

Models of Higher Education Governance: Rethinking the Ethiopian Experience

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Abstract: *The conceptualization and role of higher education has evolved over the years depending on the philosophies of the times and other social demand imperatives. The Ethiopian higher education governance model in the last six decades could be described as the state centered model. HEIs lack the financial, personnel and substantive autonomy. Regardless of change in regimes, it did not show any significant changes to respond to changes in social demands and the governments' own strategic goals. Despite its contributions to socio-political change of the nation, where HE students are credited for propelling the transition from a long held feudal system, HEs contribution to economic and social growth of the nation has been stifled. This could be attributed to the governance model the sub sector followed in its entire history. There has been rapid expansion of the sub sector in the last two decades and a half, but relevance, quality, and outcome of the sub sector are being questioned given the deficit skill set and mounting unemployment rate of the graduates. All these factors call for a significant structural change in the governance of the sub-sector. The governance of Ethiopian higher education institutions should evolve commensurate to the emerging mission and social demand for higher education by reconsidering the current relationship of the state, the HE institutions and the market.*

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Introduction

The conceptualization and role of higher education has evolved over the years depending on the philosophies of the times and other social demand imperatives. In the late middle ages (1150-1500), the period was characterized by the rise of mercantilism, accelerated urbanization, expansion of the middle class and bureaucratization. These social developments called a need for trained professionals and hence HEIs organized themselves as free private enterprises that served as professional teaching institutions. The early modern era (1500-1800) was characterized by the rise of independent nation states, which forced the universities to own a socio-political role to the extent of being an ideological branch of the government (Scott, 2006 as cited in Davidovitchandram, 2015). The year of 1810 witnessed the establishment of the Berlin University by Wilhelm von Humboldt. This witnessed the gradual erosion of the socio-political role of the universities starting a shift towards a creation of “public institutions that were both financed by public funds and protected from this same public and thus free to act according to their own standards” (Davidovitchandram, 2015, p.19). The emergence of capitalism came up with a strong market ideology seriously questioning the public nature and freedom of higher institutions thereby ensuing public supervision and regulation (Amaral, 2009). This period was characterized by the rapid rise in the number of students and the transformation of higher education into a mass commodity, which led to the quest for new models of governance that ensure order and efficiency in the academic world (McLendon, Deaton and Hearn 2007). Hence, governance of higher education institutions have evolved commensurate to the societal orientation on the mission of universities and ensuing relationship of the institutions with the state and the market.

This paper presents a discussion on the description of the model of governance of the Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions using a conceptual framework from a global literature and literature on the

governance evolution of the EHIs. The conceptual model adopted here helped to look into the state of HEIs through Dobbins, Knill and Vögtle's, (2011) model of internal governance indicators: financial, human and substantive autonomy of the institutions Vis-a-vis the three models of governance: the state control, the self-rule and the market models. Finally, it tried to determine the dominant governance model in the Ethiopian HEIs and comprehend its impact on the achievement of the government articulated goals of access, relevance, quality, and outcome.

Problem articulation

The above mentioned progression of socio-economic and political roles and place of higher institutions in society brought competing models of HE governance that followed the thought paradigms and existing country ideologies, size of economies and history of countries (Davidovitchandram, 2015; Enders, 2004). Even within single country instances, thought diversity has been witnessed and ensuing HE governance models of mixed nature are becoming the norm. Majority of the debates on governance models revolves around defining the role of higher education in society, which transpires to the level of accountability, and/or autonomy HEIs should garner while receiving public funding.

Despite its existence as an institution for a "significant" period and its robust contribution to socio-political changes in the country, HE governance in Ethiopia seemed static in one model that has not shown significant dynamism and variation. As a result, major government goals of the sub-sector -access, relevance, quality, and outcome (ESDP V) - have become problematic to achieve. Hence understanding the dynamics of higher education governance and its ensuing impacts on the goals of HE set by the government is of urgent and paramount importance.

This study described globally prominent models of higher education governance and briefly stated the Ethiopian experience so far. It discussed the overall impact of the model looking into the major policy objectives of higher education in the country. Given the current and future trends of dynamics of student enrollment, efficiency and relevance of the skill set for the graduates with regard to the economy, the study discussed if a change in the current HE governance would be imperative.

The research questions

- Which model of governance the Ethiopian Public HE institutions are dominantly exercising?
- How fit has this model been in realizing the overarching policy objectives of higher education of the nation (access, relevance, quality, and outcome)?

