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The Status of Quality and Relevance of Ethiopian Private Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs): Dynamic Conception and Challenges in Teaching-Learning Practices

Birhanu Moges (Ph.D)

Abstract

Higher education is becoming a major driver of economic competitiveness in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy. The imperative for Ethiopia to improve employment skills calls for quality and relevance teaching-learning practices within educational private higher institutions. The importance of educating people to ensure a country's continuous competitiveness and sustainable development is unquestionable. This paper examines the learners' purpose of acquiring private higher education, the basis for effective teaching-learning practices, the assessment of the quality and relevance of private higher education, the challenges faced by learners and instructors, as well as suggestions for improvement. Effective teaching-learning practices in private HEIs have a positive effect on students' learning by active and collaborative methods and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogies and communications skills. The quality of instructors' characteristics are depend on the abilities and the skills to transfer knowledge of their subject matter and enhancing the learning process through good communication, diagnostic skills, understanding of different learning styles and cultural influences, knowledge about learner development, and the ability to marshal a broad array of techniques to meet student needs. In this study a mixed-method approach using a descriptive survey design was used. The three experienced private HEIs (St.Mary's/ Kidist Mariam, Unity and Rift Valley) were selected as a sample. It also systematic and random sampling technique were used. The method of enquiry made use of both interviews and questionnaires. Data gathered from two groups (students & instructors) and 25 item Likert scale questionnaires were completed by a sample of 69 students and 24 instructors. The paper concludes that the quality of higher education in developing countries like Ethiopia is influenced by complex challenges that have their roots in commercialization, general funding, and human population growth. Appropriate policies and homebred professionals (both academic and administrative) are necessary for improving the quality and relevance of HEIs. Both instructors and students in this study conducted in the selected private HEIs of Ethiopia depicted the effective university instructor as someone who: (1) is respectful, (2) makes classes interesting, (3) is fair in evaluating, (4) cares about students' success, (5)

shows a love for their subject, (6) is friendly, (7) encourages questions and discussion, (8) is always well prepared and organized, and (9) makes difficult subjects easy to learn. Findings of students' and instructors' suggest that effective teaching is the blending of both personality and ability factors. The key factor, however, remains the instructors' personality. The study has implications for instructors to prefer innovative instructional strategies as cooperative learning while teaching. It was also forwarded that the techniques used in the approach should be diversified rather than using only group discussion and group assignment in and out-sides of the classroom. It was also suggested that the private HEIs should have to prepare detail and clear guidelines used for implementation of effective teaching-learning practices.

Key words: Effective teaching, instructors' characteristics, private higher intuitions, quality, relevance

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Higher education is of paramount importance for economic and social development. Inculcating relevant knowledge and advanced skills, higher education provides the human resources required for leadership, management, business and professional positions. The institutions also serve as the major research establishments that generate, adopt and disseminate knowledge. By giving people access to knowledge and the tools for increasing and diversifying their knowledge, higher education expands people's productivity, as well as national capacity and competitiveness. Today, as the world becomes increasingly interconnected, more interdependent and increasingly a globalized village, higher education is critical for the achievement of economic progress, political stability and peace, as well as for building democratic culture and society.

Ethiopia has fully committed itself to expand education at all levels. Since 1997, Ethiopia has embarked on an ambitious Education Sector Development Program (ESDP I to IV) with the major objective of improving quality, relevance, equity and efficiency of education, and expanding access with an achievement goal of universal primary education by 2015(MoE,2007, 2010a, 2012; FDRE, 2003a,2009). Meanwhile, government is not the sole

provider of higher education intuitions in the country as active private sector involvement dates back to the upgrading of Unity College to Unity University College in 2002; and Rift Valley University College to Rift Valley University in 2014 (Basheka, Muhenda & Kittobe 2009). Several private university colleges were subsequently established from the 1990s through the 2000s.These include Kidist Mariam University College, Alfa University College, Admas University College, Rift Valley University College, etc. Currently, there are 56 accredited privately-owned higher institutions in the country. Although none of them has become a full-fledged University yet, some are however looking forward to this upgrading once they fulfill the appropriate requirements set out in the higher learning regulations governing the establishment of universities.

It should also be stated that most of these new institutions have focused on business and management sciences, as well as health and law. A few have started undergraduate programmes in social science disciplines, such as sociology and anthropology; and some have even started offering MA programmes in the social sciences. An example is Kidist Mariam University College which offers an MA in sociology following its accreditation by the Indira Gandhi National Open University. The Rift Valley University College is also in the process of starting the first full-fledged MA programme in Sociology. One main issue of concern there, among others, is that the proposed teaching staff is largely made up of non-sociologists.

Quality and relevance in HEI is an issue that cannot be avoided in education at present and what institutions do to ascertain quality turns out to be most important and effective of all efforts and initiatives. However, the entry of "private" providers of high education, coupled with crying voices of declining government funding to public institutions is a response to the increasing demand for higher education that has caused decline in the quality of graduates (Basheka et al.,2009; UNICEF, 2011). The quality of HEI is affected by the **4C**s forces*: i) The changing University customs characteristics, ii) Increasing competition, iii) Rising costs, and iv) The impending crises*. To understand these forces, institutions of higher education need to continuously improve and strengthen themselves or else they cease to be centres of academic excellence (Mpaata, 2010). The HEIs are either private or public. Private institutions

generate money from fees and external aid, while public institutions get government grants as well as generating funds from fees and donors. As the demand for HEIs increases, it presents educational entrepreneurs and managers with a challenge of making investment decisions by which they can attain desired financial goals without setting fees structures that are so exorbitant as to scare away potential customers (Kayongo, 2010).

The Government of Ethiopia has re-affirmed, as part of the Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) initiative that all sectors in the country are going through its commitment to improving the quality of higher education institutions. At the same time there is the education reform initiative going on. This education reform mainly focuses on improving the quality and relevance of education at all levels. To this end a program called "General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) – supported by the World Bank - is developed and its first phase is under implementation. This program focuses on (FDRE, 2010):- Curriculum, Textbooks and Assessment and Inspection; teacher Development Program (TDP/CPD), including English Language Quality Improvement Program (ELQIP); school Improvement Program (SIP), including school grants; Management and Administration Program (MAP), including Education Management Information System (EMIS) and program Coordination, including monitoring and evaluation activities. The contribution of the reform to the curriculum so far include: - competency based approach; new syllabus format have been developed; minimum Learning Competency (MLC) is organized into themes or competency areas; contents reduced and simplified; new contents introduced and active learning methods designed and scientific enquiry and life skills have been included. These changes are believed to bring about positive long-term impacts on higher education (FDRE, 2010; MoE, 2010a).

1.2 Statement of the problem

In private HEIs, it seems that little conscious efforts have been made within the Ethiopian Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) to consider the quality forces, dimensions, relevance and rationales. It is more about estimating the rate of return to educational investment solely from quantity as precedence is given to quantitative targets. This is regardless

of the fact that quality education and economic development have direct, bidirectional and strong bond. Specifically, the researcher has come across students' complaints about their instructors being ineffectiveness. Heads of departments and schools deans have received anonymous applications from students complaining about quality and relevance of teaching-learning and ineffective instructors. Some cases of low throughput rate could possibly be attributed to these complaints of instructor ineffectiveness by students. University instructors are often heard expressing those students and instructors differ in their views of what constitutes effective instructors/teaching. The need for this study arises from a professional desire to better serve students and comminutes. It has been researcher observation while working with different levels of students at different institutes in the high schools, teacher training institutions, college and university that some instructors interface very well with their students and are highly successful in contributing to their profession, while others appear to have difficulties in the classroom from the initial contact with students.

However, little is researched about the status of quality and relevance of private higher educational institutions in Ethiopia. In fact, none of the existing studies were dedicated exclusively to investigating the course of institutions towards assuming and discharging the responsibility of maintaining the standards of their own education quality. There is also lack of information on the dynamic conception and challenges in teaching-learning practices and the phase at which current institutional quality education practice have reached. This study therefore is dedicated to filling this research gap.

Therefore, the main intent of this study was to examine on quality and relevance of teaching-learning practices and instructors' characteristics and implementation of effective teaching in private HEI at selected universities, Ethiopia. To achieve this main goal, the present study addresses the following basic research questions:

1. What are the predominant characteristics used by the study participants to describe effective teaching-learning and characteristics of instructors in private HEI?
2. To what extent are student perceptions of effective/ineffective teaching-learning similar to those of instructors in private HEI?

3. How can the private HEI remain relevant in the face of the government's challenging education and training policies?
4. Are the descriptors used to describe effective teaching amongst the two sample groups focused more on the ability or on the personality view in private HEI?

1.3 Objectives of the study

This study was respond issues with regard to engineering education at the selected universities, Ethiopia in general and particularly it attempts to achieve the following objectives:

- explore the relationship between effective/ineffective teaching and the instructor's personality and ability characteristics in private HEI ;
- assess students' and instructors' perceptions of effective teaching practices in private HEI;
- examine the private HEI remain relevant in the face of the government's challenging education and training policies;
- identify whether describe effective/ineffective teaching amongst the two sample groups focused more on the ability or on the personality view in private HEI.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study intends to serve academic, empirical and practical significance. The different aspects of status of quality and relevance of private higher educational institutions (HEIs) in line of dynamic conception and challenges in teaching-learning practices in topics other than HEIs have been frequently researched, thus the study seeks to fill this academic gap by explaining the key process of dynamic conception and challenges in teaching-learning practices in the context of HEIs. On the other hand, ample empirical evidence exists in the study of HEIs in Europe and the US. A study set in Ethiopia, thus, could provide an insight into the situation of quality and relevance of private higher educational institutions from a geographic context where little is known about.

In addition, studying the dynamic conception and challenges in teaching-learning could generate vital information into understanding the key quality education practices, the extent to which essential elements

necessary for quality and relevance of private higher educational institutions (HEIs) are in place, and the phase at which the existing dynamic conception of quality teaching-learning endeavour has reached. Such information could have practical implication for HEIs quality enhancement effort, decision making and policy advocacy of Ethiopia. In this regard, the study could indicate where existing dynamic conception and challenges in teaching-learning practices is found, to which direction it should develop, and how it can be better supported by higher education institutions.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

The researchers' believed that it would have been appropriate to conduct the study in large scale. Nevertheless, the limited time and other resources did not allow doing so. Hence, the study was confined to examine the reflections of private university students and instructors regarding the equality, relevance and implementation of effective teaching practices and instructors' characteristics in private HEI at selected universities(St. Mary's, Unity and Rift Valley), Ethiopia.

1.6 . Limitations of the Study

Some of the challenges that encountered during the study were lack of cooperation among the participants to fill in the questionnaire of the study. Despite such confronted challenges, the researcher had tried his best to collect the appropriate information that helped to deduce relevant conclusions. In addition, to include more sample universities in the study were difficult that may greatly contribute for the comprehensiveness of the study.