Research Methodology

This study predominantly used literature review and document analysis (Higher education proclamations, university establishment documents, and legislations of selected universities). Hence, a comparative analysis of the global models with the Ethiopian experience was made and finally a determination was made on the dominantly experienced model of governance and if a change is warranted, given the current dynamism of the HE landscape of the nation.

The Conceptual Framework

Conceptualizing Higher Education Governance

Different scholars have conceptualized HE governance differently. DavidovitchandIram, (2015, p.17-18) describe HE governance as "... the legal appropriation of decision making power within universities between the various governance structures (faculty, academic committees, senates, and boards) and administrative structures (departments, programs, presidents, and vice presidents)." They further expand the definition by citing Corcoran (2004) who says that governance refers to the division of responsibility and accountability with regard to the authority to reach decisions. The authors distinguish between internal and external governance, where internal governance refers to management on the micro level such as decision-making processes, funding, filling positions, and the limits of authority and external governance, which refers to issues of relationship with stakeholders like rules and regulations, sources of funding, and quality assessments.

Dobbins, Knill and Vögtle (2011) relate their definition of HE governance with patterns of control, coordination and the allocation of autonomy between the state, professoriate, and university management—referring to the Humboldtian, Napoleonic and British traditions of HE prevalent in Europe. In their discussions, they emphasize organizational structure of universities, the state's regulatory approach, and relations between universities, external stakeholders, and society. The authors further breakdown these issues of autonomy into financial autonomy, personnel autonomy and substantive autonomy.

By financial governance autonomy, the authors refer to the liberty of HE institutions with regard to procurement, allocation, and management of funds. Personnel autonomy relates to the ability of institutions to set freely conditions for staff, e.g. appointments, salaries, and even work hours, and the role and status of rectors and/or university leadership.

The substantive autonomy refers to the right of institutions to make decisions on institutional goals, programs, the research profile and curriculum including the freedom to review and eliminate academic programs and control institutional and research activities (Dobbins, Knill and Vögtle, 2011).

Eagleton-Pierce (2014), as cited in Wilkins and Olmedo (in press p.15) discusses the fluctuation of the concept governance between hierarchical ordering (long tied to state rule) and the modern appeal to horizontal networking. Wilkins and Olmedo (in press p.15) further describe governance as a concept that is more than a doctrine on how to cope with complexity and respond to problems. It is also more of a discourse or normative description of 'what works' to achieving specific outcomes. Hence, they regard education governance as unfinished and incomplete to comprehend and define due to its overt political construction and evolving dynamics.

This study focuses more on the relationship of Ethiopian HE institutions with the state and the market than dwelling on the internal governance affairs. It adapts the conceptualization made by Dobbins, Knill and Vögtle, (2011) of financial, personnel, and substantive autonomy institutions have as a conceptual frame to zoom into the governance practices of Ethiopian HE institutions vis-à-vis the government and the market and look into the impact of this relationship in light of the major HE goals of the country - access, relevance, quality and outcome (ESDP V).

Models of Higher Education Governance

Higher education sector has gone through various changes including changes in governmental policy, increased or decreased institutional autonomy, marketization, demands for accountability, deregulation, increased involvement of external stakeholders and internationalization (van Vught and de Boer, 2015; Enders, 2004; Gornitzka and Maassen, 2017). Those changes demanded institutional responsiveness,

efficiency, and effectiveness and called for new models of university governance (Keczer, 2012). Hence, the HE sub-sector is moving towards a new system of governance where the power of markets and the state are combined in new ways (OECD, 2003).

Scholars in the field have grappled to grasp the dynamism of change in HE governance. A seminal work by Clark (1983) established a foundation for many studies of higher education governance. Clark models three actors: a state-control model, a Humboldtian model of academic self-rule, and an Anglo-American market-oriented model. Clark underlines that the interaction among these three determines HE governance (Jongbloed, 2003 as cited in GebremeskelandFeleke, 2016). Following Clark's seminal work, various scholars have tried to explain the interplay of HE governance of nations and bigger conglomerations like continental European university governance. For instance, Kogan, *et al.* (2006) as cited in GebremeskelandFeleke, 2016) describe the continental European model as state-centered model, the US HE system as market-oriented model, and the British HE governance as more of a collegial model dominated by the academic elite rather than by the state or the market.

Van Vught (1989) discusses the "state control" models and "state supervising" models of governance. In the latter, the state's role is not playing a guardian and designer of higher education systems; it is rather acting as a "referee", "mediator", and "activator" of the system.