1.7 Operational definition of Terms

Quality Of Education- Educational environments that are healthy, provide adequate resources and facilities; content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills in scientific and mathematical skills for life; teaching-learning processes through which teachers use student-centered teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning.

Relevance of Education: - is the application of knowledge and skills acquired through education into day to day life.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Quality and Relevance Dimensions of Education Enhancement in Private Higher Educational Intuitions (HEIs)

There can be no doubt that one of the predominant concerns about the educational enterprise is the sustenance of quality and relevancy. The standard of education in Ethiopia at all levels was declining greatly and the entire education system was at stake in the early 1990's. The performance of university graduates in the work place, as well as their adaptability and leadership abilities, were not as much as expected and should be. Most graduates were good in the theoretical knowledge but poor in skills and in the application of the knowledge they gained from the universities in to the real world of work. The main element of the strategy to improve the performance of higher education against which progress can be measured includes improved quality of teaching and research, increased responsiveness to labor market demands, and greater equity. Enhancing quality involves student preparation and training, availability of higher motivated and competent teaching staff, supplying adequate facilities and inputs and strengthening evaluation and monitoring mechanisms towards quality of training and research outputs. The Ethiopian higher education reform anticipates the establishment of a Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency (QRAA) to develop standards and evaluate institutions to maintain quality and relevance. The agency will be an autonomous body responsible for evaluating, monitoring and providing support to higher education institutions in the country. It will also serve as advisory body for the government on issues of standards, quality and relevance of higher education programs of study.

2.1.1 Enhancement of the quality and relevance of private Higher Education Institutions (HEIS)

Meanwhile, quality is an elusive concept to define.Many has asked 'what the hell is quality?' UNICEF (2011).also pointed out that there has been inconsistency in the education literature when it comes to using terms

quality, equity, effectiveness, and efficiency. Besides this tradition, the term quality has proved to remain a complex and challenging 'thing' to confidently define. It is an ardently debated term. There is no firm consensus within the field as to exactly what constitutes high-quality teaching or a quality teacher. However, it will be useful to establish a working definition of teacher quality for the purposes of the current report. The clearest and potentially most useful example identified in our review of the literature comes from the Center for High Impact Philanthropy (2010:7):

> *A quality teacher is one who has a positive effect on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communications/interpersonal skills. Quality teachers are life-long learners in their subject areas, teach with commitment, and are reflective upon their teaching practice. They transfer knowledge of their subject matter and the learning process through good communication, diagnostic skills, understanding of different learning styles and cultural influences, knowledge about child development, and the ability to marshal a broad array of techniques to meet student needs. They set high expectations and support students in achieving them. They establish an environment conducive to learning, and leverage available resources outside as well as inside the classroom.*

These definitions suggest that teaching quality in practice constitutes a set of actions and activities that improve student outcomes. As is often the case, despite some areas of common ground, the field remains engaged in active debate and discussion around some key aspects of defining quality teaching and its impacts. Enhancement of the quality and relevance of private Higher Education Institutions (HEIS) requires training and tertiary institutions and adoption by teachers and students/learners. It can be describe the concept of adoption in accordance to literature as the decisions that individuals make each time that they consider taking up an innovation (Reeves, 2002; Cooper, 2002; UNICEF. 2011). The concept and the concern for assuring and enhancing quality were developed in the business sector in the West for commercial purposes. As things started to change in the western societies as of the late 1980s, however, stakeholders demanded relevant and quality academic programs at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Following the demand, quality has

become part and parcel of management system of HEIs- worldwide and also a recent concern in our country. Equally, whereas higher education was introduced to our country in 1950, its expansion is a recent phenomenon. Higher education quality, therefore, is not yet well established as value of all concerned stakeholders and consequently less well conceptualized as it ought to be. Due to these reasons and other features, the concept of quality remains fluid, illusive, complex and slippery. The issue of quality in HEIs is described by different educators as exceptional (high standards), consistency (zero defects/errorless), value for money (return on investment, accountability/efficiency), transformative (as enhancement or improvement, an ongoing process that includes empowerment and enhancement of satisfaction), fitness for purpose (fitting customer specifications, needs, and priorities), culture(shared value)(Cooper, 2002; Daniel, 2007; MoE, 2007; Mishra, 2006; Reeves, 2002).

1) *Quality as Exceptional (High Standards)*: performance that is exceptional; attainable only in limited circumstances. This can happen only when very able and brightest students are admitted to the system, mainly in world class universities.

2) *Quality as Consistency (Zero Defects/Errorless)*: this deals with producing perfection through continuous improvement, among others, by adopting Total Quality Management (TQM) to create a philosophy about work, people and human relationships built around shared values. This definition implies fulfilling ideal standards so entails ideal environment in which all achievements can be measured and verified. This aligns with positivist paradigm which espouses for the belief that the world is definable, fixable, discoverable, and describable.

3) *Quality as Value for money (Return on Investment, Accountability/Efficiency)*:this is to see quality as the ability to provide value for resources invested and to be publicly accountable for the 'bucks' and for the 'bangs'. It goes with the types of learners joining our universities and the concerns of cab payers, funding agencies and governments. This conception may be popular with today's changing landscape of higher education and the competitive climates for scarce resources, particularly in countries like ours.

4) *Quality as Transformative (as Enhancement or Improvement, an Ongoing Process that Includes Empowerment and Enhancement of Satisfaction)*: today the world demands adaptive knowledge, skills and attitudes. This calls for enhancing the readiness and capability of HEIs to transform students on an on-going basis and add value to their knowledge and personal development. This aligns with current concerns for HEIs for the masses, where emphasis is more on value adding parse rather than value adding from an already high level.

5) *Quality as Fitness for/of purpose (Fitting Customer Specifications, Needs, and Priorities)*:this sees quality as fulfilling the purposes or missions of all parties involved in and affected by the program and /or the services we render.

6) *Quality as Fitness of Purpose*: this deals with doing the right things (instrumental) setting and implementing appropriate purpose to bring change and betterment in the practices and for transforming the learners for the world of life, work, and competition.

7) *Quality as Culture*: These deals with a supportive set of shared, accepted, and integrated systems (embedded), patterns of quality an attitude and set of group values, taken-for-granted practices, and a specific aspect of organizational culture that guide how improvements are made to everyday working practices and consequent outputs. It serves as social glue to hold an organization together' being made up of many variables—modes of interaction, assumptions, rituals, membership, structures, control mechanisms, training, educational sessions and so on'. In the spirit of quality culture, it is the responsibility of each unit to ensure the quality of their own work.

The 'Framework' established six goals called EFA Dakar Goals. The sixth goal, which deals with quality of education, is as follows.

> *Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills". "Its expanded definition of quality set out the desirable characteristics of learners (healthy,*

motivated students), processes (competent teachers using active pedagogies), content (relevant curricula) and systems (good governance and equitable resource allocation) (UNICEF, 2011).

Building up on the continuous debate on how best to operationalise the concept of quality, Gibbs(2010) also suggested an understanding of quality consisting of three dimensions. The so-called "**3P**" definition provided higher education practitioners and policy makers with set of potential indicators which can be applied to evaluate the contexts before students actually start learning; what goes on as students are in the process of learn; and circumstances of the outcomes of the learning. Accordingly, Gibbs developed variables that help in assessing states of quality at three phases namely; presage, process, and product.

Presage variables: These variables address the circumstances of a university context covering the time frame before students start the actual process of learning. It includes those aspects related with resources, screening students, quality and qualification of teachers, quality of students as well as the general condition of an educational institution. Gibbs also argued staff-student ratio, quality of teaching staff, funding and quality of students as dimensions appropriate to assess the state quality in the presage phase. Despite this, he recognised that presage variables only frame but cannot directly determine what the actual education process is going to look like. In nutshell, the presage variables imply those educational institutions that have high quality teaching staff and students; optimal staff-student ration; and sufficient and dependable fund are regarded as having respectable quality.

Process variables: The process variables of educational quality deal with the conditions of what is actually going on during the teaching and learning process. These variables also help to explain the nature of quality and quantity of students' engagement in learning. It shows what institutions are doing to achieve best results given the resources at their disposal. Accordingly, Gibbs suggested setof dimensions relevant to gauge the process phase of quality include class size; class contact hours, independent study hours and total hours; the quality of teaching (experience and training; research record; and judged by students; the effects of the

research environment; the level of intellectual challenge (level of the curriculum; depth of approach to studying; and student engagement); formative assessment and feedback; reputation; peer quality ratings; student support; and quality enhancement processes. Therefore, those institutions that score high in these dimensions are considered as having good educational quality.

Product variables: Process variables signal the state of quality coinciding with the final outcomes of an educational process. Concepts of student performance and educational gain are central to product variables that assist in capturing both the tangible and intangible impacts a learning process on students. The respective dimensions that indicate the status of product quality include student performance and degree classifications; student retention and persistence; and employability and graduate destinations. Although it is difficult to clearly measure, improvement in students' cognitive capacity is also another element of the product variables. The existence of such features among graduates of an educational institution elevates its status of quality against its counterparts that fail to achieve likewise. From the discussion of the above five pieces of works on the definition of quality, it is possible to provide a concluding remark as follows:

Quality is still a vague and controversial term to define. It is notoriously elusive and challenging to come by a universal definition. Mishra (2006) noted the existence of contending 'relativist' and 'objectivist' extremes on the understanding of quality. While some thought that we know what it is though it is difficult to define the term others suggested we should just give up worrying on such efforts.

Quality has multiple meaning and there seems to be no consensus regarding which conceptualisation is the best. It is obvious that different scholars gave competing views even though these views highly correlate. Quality does not mean one thing only. Even more, the way the concepts understood considerably varies across different stakeholders. There is difference in how policy makers define quality from the notion held by students, or parents, or quality assurance agencies, or employers.

The existence of several meanings however does not necessarily mean some groups are right and others are wrong. It is therefore very important to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each framework's and definition as their applicability is limited to certain contexts. Understanding the context thus provides the vital clue not to easily be misled and hence to properly comprehend the interpretation of a particular definition. The underlying purpose and context of any sort of definition should be considered as part of the analysis. Some of the different conceptions of quality mutually reinforce while some do not. The notion of quality as excellence and value for money, for instance, contain aspects that contradict each other while the understandings of the term as high standard input and outcome go hand-in-hand. Likewise, Gibbs (2010:5) also stressed the importance of multivariate analysis, "To understand what is going on and draw valid conclusions, it is necessary to have measure of a range of dimensions of quality at the same time". It is imperative to combine both the quantitative and qualitative measures of quality if a comprehensive understanding of the concept is to be achieved. Quality also has a dynamic nature. The task of defining the term is contextual and evolving. This makes defining the quality challenging. Its meaning considerably alters depending on time and circumstances. It should therefore be clear that defining quality does not come to a stopping point instead it progresses along the debate and discussion among interest groups and stakeholders.

In Ethiopian context, the quality of HEIs is now evaluated against the ten Focus areas set out by the Higher Education and Relevance Agency (HERQA). Quality from the practice is viewed as internal and within the peers as a continuous process of assessment and improvement. This calls for shifting (in the long run) the role of HERQA to a validating agent focusing on whether institutions have adequate mechanisms in place and in operation to support the dynamic process. Equally, the current landscape of HEIs demands maintaining standard (national as well as international). Though not the same, there is significant overlap between the concepts of 'quality' and 'standards'. Standards are specified and usually measurable outcome indicators or expected level of requirements and conditions against which quality is assessed or that must be attained by higher education institutions and their programs in order for them to be accredited or certified. Normally, academic quality is translated

into standards and indicators embedded within the functions of HEIs. Following the EFA Global Monitoring Report (MoE, 2010a), five traditions will be considered.

Quality in humanist tradition: Education (i) Should be responsive to individual learner's circumstances and needs (ii) While assessment should be integrated to the learning process, learners should have information and feedback of their learning; self assessment and peer assessment are welcomed; (iii) Teacher's role is more of a facilitator than an instructor and (iv) Learning is considered more as a process of social practice than the result of an individual intervention.

Quality in the behaviourist tradition: In this tradition: (i) Education is based on prescribed objectives, standardized, externally defined with controlled curricula, (ii) Objectively preset assessment criteria are used to measure learned behaviour (iii) Tests and examinations are the main means of planning and delivering rewards and punishments (iv) Teacher directs learning and controls it and (v) Incremental tasks that reinforce desired associations in the learner's mind are favoured.

Quality in the critical tradition:(i) Education should prompt social change, (ii) Curricula and teaching methods encourage critical analysis of social power relations and ways in which formal knowledge is produced and delivered and (ii) Active participation of learners in the design of their learning experience.

Quality in indigenous tradition:(i) Imported approaches are not necessarily relevant and relevance implies local design of teaching learning strategies (ii) Learners' prior knowledge accumulated through their own experiences should be identified and nourished (iii) Learners should play a role in defining their own curriculum and (iv) Non-formal and lifelong learning should be an integral part of the teaching/learning strategy.

Quality in adult education approaches: In adult education tradition (i) Experience and critical reflection constitute important aspects of quality and (ii) Learners have the potential to use their experience and learning as a

basis for social action and social change. From the above analysis one could observe the complexity and multi-dimensional nature of the quality concept.

There is also a growing trend for developmental approach to quality. Quality can no longer be thought merely in terms of maintaining standards. Instead, higher education institutions, like other organizations, are being encouraged to take a developmental approach to quality (Mishra, 2006; Reeves, 2002). This implies that organizations as well as individuals within those organizations are continually changing and learning as they cope with new situations and expectations. This calls for making quality assurance the culture of all the university community and the functions of the university. The culture implies collegial discussions and consensus-building to reduce inefficiencies or waste from the very start; develop an environment of trust, honesty and respect; embedding lines of accountability, transparency into a process of continuous quality improvement, at the institutional level, and at the level of the academic disciplines as well. For the purpose of this study, quality could be referred to as a process whereby teaching and learning are continuously improved and maintained with a view to bringing about desirable educational goals in the school system. The issue of quality is emphasised more in ESDP IV (MOE, 2010a) which focuses on (1) improving student achievement, (2) designing new programmes to help disadvantaged children, (3) developing the capacity of the system, and (4) improving school management and administration.

2.1.2 Quality Dimensions in Higher Education

Stakeholders of higher education intuitions (the government, providers/funding bodies and the community at large, students, staff and employers of graduates) want to know the different dimensions of quality (Cooper, 2002; Mishra, 2006). The most commonly grouped dimensions of quality are product, software and service. Based on the review of literature on the different approaches to quality in HEIs (Cooper, 2002; MoE, 2007; Mishra, 2006) present a conceptual framework that covers six criteria to depict quality dimensions. These are tangibles, competence and attitude, content, delivery and reliability as have been outlined hereunder.

- *Tangibles*: Sufficient and modern equipment/facilities; ease of access; visually appealing environment; and support services.

- *Competence*: Sufficiently qualified (academic) staff; theoretical and practical knowledge, qualifications; up to date; teaching expertise, communication skills, etc.
- *Attitude*: Understanding students' needs; willingness to help; availability for guidance and advice; giving personal attention; emotional, courtesy, disposition, etc
- *Content*: Relevance of curriculum to the future jobs of students; effectiveness; containing primary knowledge/skills; completeness, use of computers; communication skills and team working; and flexibility of knowledge, being cross-disciplinary.
- *Delivery*: Effective presentation; sequencing, timeliness; consistency and fairness of examinations; feedback from students; and encouraging students.
- *Reliability*: Trustworthiness; giving valid award; keeping promises, match to the goals; and handling complaints, solving problems.

2.1.3 Objectives of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP)

The dimensions and the criteria are indicative of the areas that should be of concern to ensure quality in higher education. It might be advantageous to see whether the Ethiopian

Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) have given space to the dimensions and the criteria.

The objectives of higher education intuitions in GTP are the following (MoFED, 2010):

- Establish a HEI system which focuses on result performance, that recognizes and scales up best practices;
- Produce a higher level skilled and capable human power as per the demand of the development of the country in general and the manufacturing in
- Ensure HE enrolment that prioritizes science and technology;
- Assure HEIs that have achieved education quality and relevance in accordance with the demands of the economy;
- Enhance the competitiveness and competency of female students success and ensure gender equity

The underlying reason for formulating GTP is to backup Ethiopia's aspirations to:

- be a middle income country by 2020-2023,
- achieve the MDG targets by 2015,
- achieve UNESCO's teacher-student ratio of 1:20,
- improve and ensure the quality, relevance and efficiency of education at all levels with the purpose to produce trained manpower innovative citizens in line with the demands of the emerging economy and industry.

Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP), therefore, has ambitiously targeted quantitative gains in teacher development; student teacher-ratio; annual intake for postgraduate programs, average graduation rates, gross admission and participation rates. A look at the above targets generates a concern about quality. Regardless of the growing recognitions for, and the efforts made by the Federal Ministry of education, it seems that plea and applauds, emphasis and resources are directed to quantitative gains-enrolling and ever level quality students. It seems that little conscious efforts are made to consider the quality forces, dimensions, and rationales.

2.1.4 Factors Inhibiting Quality and Relevance of Private HEI Practices

Currently, achieving quality teaching and learning in higher education for developing scientifically literate citizens is a worldwide problem facing many nations (Cooper, 2002). Several studies in higher education over the past decades have made attempts to unravel the causes of students' low achievement (Van't Hooft, 2005; UNICEF, 2011). In the review of higher education, Okebukola cited in (Oredbeyen,2010:3-4) identifies the following five factors as inhibiting higher education:

- *Student-related*: such as poor attitude to work, apprehension that courses are naturally difficult to learn, difficulty associated with learning symbols and difficulty in learning the language;
- *Teacher-related*: such as poor preparation of teachers, lack of motivation, inadequate knowledge of subject matter by teachers, and lack of skills/competence required for teaching;

- *School-related*: such as overcrowded classrooms, overloaded examination syllabus, lack/inadequate laboratory and workshops, poorly equipped library and lack of vital instructional materials such as reference-books, teacher's guide and audio-visuals;
- *Home-related*: such as imposition of fields by parents on students despite poor attitude to teaching especially at the university level, non-monitoring at home of students' progress in courses and lack of provision in many homes for the educational needs of students; and
- *Curriculum-related*: such as overloaded syllabus and insufficient time allotted to teaching-learning at universities.

Literature in higher education in developed countries indicate teacher quality is the most important factor inhibiting quality teaching-learning in higher education that needs to be addressed (Cooper, 2002). Improving the quality of teaching and students' achievement in higher education depends on the quality of initial teacher education, mentoring and induction programmes provided for beginning teachers, opportunities for ongoing professional development provided for teachers, teaching resources in higher education and community support among other factors.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study design and methods

The use of several approaches and methods leads to a better understanding of the issue under investigation. Hence, a mixed methods approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative research a method using a survey design for obtaining descriptive statistics supported by a qualitative investigation was employed because of the complexity of the research issues (Creswell, 2009:203-223). The researcher for this particular study primarily selected descriptive survey method because it is found to be the most appropriate technique for collecting vast information and opinions from quit a large number of respondents. This methods of study is also relevant together detailed descriptions of the existing condition in current practices of an educational phenomenon.

3.2 Sources of data

The primary sources included in this study were private HEI students and instructors, deans and vice deans, programme coordinators and department heads selected from three sample universities (Kidist Mariam/St. Mary's, Unity and Rift Valley). The secondary sources for the present study were printed materials. One-tenth of the seiner year private HEI students of 23 from each sample university a total of 69 and24 instructors were selected by using systematic and random sampling technique.

3.3 Data collection instruments

In order to collect the required information the researcher was used questionnaires, interviews and observation check list. The interview instrument was developed by researcher and has been used extensively in his study. The questionnaire containing mainly closed ended items were administered to engineering instructors and students. These respondents were responded to different items concerning the implementation of effective teaching practices and instructors' characteristics in engineering education in the light of effective teaching -learning in the sample universities, Ethiopia. The *observation checklist* was helped the researcher to observe the extent the university instructors' use different teaching methods effectively. The questionnaire was implemented a Likert Scale of response of 1 to 4 with the following meanings: *1= Least Important, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Important, 4= Very Important*. Interview and observation was used to triangulate information collected through questionnaire.

3.4 Methods of data analysis

The data collected through different instruments (questionnaires, observation and interview) were organized, presented in tables and then analyzed statically using statistical methods such as %ages, means, standard deviation and Ch-square and were interpreted. Finally, the collected data was organized and analysed thematically. All the issues that emerged from the different approaches were used to create themes describing the challenges and opportunities facing the study of three private HEI disciplines.

4. Results and Discussion

There are important implications here for debates about the nature of '*quality*' in teaching and learning, and about ways we might conceptualise aspects of quality, especially at a time of rapid change in 'mass' higher education. The research questions identified in the introduction was the focal point for this chapter. The findings revealed from three sources: statistical analysis of the questionnaire items, recorded interviews and the open-ended questionnaire items, and it was discussed the findings relevant to the literature reviewed.