Other scholars have dwelt on the diversity of governance patterns. Braun (2001) as cited in Dobbins, Knill, and Voigtel (2011) discussed the model of corporate governance. He emphasized the entrepreneurial and strategic planning efforts of HE institutions. Braun and Merrien (1999) asserted that New Managerialism characterized by decentralization, institutional autonomy, cooperation with the private sector, institutional evaluation, continuous learning, and performance contracts, has emerged as a key principle for steering the HE systems.

In general, though the concepts have been developed and refined, the work of Clark that stated the role of the three actors as determinants of HE governance is less challenged, and will be used here as a framework of understanding.

i) The state centered model

Under this model, the HE institutions are perceived as public institutions operated by the state with the aim of meeting national goals (pre-determined economic, social, and political objectives). Decision-making is centralized and 'top down'. Steering is by hierarchy. Autonomy of organizations (if any) is based on the idea that government is overloaded and that technical decisions can, therefore, be left to the social institutions and organizations themselves. Change in higher education follows changes in the political leadership either via elections or via changes in political coalitions (Gornitzka, Masseur, and de Boer 2017).

Teaching and research are perceived as HE products contributing to the states' trade, industry, and technological capabilities and the society at large. The state has firm control over many issues like admission terms, conditions of candidacy, examinations, and curricula. The state interference and supervision is high including internal affairs like quality assurance, efficiency, and relationship with the business. The state is the solo or big contributor of finance and has a big control over allocation and utilization. Academic officers are appointed than elected (with some variations) and HE institutions have similar structure, uniform legislation and nationwide standards (Davidovitchandram, 2015; Dobbins, KnillandVögtle, 2011).

The government regulates (no need for punctuation) all critical issues including "institutional missions (mandates), access, curricula, degrees, staff appointments, employment conditions; owns physical assets; and prescribes in detail how public funds are to be spent (line item budgeting)" (van Vught, and de Boer, 2015, p.71). In general, the state

acts as regulator (legislative power), principal financier and, direct producer and manager of university institutions (Agasisti, and Catalano 2006). Countries like France, Sweden, Turkey and Russia follow the state centered model (Davidovitch and Iram, 2015; Dobbins, Knill and Vögtle, 2011).

Proponents of the model describe justifications for state centered model of governance and state interference. They state that education has positive externalities to the greater public, beyond individual benefits of the student. Research conducted in universities is mainly a public good where society is a major recipient of its results like lower crime, better health and higher productive workforce leading to lower social costs and greater tax revenues (Salerno, 2004). Others argue that 'failures of the market' may lead to an underinvestment in education (Hansmann, 1999 as cited in Agasisti, and Catalano, 2006). Information asymmetry at the education production (where parents and students have less information on the quality and value of education) and later at the labor market undermines the market model and justifies public intervention (Propper, 1993, as cited in Agasisti and Catalano, 2006).

ii) The Self-rule model

The self-rule model found its pedigree on Humboldt's principle of *Lern- und Lehrfreiheit*- freedom of teaching and learning (Commager, 1963). Under this model, HE institutions are perceived as public institutions but are not there to meet public goals; rather university education is a goal in and of itself (Oslen, 2007 as cited in Davidovitch, and Iram, 2015). Research and teaching have their own intrinsic value that is not necessarily compatible with national, public, or social interests. The academia receives budgeting from the state without being subjected to serious regulatory measures. The academia has control over admission terms, conditions of candidacy, examinations, and curricula. State interference is low in all affairs including internal affairs like quality assurance, efficiency, and relationship with the business. The

state is a big contributor of finance but has no control over allocation and utilization; the professoriate does. Academic officers are elected (Davidovitch, and Iram, 2015; Dobbins, Knill and Voigtel 2011). Change of higher education is through historical process and is evolutionary rather than a result of “reforms” (Gornitzka 1999, p.25). There is no institutional coordination between the universities’ strategies and political or industrial goals. Higher education is conducted with no plans for human resources.