Research question one: *What are the predominant characteristics used by the study participants to describe effective teaching practices?*

Since the questionnaire items were categorized under two separate categories of effective teaching characteristics (personality and ability/skill), the results from the questionnaire are presented in two different Tables (1 and 2) and was addressed in separate sub-sections. From Table 1 below, results from the questionnaire data indicate that according to the sample respondents, the following six personality characteristics were very important (VI) to describe effective/excellent teaching: are respectful of their students; make classes interesting; are fair in grading and evaluating student work; care about students succeeding in their course; show that they really like the subject they teach, and are friendly to students. Also worthy of mention is that all remaining personality characteristics included in the questionnaire survey instrument were considered by the study respondents to be important (I) descriptors of effective teaching. Thus, each one of the 11 personality characteristics specifically designed for the questionnaire was rated as either very important or important. This indicates that all personality characteristics reflected in the questionnaire were essential (average mean of 3.37, Table 1) to the entire sample population to describe effective/excellent teaching, and should be considered by instructor interested in demonstrating to their students that they have effective teaching skills.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the personality traits measure of effective teaching by entire sample (α=0.05)

Personality characteristics	Min	Max	Mean	Rate	S D	Rank
. … are respectful of their students.	1	4	3.73	VI	.538	1
. … make classes interesting.	1	4	3.70	VI	.522	2
. … are fair in grading and evaluating student work	1	4	3.67	VI	.612	3
. … care about students succeeding in their course.	1	4	3.56	VI	.632	4
. … show that they really like the subject they teach.	1	4	3.53	VI	.713	5
. … are friendly to students.	1	4	3.50	VI	.735	6
. … welcome students' opinions/ suggestions.	1	4	3.38	I	.682	7
. … are available to help students outside of class.	2	4	3.33	I	.693	8
. … use humor in the classroom.	1	4	3.33	I	.781	9.5
. … make an effort to get to know their students.	1	4	3.11	I	.794	9.5
. … have a unique teaching style.	1	4	3.11	I	.049	11
Average of means			3.37			

According to the two population groups (students & instructors) in this study, the most important characteristic of the effective instructor to emerge is the personality trait "are respectful to their students" (mean 3.73, Table 1). This finding closely matches the high (2nd place) ranking of Feldman's trait "is concerned with, is friendly to and *respects* students" and matches the results from studies conducted to other researchers (Saafin, 2005; Raymond, 2001). Respect for students emerged as 9th highest trait to be mentioned in the qualitative, open-ended portion of the questionnaire instrument (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Characteristics of effective instructors extracted from open-ended questions

VERB REFERENT STATEMENTS	Students	Instructors	Sum	Rank
1. *Makes class interesting/fun*	25	25	50	1
2. *Is friendly to students*	26	12	37	2
3. Really knows subject	7	20	27	3

knowledge				
4. *Cares about students' learning*	9	24	25	4
5. Makes lessons understandable	12	10	22	5
6. Is well prepared for class	8	10	18	6
7. *Is enthusiastic*	5	12	17	7
8. *Encourages students to think*	2	14	16	8
9. *Respects students*	4	10	14	9
10. *Has good teaching style*	9	21	10	5
11. *Understands how students think and feel*	3	10	13	10.5
12. *Gives support*	8	3	11	12
13. *Is approachable/available*	3	7	10	13
14. *Is fair*	1	5	9	14
15. *Has good sense of humor*	5	2	7	15.5
16. *Listens to students' questions & opinions*	5	2	7	15.5
17. Relates theory to outside world	1	5	6	17.5
18. Is professional	1	4	6	17.5
19. Has lots of experience	6	0	6	17.5
20. *Is adaptable/flexible*	1	4	5	20
21. *Is patient*	3	1	4	21.5
22. Develops new activities all the time	2	2	4	21.5
23. Makes students think	0	3	3	23.5
24. *Is kind*	2	1	3	23.5
25. Develops students' skills	0	2	2	25.5
		Total sum	332	

Ability characteristics (28%) and *Personality characteristics* **(72%)**

Note: italicized bold text indicates *Personality* factors; non-highlighted text indicates Ability/skill factors.

Upon closer examination of Table 4.2, it appears that respect for students is more of a concern for instructor respondents. Instructor respondents in particular mentioned this trait frequently; in addition to delivering content knowledge, also prepare university students by inculcating in them the social behavioural skills such as respect for self, others, their instructors, and institutional policies and procedures. "Creating an environment that is

mutually respectful is the most important thing that effective/excellent instructors can do" is how one instructor respondent answered this open-ended question on the questionnaire. The second highest overall rated effective personality teaching trait as revealed by this study's respondents is the descriptor "makes classes interesting" (mean 3.70, Table 4.1). This trait ranked high in both components of this study (questionnaire results, and open-ended questions). "Make classes interesting and fun" was the most frequently mentioned trait mentioned in the open-ended question (Table 4.2), providing further support as to the importance of this finding. "An effective instructor should regularly succeed in inculcating a love of knowledge" are the words written by one instructor while answering the open-ended question on the survey instrument. Being "fair in grading and evaluating student work" was the third most prominent effective teaching characteristic as reported by respondents. Instructors rated this trait as their most important descriptor of effective teaching while students rated it 5th. This suggests that instructors at the university where the study was conducted have high ethical standards. Fairness in grading and evaluating student work rated not as high in the literature review (5th overall) as it did in the current study, but the importance of objectivity to effective teaching has been discussed methodically in the literature reviewed (Saafin, 2005; Day, 2004).

The fourth highest rated personality characteristic of effective teaching to emerge from this study was "caring about students succeeding in their course" and was also ranked fourth highest according to the open-ended question on the survey instrument (Table 4.2). Students ranked this trait as their second most important indicator of teaching excellence. Conversely, instructors rated this trait higher (3rd overall). This is an interesting juxtaposition, suggesting that perhaps instructors act in a more supportive, surrogate parent role for their pre university students. This trait of genuinely caring for students' success was also important to researchers examined in this study (Saafin, 2005; Day, 2004; Walls *et al.*, 2002; Beishuizen *et al.*, 2001).

Making a link between this study's results and the literature, Borich (2000:27) describes effective instructors as those who "… provide a warm and encouraging classroom climate by letting students know help is

available". The essence of this characteristic of effective teaching is captured by the simple words one student used to describe effective instructors in the open-ended question: "To actually care about their students". The last predominant (very important) personality attribute of effective teaching that emerged from the study respondents was the characteristic "are friendly to students". This 6th highest ranked personality trait (mean 3.50, Table 4.1) was placed 3rd highest by the students and occupied 7th position according to the instructors. Following on from the previous findings, students rated this trait as their premier characteristic, while the more experienced, more independent students ranked this item 6th of the eleven personality characteristics measured in the questionnaire. A comparison of how students and instructor rated the eleven personality characteristics contained in the questionnaire instrument can be reviewed in Table 4.3.The lecturers lack practical pedagogical skills to effectively facilitate the development of higher order thinking skills through appropriate methodology. Consequently, the students are not empowered to apply and transfer knowledge so as to transform themselves and society as is their wish.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics used to compare students and instructors perspectives on the importance of personality characteristics of effective/excellent instructors

Personality characteristics	Students					Instructors				
	Min	Max	Mean	Rate	Rank	Min	Max	Mean	Rate	Rank
… make classes interesting.	2	4	3.7	VI	1.5	1	4	3.7	VI	3
… are respectful of their students.	2	4	3.7	VI	1.5	1	4	3.8	VI	2
… are friendly to students.	1	4	3.6	VI	3	2	4	3.4	I	7
…care about students succeeding in their course.	1	4	3.5	VI	4	1	4	3.6	VI	4
… show that they really like the subject they teach.	1	4	3.5	I	5.5	2	4	3.6	VI	5
… are fair in grading and evaluating student work.	1	4	3.5	I	5.5	3	4	3.9	VI	1
… are available to help students outside of class.	2	4	3.4	I	7	4	2	3.3	I	8
…welcome students' opinions/ suggestions.	2	4	3.4	I	8	1	4	3.4	I	6
… make an effort to get to	1	4	3.1	I	9	2	4	3.1	I	10

know their students.										
… have a unique teaching style.	1	4	3.1	I	10	1	4	1.9	SI	11
… use humor in the classroom.	1	4	3.0	I	11	2	4	3.3	I	9
Average of means 3.39						**Average of means 3.34**				

Of the eleven personality traits included in the survey instrument, six were rated as *very important* (dominant) and five were rated as *important* descriptors of the effective instructor. This high ranking of each of the eleven personality characteristics included in the survey instrument provides further verification as to the cultural appropriateness of the survey instrument. Though it can be seen that there are some minor differences in opinion between how students and instructors rated the personality traits included in the questionnaire instrument, it is evident that there is substantial agreement between students and instructors views as to which traits are deemed important to effective teaching. Foremost amongst all the personality characteristics which contribute to teaching of the highest level in the students and instructors in a university setting, this study findings reveal that instructors who demonstrate genuine respect for their students, make classes interesting and exciting places to be, are fair in all students' dealings, care about students' success, genuinely enjoy teaching their subject matter and are always friendly and approachable are more likely to be effective in transferring knowledge to their students, and in return more likely to be rated higher in instructor evaluations. According to the student and instructor respondents, three ability attributes emerged as dominant (very important) by the study participants to describe effective/excellent teaching: encourage students' questions and discussion; are always well prepared and organized, and make difficult subjects easy to learn.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the ability characteristics measure of effective teaching by entire sample ($\alpha=0.05$)

Ability characteristics	Min	Max	Mean	Rate	S D	Rank
. … encourage students' questions and discussion.	1	4	3.7	VI	.62	1
… are always well prepared and organized.	2	4	3.6	VI	.62	2
… make difficult subjects easy to learn.	1	4	3.5	VI	.69	3

… have expert, up-to-date knowledge of their subject.	1	4	3.4	I	.73	4
… require students to think critically.	1	4	3.4	I	.69	5
… expect students to become independent learners.	1	4	3.3	I	.73	6
… give frequent feedback about student progress.	1	4	3.2	I	.71	7
… encourage students to learn in pairs/groups.	1	4	3.0	I	.89	8
… maintain strict control over the class.	1	4	2.8	I	.78	9
… use the latest computer technology in their teaching.	1	4	2.5	I	.98	10
… give many quizzes and tests.	1	4	2.3	SI	.81	11
… have many years of teaching experience.	1	4	2.2	SI	.96	12
… assign a lot of homework.	1	4	2.0	SI	.74	13
… lecture (talk) for the entire class period.	1	4	1.7	SI	.87	14
Average of means			**2.89**			

Table 4 above, indicates that three ability attributes were considered to be very important descriptors of effective instructors to the entire sample and that the highest ranked ability trait used to define effective/ excellent teaching emerged as "encourage students' questions and discussion". Overall, this ranked the 4th highest of all questionnaire personality and ability characteristics with a mean of 3.65. What was unexpectedly discovered is that instructors rated this measure as their most important ability characteristic. This characteristic (*is open to students' ideas, opinions, and discussion*) also rated high in the literature summary, tying for second place overall (Saafin, 2005; Walls *et al.*, 2002; Beishuizen *et al.*, 2001). The second of three predominant ability attributes viewed as very important by the study respondents is the descriptor of instructors who "are always well prepared and organized" (Table 4.4). Rated 5th highest of the 25 teaching characteristics examined through statistical analysis, (mean 3.57), being prepared and organized also rated very high in the literature review (3rd place) and was discussed by earlier researchers (Saafin, 2005; Walls *et al.*, 2002).

Results from the open-ended question also indicate the importance of instructors being prepared to stand and deliver well-organized materials and lessons to their students (6th position, Table 2). In answering the interview question, "Twenty years from now, what do you think you will remember the most from your best university instructor?, one student respondent seized this opportunity to help us realize the importance of this trait from learners' perspectives: "… how he interacts with his students and was always prepared for class." The last predominant effective teaching ability attribute to emerge from this study was the aptitude of instructors to make difficult subjects easy to learn (Table 4). This characteristic, like all others discussed while answering this first research question, appears to be common as well. The literature review meta-table ranks this as 4th most important ("explains using simple terms") and was important to preceding researchers (Walls *et al.*, 2002; Beishuizen *et al.*, 2001).

A comparison between how students and instructor rated the eleven ability characteristics found in the questionnaire instrument is presented in Table 5. Finally, the private HEIs use both summative and formative evaluation. However there have been cases of dishonesty among students in form of cheating during examinations and duplicating each other's assignment and course works. The institutions take stringent measures to deal with students who cheat during exams which include facing the disciplinary committee and discontinuation if proved beyond doubt.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics used to compare student and instructor on the importance of ability characteristics of excellent instructors– open-ended question

Ability characteristics	Students					Instructors				
	Min	Max	Mean	Rate	Rank	Min	Max	Mean	Rate	Rank
…. are always well prepared and organized.	2	4	3.6	VI	1	2	4	3.6	VI	1
… make difficult subjects easy to learn.	2	4	3.5	VI	2	1	4	5.6	VI	2
… have many years of teaching	1	4	2.5	I	3	1	4	1.8	VI	3

experience.										
…encourage students' questions discussion.	1	4	3.4	I	4	1	4	3.9	VI	4
… have expert, up-to-date knowledge.	1	4	3.4	I	5	1	4	3.4	I	5
… require students to think critically.	1	4	3.2	I	6	2	4	3.6	VI	6
… give frequent feedback progress.	1	4	3.1	I	7	2	4	3.3	I	7
. … expect students to become independent.	1	4	3.1	I	8	2	4	3.5	I	8
… maintain strict control over the class.	1	4	2.9	I	9	1	4	2.7	I	9
…encourage students to learn in pairs/ groups.	1	4	2.9	I	10	1	4	3.1	I	10
…use the latest computer technology in their teaching.	1	4	2.8	I	11	1	4	2.2	SI	11
… give many quizzes and tests.	1	4	2.6	I	12	1	4	2.1	SI	12
… lecture (talk) for the entire class period.	1	4	2.2	SI	13	1	4	2.1	NI	13
… assign a lot of homework.	1	4	2.1	SI	14	1	4	1.9	SI	14
Average of means			**2.95**		**Average of means**			**2.82**		

It is evident from Table 5 that a high degree of similarity has been expressed in the views of student and instructors on the importance of the ability attributes included in the survey instrument. The students generally appreciate that the lecturer: student ratio is overwhelming. However, their assessment of the quality of education in relation to lecturers was as follows: While some lecturers are doing their best with limited resources, are knowledgeable and have a good relationship with

students, many exhibit tendencies of absenteeism, sluggishness, inability to give valuable time, and lack of concern for students' challenges.

Research question two: *To what extent are student perceptions of effective teaching similar to those of instructors?* Even though numerous matches appeared amongst the respondents in regards to effective teaching, some minor mismatches did surface. In other words, what the participating students appeared to value in their instructors differed in some instances from what the participating instructors seemed to regard as very important to teaching effective. Table 6 below indicates the major matches of personality and ability factors between students and instructors unveiled in this study to describe the effective instructor.

Table 6: Major matches b/n instructors and students to describe effective teaching

Personality Traits	Ability Characteristics
Are respectful of their students	Encourage students' questions and discussion
Make classes interesting	Are always well-prepared and organized
Care about students succeeding in their course	Make difficult subjects easy to learn
Show that they really like the subject they teach	
Are friendly to students	

Participating students and instructors agreed on a number of characteristics they believed distinguished between the effective and ineffective university instructor. Both students and instructors regarded highly as very important (VI) the quality to treat students with respect and caring. The participating instructors' and students' perceptions also matched with regard to making classes interesting, caring about their students' success, demonstrating a love for teaching and being friendly. In addition to the five personality characteristics listed above, three ability characteristics were also stressed as being very important (VI) to all participants: encouraging students' questions, being well-prepared and organized and having a knack for making difficult subjects understandable. Thus, according to these study

participants, both skills and affective factors are necessary virtues to paint a portrait of the effective university instructor.

Differences in opinions between the instructor and student groups occur when the mean difference is greater than 0.30. Student results indicate that having a unique teaching style, giving a lot of tests, using the latest computer technology and having many years of teaching experience was more important than it was to instructors. Students who express the view that each instructor should have his or her own style are possibly a reflection upon the inexperience of the undergraduate student participants in this survey who perhaps feel that instructor have the responsibility to perform entertaining lectures and classes for them. Similarly, a student indicating that they would prefer an instructor who gives them lots of tests suggests that students are looking for personal feedback and practice opportunities, rather than being graded for the entire semester by one final exam. Students also rated instructors who use computer technology as more important than did the instructors themselves possibly reflects that the former are more attuned to the latest developments in computer technology than their instructors who are possibly using all their spare time preparing lectures, examinations and demands for teaching portfolios placed upon them.

Table 7 below, represents personality findings extracted from the data and is presented to explain similarities between students and instructors on personality characteristics of effective teaching. Many similarities can be observed between the students and instructors of this study conducted in the selected universities, Ethiopia. Both groups (students and instructors) consider making classes interesting, being respectful of students and caring about students' success to be very important (VI) or predominant characteristics of effective teaching. Furthermore, both student and instructor respondents share the perception that effective teaching is exhibited by instructors who remain available to students outside of class, who are open to students' input, make an effort to learn their students' names and who employ appropriate humor in the classroom. Three other personality items – being friendly to students, demonstrating that they like their subject and being fair when dealing with students – were also considered as either important or very important to both groups.

Table 7: Student and instructor overall ratings of personality characteristics of effective teaching

No.	Personality characteristics of excellent teaching	Student rating	Instructor rating
1	Make classes interesting	**VI**	**VI**
2	Are respectful of their students	**VI**	**VI**
3	Are friendly to students	VI	I
4	Care about students succeeding in their course	**VI**	**VI**
5	Show that they really like the subject they teach	I	VI
6	Are fair in grading and evaluating student work	I	VI
7	Are available to help students outside of class	I	I
8	Welcome students' opinions/suggestions	I	I
9	Make an effort to get to know their students	I	I
10	Have a unique teaching style	I	SI
11	Use humor in the classroom	I	I

Table 8 below, represents the findings extracted from the data and are presented to explain similarities between students and instructors on the ability characteristics of effective teaching. As found with personality traits, considerable overlap exists between how students and instructors of this study conducted at selected universities in the Ethiopia view ability characteristics of effective teaching. Both groups (students & instructors) consider effective instructors to be always well prepared for their classes and have the ability to make difficult topics easy to learn. Despite this finding, however, it can be reasonably concluded that student and instructors perceptions of what constitutes effective teaching are to a large extent very similar. Other sub-group differences which have emerged will be discussed below.

Table 8: Student and instructor overall ratings of ability characteristics of effective teaching

No.	Ability characteristics of excellent teaching	Student rating	Instructor rating
1	**Are always well prepared and organized**	**VI**	**VI**
2	**Make difficult subjects easy to learn**	**VI**	**VI**
3	Have many years of teaching experience	I	SI
4	Encourage students' questions and discussion	I	VI
5	**Have expert, up-to-date knowledge of their subject**	**I**	**I**
6	Require students to think critically	I	VI
7	**Give frequent feedback about student progress**	**I**	**I**
8	**Expect students to become independent learners**	**I**	**I**
9	**Maintain strict control over the class**	**I**	**I**
10	**Encourage students to learn in pairs/groups I**	**I**	**I**
11	Use the latest computer technology in their teaching	I	SI
12	Give many quizzes and tests	I	SI
13	Lecture (talk) for the entire class period	SI	NI
14	**Assign a lot of homework**	**SI**	**SI**

Answers to the open-ended question on the questionnaire instrument help us to understand the importance of these characteristics to students:

S1: In my opinion, the effective instructor who is strict controls the class, has a unique teaching style, and gives many quizzes or tests.
S2: Give many tests and frequent feedback to students.

Instructors, on the other hand, rated the ability characteristics of requiring students to become critical thinkers, encouraging questions and discussion as well as expecting students to become independent learners as more important than did their young charges who are likely inexperienced with these concepts of higher education. Answers to the open-ended question on the questionnaire instrument help us to understand instructors' perspectives of these attributes:

In1: An effective instructor should regularly succeed in inculcating a love of knowledge.

In2: One who understands the student needs & learning preferences & can facilitate high-order thinking in the learning process.

Relative to how instructors assess encouraging students' questions and discussion, as well as to the importance of assisting students to become independent learners, one instructor had this to say:

In1: An effective/ excellent instructor is one who is always open-minded–actually welcomes students' questions, opinions, and suggestions. One who uses what students say and contribute to bringing the learning process to life!

In2: … listen to them, have time for students outside of class, be creative and fun in class, be a friend and a instructor.

In3: The ability to motivate students to learn.

Thus, findings from this study appear to correspond to what Beishuizen *et al.* (2001:185) found in their study conducted in the Netherlands. Similar to students in this study, primary students in Holland "… described effective instructors primarily as competent instructors, focusing on transfer of knowledge and skills …" whereas secondary students and instructors at the same institute in Leiden "… emphasised relational aspects of effective instructor …" reflecting what has just been discussed with the instructors' comments. Furthermore, "Young students displayed an ability view while mature students and instructors showed a personality view on instructors" (Beishuizen *et al.*, 2001:196).