Compared with state-authority models, this understanding of HE is marked by the lack of institutional coordination between university strategies and industrial and/or political goals. In other words, there is a lack of anything resembling work force plans, which would streamline socio-economic needs into academic activities and student placement. Instead, the purest and indeed utopian version of the Humboldt model is founded upon free scholarly enquiry and the inseparable link between research and teaching. Hence, the self-perception of the university is tantamount to the shared commitment to the search for truth through intellectual freedom—regardless of the utility, applicability, economic benefit or political convenience of scientific results (Olsen 2007 as cited in Dobbins, Knill, and Voigtel, 2011)

iii) The market model

Under this model HE institutions are perceived as institutions of the market that sell commodities to individuals and society. Contrary to the state centered model, HE institutions do not share predetermined public goals or objectives of the state; neither does education constitute public good. Contrary to the self-rule model, university education is not perceived as a goal in and of itself. Instead, the university is perceived as a commodity, an investment, and a strategic

resource, and hence HE institutions should be governed by market policies.

Jongbloed (2003: 113)(style not correct),as cited in Dobbins,KnillandVo"gtle(2011),describes marketstation as instrument that enhances "student choice and liberalizing markets in order to increase quality and variety of services offered." In the market model, universities compete for students and financial resources. University management as a producer and entrepreneur is the core feature of the university and the forces of competition helps institutions adapt to new constraints and opportunities (Dobbins, Knill, andVo"gtle 2011).

The government does not design and plan the system of higher education; it rather promotes competition and increases quality assurance and transparency in academic institutions(Ferlieet *al.* 2009).Institutional recognition and quality control is out of the state - it is believed that the private sector and non-profit organizations do it better. The role of the state is to serve as the "bookkeeper of the great necessities," making sure that the market runs smoothly (Gornitzka, 1999, p.27). There is little government interference other than encouraging competition and high standards in the form of incentives. Finance is private-from tuition and third party income(Davidovitch, andIram, 2015; Dobbins, Knill, andVo"gtle, 2011).

The major arguments for the Market model revolve aroundimproving productive efficiency, securing more private resources, giving attention to students and improving the quality of teaching and research activities (Jongbloed, 2003 as cited in AgasistiandCatalano, 2006). Other scholars give it an economic perspective and state that education is not a public good; rather, it is a private good for the following reasons:

University education has many characteristics typical of private goods. It is a rival in consumption since the production of additional units cannot be obtained at zero cost (One may think of technical limitations like spaces in classrooms, number of tenured teachers, etc.). Education is also an excludable good: student number can be limited by selection criteria and prices (tuition fees). Lastly, university education produces substantial private benefits in terms of higher income and social status for graduates over non-graduates." (Agasistiand Catalano, 2006, p. 247).

Looking into the three market models, HE institutions in the state-centered model do not have the financial, personnel and substantive autonomy; all the three are under the control and supervision of the state. In the self-rule model HEIs clearly have the personnel and substantive autonomy while there is some supervision on the financial one. In the market model, HEIs enjoy all the three autonomies.

Are quasi-publics, the new normal in HE governance?

All the three models, despite sound justifications, have entertained significant criticisms. Consequently, the emerging landscape of HE governance seems to be some sort of a mixture of the three. The state intervention is disparaged for inefficiency caused by extended bureaucracy; its inability to run a complex system such as higher education, and the influence of interested groups aka 'regulative capture' (Bartlett and Le Grand, 1993). The self-rule model is criticized for its "... deterioration of teaching, mass bureaucratization, and mistrust between the state, universities, and society" (Dobbins, Knill, Voigtel, 2011, p.672). The market model on its part is criticized for its cherry picking of the able students (both financially and academically able) limiting access to mass and limiting access to less profitable programs there by affecting public welfare (Agasisti and Catalano 2006). The model is also susceptible to

special interests as it responds to dual accountability towards the state sector and market demands. Without public intervention the market "...suffers from problems related to information asymmetry ... students' choices would be, at least partly, driven by their financial availability impacting on equity and efficiency"(Dobbins, KnillandVo"gtle, 2011,p.672-673).

Consequently many countries have been re-considering the governance models of their higher education systems as part of a wider public administration modernization process (New Public Management, NPM) aimed at improving the efficiency of the public sector and focusing on the quality of the services (Hood,1995). NPM assumes that private techniques improve performance in public higher institutions (BrouckerandDe Wit, 2015).The role of government in HE governance is changing from production and control to supervision and regulation.Governance models that mix features of the three models are becoming the norm. These models are characterized by a mixture of state regulation, autonomy of institutions and market orientations (AgasistiandCatalano, 2006).