Finally, a comparison of the significant differences between the students and instructors indicates once again somewhat different views between the two groups. Instructors rated six ability characteristics to be more important indicators of effective/excellent teaching than did their students. Instructors would more likely describe the excellent instructor as one who requires students to think critically, encourages students to work in small groups or in pairs, gets to know their students, and encourages students' discussion and questions. To help us identify with the environment at the time the study was conducted, the following quotes taken from the open-ended qualitative questions are presented:

In1: Someone who can get the students to question ideas/concepts –create a genuine interest in learning; someone that "pushes" the students to do their best.

In2: Student-centred learning manoeuvres that guide students to independent knowledge and skills acquisition.

In3: … engage the students in critical thinking and new ways of looking at the world & their learning who then reflects on the process & seeks ways to improve.

In4: Interact with students on a professional and personal level.

Students, on the other hand, would place more emphasis on ability descriptors of effective instructors such as being current with the latest technology and up-to-date with their subject knowledge. In addition, students would describe the effective/excellent instructor as one who has more teaching experience, and who assigns lots of tests and homework, as well as employing lecturing as a means of teaching. As it has seen in the literature review, opportunities to work in groups were also reported as a learning preference by students according to Saafin (2005), and Raymond (2001). What has not been located in the literature and is raised in this analysis as a topic for future research, especially in the selected universities where age is highly respected, is the relationship between the teaching experience of the instructor and students' ratings of the instructor's effectiveness.

Research question three: *To what extent are student perceptions of ineffective teaching similar to those of instructor?*

To answer this question, descriptive data that was collected through interviews and respondents' answers to an open-ended question of the questionnaire asking them to describe in their own words the ineffective instructor was compared. The numbers in the columns in Table 9 below indicate the number of times each verb referent statement was referred from the open-ended question (O) asking respondents to state in their own words the most striking characteristics of the ineffective/worst university instructors.

Table 9: Student and instructor perceptions of ineffective teaching extracted from interviews and open-ended question (O)

No.	Verb-referent statements	Students		Instructors	
		I	O	I	O
1	Is disrespectful of students	22	14	5	13
2	Doesn't care if students understand	10	12	15	30
3	Is boring	13	7	10	13
4	Cannot explain well	9	8	10	5
5	Is unprepared for class	3	5	7	7
6	Is unfair in grading	8	9	0	9
7	Is disrespectful of students	22	14	5	13
8	Doesn't care if students understand	10	12	15	30

From Table 9 above which condenses information extracted from interviews and Table 5 (Open-ended question), it can be observed that students' and instructors' perceptions of ineffective teaching coincide with regard to a number of attributes. Both groups describe the ineffective instructor as someone who does not demonstrate respect for his/her students, does not care, is boring, cannot explain the subject matter well, is unprepared for class and is unfair in grading students. Findings from this study indicate that most respondents do indeed hold mirror images of effective/ineffective teaching traits. Table 11 below, which compares the characteristics of effective teaching extracted from research question 2 alongside the results of the ineffective instructor revealed from the interviews and open-ended question discussion, suggest that at least to the population sampled in the selected universities, Ethiopia, there is agreement that study participants do view the two extremes as polar images of each other.

Table 10: A comparison of effective and ineffective teaching characteristics

No.	Effective instructors	Ineffective instructors
1	*Are respectful of their students*	*Are disrespectful of students*
2	*Care about students succeeding in their course*	*Don't care if students understand*
3	*Make classes interesting*	*Are boring*
4	Make difficult subjects easy to	Cannot explain well

	learn	
5	Are always well prepared and organized	Are unprepared for class
6	*Are fair in grading and evaluating student work*	*Are unfair in grading*

Note: personality measures are highlighted in *italicized* font.

The first descriptor of the ineffective instructor to emerge from Table 4.10 above is disrespectful of students. This finding is particularly interesting for three reasons. First, it represents a very close match in that it appeared with nearly the same frequency in both students' and instructor's data from the open-ended question (Table 4.5). Second, supportive evidence is provided for researcher earlier argument in favour of the mixed-methodology approach to the questionnaire instrument wherein it was claimed that unforeseen and beneficial results can often be revealed by the use of qualitative methods. Third, it was indeed an unexpected result since the researcher had not anticipated that lack of respect would be an issue raised by students in answering the open-ended question, especially where this study was conducted. The following excerpts from both student and instructor respondents appear to be representing the undercurrent of a potential problem brewing beneath the surface at the institute where this study was conducted.

*Students said: **S1**: The worst instructor is someone who is hostile towards students and always suspicious. **S2**: Ineffective university instructors enjoy humiliating students in his or her office. Instructor said: **In1**: Disrespectful of culture and intolerant of differences. In2: Being harsh and not respectful and arrogant.*

The second noteworthy characteristic of ineffective teaching as reported by both students and instructors in this study is the affective quality of caring. An uncaring instructor would most likely meet with resistance and minimal academic performance from his or her students. Excerpts from participating students' and instructors' responses to the interview question, "In your opinion, what constitutes ineffective/poor university teaching?" echo the important role "caring" plays in creating a better learning environment.

One student said: The bad instructor is not concerned about the students. Researcher: What do you mean? Student: I mean he/she can't tell when someone is distracted in class because he/she doesn't care of this guy. For me I don't usually

work hard for a instructor that doesn't care if I do my works or not ... or doesn't ask me if I have a personal problem or not. Maybe I miss my family too much and I can't concentrate because maybe I have problem adjusting to the dorms, for example. That's what I mean ... instructor who doesn't care about me is a poor instructor.

An engineering instructor said: Oh!!! To tell you the truth, I have a well developed Emotional Quotient(EQ), so for me an ineffective instructor would be someone who didn't show his/her emotional side ... who was uncaring, frigid, unfeeling, lacked compassion ... actually, it's just the opposite of what I've just answered in effective instructors. Researcher: Are you saying that the characteristics of the effective instructors are merely the opposite of the ineffective one? Instructor: Essentially, yes!

Previous research on teaching effective has established caring as an important factor in distinguishing between effective and ineffective teaching. "Is concerned with, and is friendly to ..." have been reported by other authors as an essential personality component (Saafin, 2005; Walls *et al.*, 2002; Beishuizen *et al.,* 2001; Raymond, 2001). Caring therefore appears to be an important quality of effective instructors judging from the aforementioned studies which were conducted around the globe, and from the consistency of responses from two population groups gathered in this study.

A third attribute that was used by study respondents to elucidate what differentiates an effective from an ineffective instructor is the characteristic of being boring. From the excerpts below extracted from both students and instructors, it becomes clear that an instructor's effort at making the subject come alive is an attribute the ineffective instructor either does not possess or does not attempt to cultivate. Interestingly, from the comments taken from the open-ended question, the common thread that emerged is that lecturing without involving students was used to paint a rather grim but succinct picture of the ineffective instructor. One common depiction of the ineffective instructor that surfaced throughout the interviews of students and instructors was the inability of being able to explain a complex topic simply through the use of a lot of good examples. The following excerpts from the interviews illustrate this point.

An engineering student described ineffective instructor as follows: Don't explain the lesson well or they are not explaining the problem to be solved by giving useful … uh enough examples … they can't explain the lesson in an easy way … they teach continuously regardless of whether students are understanding the material or not… I really hate this type. Further, An engineering instructor said: Ah, I know that not everyone can be a brainiac instructor, but I think the ineffective instructor does not know the subject they are teaching and they find it hard to communicate it to students in a way they understand … ya … if they don't know their subject it becomes mechanical … in a nutshell, the poor instructor teaches what he/she is not capable of teaching.

This is consistent with Brookfield's in Saafin (2005) argument discussed in the literature review, that effective teaching requires the instructor to relate new concepts to something that is familiar to students. Thus it can be concluded that unless an instructor can explain his/her topic in a meaningful manner, effective learning will be unlikely to transpire in the classroom or lecture hall. Participating students and instructors in this study described ineffective instructor as being unprepared and disorganized. The common concern deduced from the interviews from both students and instructor is that unless an instructor prepares and organizes instruction, feelings of frustration will quickly arise amongst students since learners will not have a clear sense of the priority and significance of the material being presented. This finding is consistent with the discussion on research question 1 above relative to the predominant factors emerging from this study, one of which was the effective instructor as being well organized and prepared. Similarly, the importance of instructor preparedness and organization is one of the most common features of the effective instructor identified by both instructors and students in the literature reviewed. For example, Saafin (2005) would all agree that effective instructors must be prepared and organized. If instructors fail to capitalize on this opportunity, students will rapidly lose interest and respect, causing the instructor to resort to wielding power in an autocratic manner in order to maintain classroom order.

To sum up, according to this study's respondents, ineffective instructors are: disrespectful of students, do not care, are boring, can not explain topics well, are unprepared for class and are unfair with their grading. What has resulted from examining the characteristics of ineffective instructors has

produced mirror images of six of the nine traits that were considered predominant effective teaching measure by the same sample population. Four of the six personality items and two of the three ability traits are addressed. The missing ability characteristic *encourages students' questions and discussion*, however, could arguably be considered the opposite of the second highest ineffective instructor characteristic to emerge as one who doesn't care if students understand. Similarly, the first personality trait that did not have a direct mirror image in wording (show that they really like the subject they teach) could be countered by two ineffective instructor descriptors as is only interested in money, not teaching, and, is boring. It can be observed that from the transcribed interviews of study respondents, 54% of the traits mentioned by instructor and student respondents were attributed to personality measures while the remaining 46% were categorized as ability, indicating that when verbally discussing effective teaching traits, respondents in this study slightly favoured personality traits. Of the two comparative measures, personality traits were indicated to be more dominant than ability characteristics when both instructor and student respondents described the characteristics of the effective instructor in the open-ended question (Table 2). Out of the 46 attributes which were synthesized, 71% were classified as personality characteristics while ability characteristics occupied the remaining 29% of the total characteristics extracted from the questionnaire.

Table 11: Counts of authors who mentioned a specific ability or personality characteristic in the literature review

Number of authors who mentioned this	Trait	Trait Ability (A) or Personality (P)
14	Is enthusiastic for subject/towards teaching	P
14	Is available to help students	P
13	Is concerned with, is friendly to, and respects students	P
13	Is open to students' opinions, ideas and discussion	P
11	Stimulates interest in the course/subject	P
11	Is prepared/organized	A
10	Is knowledgeable of subject	A

10	Explains using simple terms	A
10	Encourages students to think critically	A
9	Is sensitive to and concerned with class level and progress	P
9	Is fair and impartial in marking/evaluating students	P

What can be observed from Table 11 is that six of the top ten characteristics used in the literature to describe effective quality teaching in the opinions of students and instructors across many diverse cultures and of various age and status rankings are personality traits. Additionally, the first five highest ranked traits on this list are personality traits. Furthermore, in other studies concerned with teaching excellence, researchers have reported that respondents (both instructors and students) tend to focus on personality factors more prominently than on ability factors, irrespective of level, age, nationality, and academic discipline (Walls *et al.*, 2002). Consistency in the higher importance placed on personality traits arising from the questionnaire results, transcribed interviews, the open-ended questions, and in the literature has been demonstrated.

Research question four: *To what extent do mediating factors such as academic discipline and participants' gender have an effect on the portrait of the effective instructor?*

To answer this question, Chi-square test for association at the significant level (α=0.05) was used. Only items of significant association (less than 0.05) are presented in the tables that follow. Significant association can be interpreted as major disagreement on the level of importance associated amongst the two population groups as to how they rated the 25 questionnaire items on a four-point scale of not important (NI) to very important (VI). Personality and ability measures are discussed independently in what follows. Table 13 below show two significant associations resulting from Chi-square analysis of the 11 questionnaire items categorized as personality traits of excellent instructors.

Table 12: Chi-square test for association between the academic discipline and importance at significant level (α=0.05) on the personality characteristics measure

Academic Value Discipline*	Importance Level								Chi Value
	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Important		Very Important		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Sig.
. … use humor in the classroom.									
Engineering instructors	0	0.0	7	19.4	34	53.1	23	35.9	19.736
Engineering students	2	2.9	23	33.3	23	33.3	21	30.4	
. … are friendly to students.									
Engineering instructors	0	0.0	9	14.1	23	35.9	32	46.4	26.495
Engineering students	2	2.9	4	5.8	12	17.4	51	73.9	
. … are fair in grading and evaluating student work.									
Engineering instructors	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	10.9	57	89.1	19.389
Engineering students	1	1.4	7	10.1	20	29.0	41	59.4	
… have a unique teaching style.									
Engineering instructors	25	39.1	24	37.5	13	20.3	2	3.1	56.000
Engineering students	4	5.8	12	17.4	28	40.6	25	36.2	

Item 4, "*use humor in the classroom*", reveals that amongst the sample population groups, differences existed between students' and instructor's opinions on the use of humor in the classroom. Engineering instructors in particular rated this personality trait as either important or as very important. Engineering students' low rating of the use of humor in the classroom perhaps reflects their inadequacy in understanding humor conducted. In order to understand humor, a high level of the language as well as advanced cultural awareness is required; both are skills the Engineering students acquire in the intensive program. Hence, this study indicated that a tendency to utilize humor as an appropriate means to stimulate interest in students or to bring their scientific topics to life. The use

of appropriate humor in the classroom, therefore, can be interpreted from this study's findings as an indicator of effective teaching. The second personality item to result in significant association, questionnaire item 6, "*are friendly to students*" was most likely caused by two student participants who claimed that friendliness of instructor was not an important trait of effective teaching. This anomaly occurring with a small sample size in all probability skewed the results since the majority of all respondent groups and subgroups clearly indicated that being friendly to students was an important or very important trait that should be exhibited by effective instructors. Questionnaire item 20, "are fair in grading and evaluating student work" indicated a disparity between instructors and students. Table 13 below illustrates significant associations resulting from Chi-square analysis of the 14 questionnaire items categorized as ability traits of effective instructors.

Table 13: Chi-square test for association between the academic discipline and importance at significant level (α=0.05) on the ability characteristics measure

Academic Value Discipline*	Importance Level								Chi Value
	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Important		Very Important		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Sig.
… give many quizzes and tests.									
Engineering instructors	13	20.3	32	50.0	18	28.1	1	1.6	19.573
Engineering students	6	8.7	27	39.1	28	40.6	8	11.6	
… encourage students' questions and discussion.									
Engineering instructors	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	12.5	56	87.5	24.434
Engineering students	2	2.9	4	5.8	25	36.2	38	55.1	
… use the latest computer technology in their teaching.									
Engineering instructors	16	25.0	25	39.1	18	28.1	5	7.8	18.562
Engineering students	6	8.7	20	29.0	23	33.3	20	29.0	
… lecture (talk) for the entire class period.									
Engineering instructors	60	93.8	1	1.6	3	4.7	0	0.0	71.749
Engineering	15	21	26	37.7	26	37.	2	2.9	

students		.7				7		
… require students to think critically.								
Engineering instructors	0	0.0	1	1.6	21	32.8	42	65.6	22.386
Engineering students	2	2.9	8	11.6	35	50.7	24	34.8	
… have many years of teaching experience.								
Engineering instructors	22	34.4	33	51.6	8	12.5	1	1.6	28.189
Engineering students	12	17.4	26	37.7	15	21.7	16	23.2	
… assign a lot of homework.								
Engineering instructors	23	35.9	27	42.2	13	20.3	1	1.6	21.130
Engineering students	9	13.0	33	47.8	15	21.7	2	2.9	

As indicated in Table 13 above, seven (50%) of the 14 ability traits indicate a significant association. Item 3, "*give many quizzes and tests*" was considered a more important ability characteristic to student respondents than it did to the instructor respondents as we have seen earlier in this discussion. Engineering students indicated that they prefer frequent testing. One possible explanation for this could be that Engineering students are tested frequently by their instructors not only to give them practice in taking tests, but also to help them get accustomed to studying daily as opposed to cramming the night before the exam occurs. In addition, Engineering instructors tend to test their students weekly as a means to review and reinforce materials taught earlier, and to help this knowledge transfer to students' long-term memory. Item 5, "encourage students' questions and discussion", produced a similar of opinion between student and instructor respondents. Both students and instructors rated this trait as either an important or very important characteristic of effective teaching, some students on the other hand rated this trait as only somewhat important or as not important. One possible explanation for this difference could be that some classes are generally delivered in huge lecture halls with large numbers of students who become passive, note-taking learners, as opposed to other classes which are purposely restricted to smaller numbers and where students are engaged in two-way instruction as a part of their Engineering skills development. Instructors considered questionnaire item

11, the ability "*use the latest computer technology in their teaching*" to be a less important determinant of effective teaching than did students. A large number of students rated the use of computer technology much higher than did their instructors. Saafin's (2005:132) student respondents also expressed the view that the use of computer technology in teaching Engineering assisted the instructors to be more effective. He argued that students' motivation for learning was enhanced when the students were given the opportunity to "… go to the computer labs and use computers …" to learn new materials. One plausible explanation for this difference in view could be that students are more attuned to technological advancements than their instructors, see the use of computer programs as fun and entertaining, and would therefore like to see this technology being put to more use in the classrooms to help them assimilate their materials.

Engineering instructors highly agreed that it was not an indicator of effective teaching if one were to "lecture (talk) for the entire class period" (Table 13), while some students tended to rate lecturing as slightly more important. The finding that 37.7% of the Engineering students rated lecturing as important is surprising, since Engineering instructors minimize the use of lecturing techniques and instead encourage two-way communication with their students as a means of enabling students to practice what they have learned in the classroom. There are two possible explanations for this finding; either the Engineering students did not fully comprehend the question item, despite the re-designing attempts, or the students are inexperienced with this method of instruction and are anticipating with excitement entering into their majors where they believe lecturing is how higher education is conducted.

Instructors rated the ability "*require students to think critically*" (Table 13) as important or very important, though surprisingly one instructor rated thinking outside of the box as only somewhat important. Another divergence appears to be caused by students who rated this trait as not important. One explanation could be that the Engineering student did not understand the question; is it also possible that students who rated the development of critical thinking as not important were not accustomed to critiquing anything their instructors told them while attending their formative years in university. A contradiction occurred on the ratings of

item 21 (Table 13), "*have many years of teaching experience*", with no agreement on one importance level indicated. What are interesting with these results are the difference in opinion between students and instructors. Teaching experience and age appear to have a lower priority with these study participants.

Table 14 below indicates that female respondents rated the importance of making classes interesting as less important than did their male counterparts. One explanation for this could be that the female students are more engaged with their learning, which helps them to be more self-motivated than males, thus requiring less entertainment in the classroom to maintain attention to what the instructor is striving to offer them. M=143, F=90

Table 14: Chi-square test for association between the respondent gender and importance at significant level (α=0.05) on the personality characteristics measure

Academic Value Discipline*	Importance Level								Chi Value
	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Important		Very Important		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Sig.
1. … make classes interesting.									
Male	0	0.0	0	0.0	30	21.0	113	79.0	8.787
Female	2	2.2	2	2.2	33	36.7	53	58.9	.032

This differs from Donaldson and Flannery in Walls *et al.* (2002), who reported that female student respondents rated instructor's flexibility and acting as a good role model more important than did the male students while Saafin(2005:22-26) discovered "student centeredness" to be more important to the female student respondents. Moreover, Saafin "… found no significant differences between the perspectives of males and females on effective teaching". This is consistent with the study conducted by Fernandez & Mateo in Saafin's (2005) in Spain where no significant

differences between male and female students were observed. Hence, even though the present study revealed one uniquely significant difference between female and male student opinions on the trait "makes classes interesting", further research could be conducted on larger sample sizes in order to determine if differences of opinion between male and female students in the different universities.

What follows next is a summary of the findings related to the literature and to the current investigation, conclusions and recommendations arising from this research.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusions

The quality and relevance of HEIs in developing countries is influenced by complex factors that have their roots in commercialization, general funding, and human population growth. Appropriate policies and home-bred professionals (both academic and administrative), are necessary for improving the quality of HEIs in developing countries.

The current world dynamism is both a chance and a challenge to both government and private HEIs in our country. It is a chance because of the fact that the world developments and trends are heading to our country. It is a challenge because of the low or no readiness from the side of our HEIs. The dynamisms call for devising survival strategies by assuring the quality and relevance of the functions of both government and private HEIs in the country. Quality, nonetheless, is indefinable due to priority differences, perceptual shift, changes overtime, and antecedents within its origin. Regardless of these reasons, however, it has been viewed as exceptional (high standards), consistency (zero defects/errorless), value for money (return on investment, accountability/efficiency), transformative (an ongoing process that includes empowerment and enhancement of satisfaction), fitness for purpose (fitting customer specifications, needs, and priorities), fitness of purpose (what the purpose itself needs to be' for supporting the survival strategy whereby learners are transformed for the

world of life, work, and competition), and a culture (shared values) of the institution and its community.

Higher education has to constantly change and adjust to a wide variety of situations in the country, be they political, social, economic or cultural. It should not lose sight and speed and fall behind. It should not fall out of touch in relation to knowledge and the demands of the social, economic and political situations that lie outside of its walls.

Higher education is the most appropriate and, if rightly led, the prepared place to guide the future of our development. As such, it is an instrument of hope. Higher education must continue to be a centerpiece in the national capacity building, sustainable development, and poverty reduction endeavors of any government.

In Ethiopian context, the quality of private HEIs is now evaluated against the focus areas set out by the Higher Education and Relevance Agency (HERQA).There are growing trends whereby the achievements of private universities are judged against a set of Performance elements/criteria developed by the Consortium of Ethiopian Public Universities (CEPU) with a purpose to be responsive to national and international demands. This gradually leads to adopting developmental approach to quality whereby the universities as well as individuals within them are continually changing and learning as they cope up with new situations and expectations by making quality assurance the culture of all the university community and the functions of the university.

It is essential to establish autonomous bodies as mechanisms to ensure quality and relevance. Access to
ICT should be given priority to strengthen institutions' capacities, to improve the quality of teaching and learning, to develop and expand access through distance learning, to widen access, and to improve international linkages and cooperation.

We are losing our talent and highly skilled human resource, for each of whom we have paid dearly.
Therefore, we must develop mechanisms of reducing the brain drain through building local human resource development capacity and

improving living and working conditions. Dialogue on mobilizing the Diaspora for brain gain by our countries should also be pursued with vigor.

A lot is expected from higher education to pull our countries out of the extreme poverty and underdevelopment. It has a unique role to play in this respect, and has to make itself relevant to deliver as per the challenging requirements of the society and the country. There is still a long way to go and a lot of expectations to meet from this generation. It is on our shoulders and we can and shall not run away from the challenges, but face them with courage and sense of urgency. We have to nurture, develop and revitalize our higher education systems. We largely know what is required to revitalize higher education institutions and make them key actors in national development. Now it is time to take the necessary actions with vigor, determination and commitment.

Furthermore, it validates the use of classification by personality and ability as a commonly accepted method for examining effective teaching characteristics since respondents tend to categorize effective teaching using these two dimensions, and that the personality measures are the higher ranked of the two categories. Important personality traits used to describe effective teaching are the following: is *enthusiastic towards teaching the subject*, *is available to students*, *respects and is friendly to students*, is *open to students' ideas and opinions*, *stimulates interest in the topic*, is *sensitive and concerned with students' progress and is objective in evaluating students*. Predominant ability attributes used to describe effective instructors are being *well prepared and organized*, *possessing subject knowledge*, *being able to explain difficult subjects using simple terms*, and *encouraging students to think critically*.

The findings of this study support the results of previous studies on teaching effectiveness which demonstrate that many traits or practices are common, regardless of culture, age, and/or academic discipline. It also supports the literature findings of relatively high correlations between students and instructors in what they appreciate in instructors and that student opinions are of value. In other words, the participating students and instructors each appear to have an image in mind of what ideal instructors are like and how they conduct themselves and what they do both in the classroom and outside, which differentiates them from ineffective

instructors. These ideal images in most cases matched the portrait of the good instructor painted by many participating students and instructors in academic programs from many corners of the globe.

Results from research Question one which attempted to capture predominant characteristics of effective instructors have revealed that all of the predominant personality and ability measures used by this study's respondents to describe effective teaching coincide with principal characteristics revealed in the literature review. Common personality characteristics of effective teaching therefore appear to be: *demonstrating respect to students, delivering interesting classes, caring about students' welfare, exhibiting a love for the subject being taught, and being friendly to students.* Common ability attributes of effective teaching are demonstrated by educators who *encourage two-way communication with students, are organized and well-prepared, and present topics in ways that students can relate to and easily understand.*

Research Questions two and three examined the degree to which student perceptions of effective and ineffective instructors are similar to instructors' perceptions. The two questions, to be discussed jointly, were included in this study to attempt to determine if differences in opinion exist at the institute under study between instructor and student respondents in their opinions of what constitutes effective and ineffective teaching. Question three was purposely designed to assess respondents' opinions to determine if mirror images of the effective instructor were held by study respondents as well as to determine effective attributes from an alternate approach. Only two personality traits appear to have raised significant differences of opinion between the study's two population groups. Science instructors rated the use of humor in the classroom to be an essential ingredient to effective teaching while in contrast, engineering students, with less developed Engineering skills needed to interpret humor, understandably placed a low value on this quality.

On the other hand, what was important to students was that instructors should demonstrate a unique teaching style whereas instructors indicated no consensus of opinion on this personality trait. Having a unique teaching style is perhaps being expressed by new, inexperienced students who are

expecting to be entertained in the classroom or, conversely, in fact do learn more effectively from instructors who vary their instructional delivery. This leads us to the suggestion that instructors who employ a variety of methods of communication in the classroom may concurrently improve knowledge transfer and secure higher student ratings on their assessments. All instructors agreed that lecturing was not an indicator of effective teaching. Expressing the expectation of students to interact in two-way dialogue by the instructors at their university where the survey was conducted was encouraging to see, since as it has learned above, lecturing is not viewed as a favourable method of effective teaching according to both the literature results and this study's respondents. The lower rating of this trait by students is probably once again an example of students' inexperience with this manner of communication, and with their expectation or misconception that university classes are of the lecture format.

Student and instructor respondents agreed on a number of characteristics they believed distinguished the effective from the ineffective university instructor. Both students and instructors regarded the affective quality to treat learners with respect and caring as very important. Instructors' and students' perceptions also correspond with regard to making classes interesting, caring about their students' success, demonstrating a love for teaching and being friendly. In addition to the five personality characteristics listed above, three ability attributes were also stressed as being very important to all participants: encouraging students' questions, being well prepared and organized, and having a knack for making difficult subjects understandable. Thus, according to these study participants, both skills and affective factors are necessary virtues to paint a portrait of the effective university instructor. As we have seen above, all of these personality and ability factors used to describe effective/excellent teaching were highly compatible with the literature reviewed for this study.

Conversely, instructors rated as more important than students the ability to think critically, being fair in grading, encouraging students' questions and discussion, and expecting students to become independent learners. This is a potentially important finding and it is tempting to conclude that instructors' judgments of effectiveness are founded on strong pedagogical principles and the acquisition of a more global view of education learned in their

professional development programs. Critical thinking is high on Bloom's taxonomy in Saafin(2005) and awareness of this cognitive domain hierarchy is no doubt discussed in any instructor preparatory program. The development of these skills would also have been experienced by teacher trainees who have walked the path towards higher level thinking on their way to becoming instructors and independent learners. Students, especially undergraduates, on the other hand, are progressing up the higher-order levels from simple recall to being able to independently evaluate the value of ideas based on some benchmark or standard- target skills required for higher order and independent thinking in all academic disciplines. Similarly, grading students' work objectively, the researcher would argue, would be another fundamental ingredient included in teacher training programs. However, it is also possible that instructors respondents in this study place more emphasis on teaching characteristics which are included in their annual evaluations, or on those they believe are expected of them to deliver. Once again student inexperience or unfamiliarity with this concept may have caused this difference of opinion to appear.

According to this study's respondents, ineffective instructors are: *disrespectful of students, do not care, are boring, cannot explain topics well, are unprepared for class and are unfair with their grading*. What has resulted from examining the characteristics of ineffective instructors has produced mirror images of most of the traits that were considered predominant effective teaching measure by the same sample population. This finding helps to bring into question Walls *et al.*'s (2002) claim that ineffective traits are not replicas of effective ones, and also provides validation of the present study methodology, purposely designed to measure effective teaching traits using an alternative method. However, comparable to the Walls *et al.* study, the present findings also indicate that students and instructors hold similar perceptions of what characterizes an ineffective instructor. Research Question five was included in this study in an attempt to determine if mediating factors such as academic discipline and gender would impact respondents' portrait of the effective instructor. One conflict of opinion occurred between students and instructors in their opinions of the value of teaching experience and age of the instructors. Students ranked this ability trait much higher than did instructors, suggesting that cultural values may still play an important part in the instructor-student relationship. Finally, a gender difference appeared over the issue of valuing instructors who

demonstrate the ability to make classes interesting: female respondents did not view this to be as important as did their male counterparts.

Finally, the findings of this study conducted in the selective universities, are consistent with past research conducted not only in a similar setting, but also with research conducted at various locations around the globe. Findings support a widespread view that certain personality and ability traits are critical to effective teaching. Both personality and ability characteristics are used by respondents in describing effective and ineffective teaching, with personality traits appearing to be the more important of the two. In addition, a high degree of concurrence exists between what both instructors and students consider to be effective teaching. Most instructor respondents appear to be aware of their students' expectations of requisite ingredients for teaching effectiveness/excellence. Furthermore, it is clear those students from different disciplines use similar measuring criteria to evaluate their instructors, and that these criteria, as mentioned above, are consistent with those used by their instructors. Some evidence has also been uncovered to support the view that ineffective teaching is the mirror image of effective teaching.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- There is need to regularly renew and design the curriculum to make it more practical and market oriented to produce skilled and highly educated graduates for the private sector both at home and abroad instead of traditional civil services.
- As the same time there is need for HEIs to be flexible in the modes of delivery from the traditional full time day programmes to embrace increasingly popular evening programmes, weekend arrangements and online and open distance learning programmes.
- There should be effective supervision of all institutional services and facilities: the teaching-learning process, water and power supply, handling power supply, handling of results and other records. Create more teaching space and recruit more staff so that students are put in small manageable groups.

- The universities should come up with alternative ways of delivering services: Overhaul the entire system and have computerized and well– monitored structures and system of students' personal information, fees payments, examination results and registration. Examination records should be communicated to individuals by internet instead of pinning them up on notice boards.

- Orientation should be more meaningful and not a mere one-week process. Also, payment of fees, registration, and issuance of receipts and other documents should be using modern facilities such as electronic money transfers.

- Revise remunerations for teaching and other staff so that they can give valuable and friendly services, and hold regular seminars on student welfare for university staff in order to improve their services.

- There is need for research to influence policy on HEIs. There is also need to translate research into practice in the role of higher education for social transformation.

- Mandatory counseling should be encouraged to help students cope with the social, academic and bureaucratic challenges.

Specifically, the results of the study made so far imply the need for:

- Adopting a dynamic conception of quality and relevance whereby the priorities of all stakeholders are addressed, the developmental approach has become a culture of each and every member of the university community;

- Recapitulating the current trends, the why, movements, and processes of quality and relevance responsive to national development endeavors of Ethiopia;

- Revitalizing the quantitative targets within the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) in line with the quality dimensions, relevant, rationales and forces;

- Adapting developmental culture of continuous improvement, and university-wide quality management involving all stakeholders, among others by situating and embedding quality assurance structure within and/or near the academic units (colleges/faculties/ colleges/schools/centers/departments); and

- Appreciating the direct, bidirectional and strong bond between quality education and economic development in private HEIs.

Finally, results of this study could be used in students and instructors induction programs understand what is expected of them, the interconnectedness, interdependence, and incremental roles of the issues cited above for producing- knowledgeable, skillful, enlightened, inspired and innovative

citizens in line with the demands of the emerging economy and the industry.

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