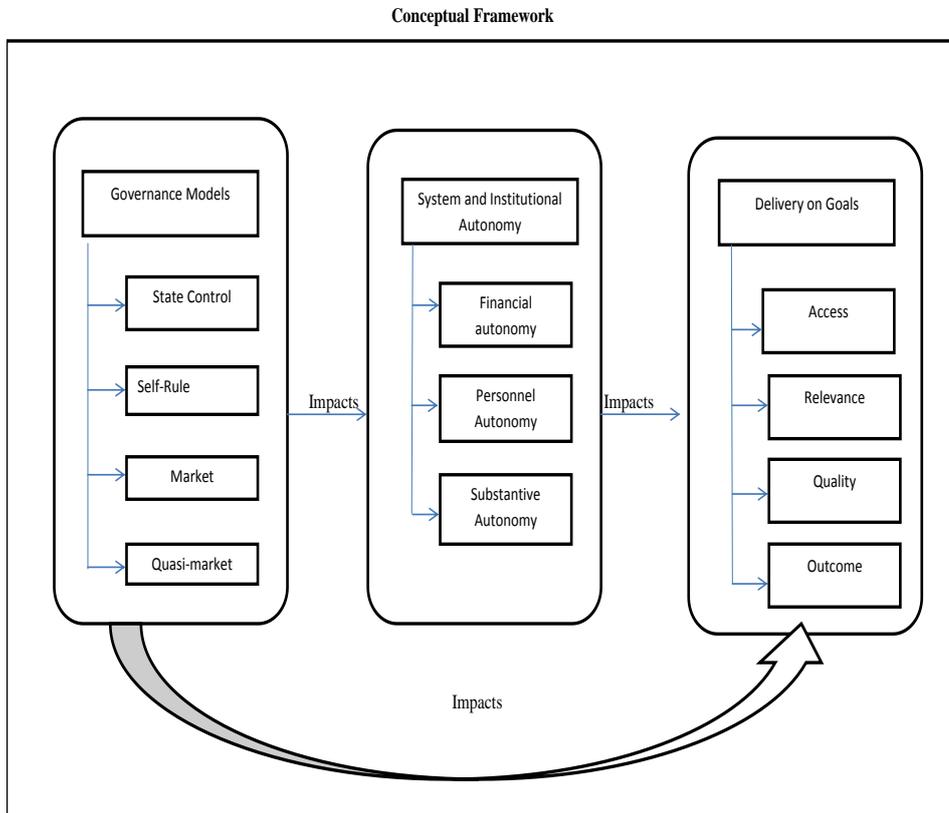


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

To sum up, the conceptual model adopted here presents the fact that governance models countries follow influence autonomy of HEIs (financial, personnel and substantive autonomies). Likewise, autonomies of institutions affect their capabilities to achieve their organizational goals; in the Ethiopian case, those goals are articulated as access, relevance, quality, and outcome.

The Ethiopian experience of HEIs' relationship with the state and the market

The first HE in Ethiopia was the AAU established in 1950 (Anteneh, 2016). During the imperial period, there was a centralized government steering (MoE, 2005). HE in Ethiopia was characterized by all the phenomenon of the state-centered model of governance. Design, production, finance, and evaluation of HE were solely occupied by the state. There was little coherence between the HE and the labor market. Nor did the market have any influence either in absorbing the HE graduates or influencing the curricula, resulting in dynamism and relevance (Girma, 1973 as cited in GebremeskelandFeleke, 2016)

HE governance under the military or 'Derg' regime showed no significant difference from the imperial state-centered model. Design, production, finance, and evaluation of HE continued to be under strict state control. The professoriate was, in fact, considered as an enemy rather than a partner in policymaking and governance (World Bank, 2003). Academic leadership was through appointment, usually through political affiliation than merit. State interference was high in all aspects (GebremeskelandFeleke, 2016). In so doing, the regime contributed to the de-professionalizing of teaching in the sector (Semela, 2014). Given the socialist orientation of the regime, the market and marketization were out of sight in HE sector. The command system the regime advocated clamped down all previous efforts in the education sector, and particularly so in the higher education sub-sector.

HE governance under the current regime (1991-todate) continued the legacy of the state-centered model. Despite some variations from its predecessor in introducing quasi-market reforms like cost sharing and allowing income generating activities in public HE institutions, the dominant model remained solidly state-centered. HE, both public and private, is perceived as a tool to meet government national goals (HE Proclamation, 2009). The government allowed Private HE there by recognizing the role and stake of the private, for non-profit and other

stakeholders (HE proclamation, 2009). Such policy flexibility has heralded emerging responsiveness of HE to community and economic imperatives - creating better choice and access to mass education and to diverse programs. However, the public HE, still remains under strong control of the state for its design, production, finance and evaluation. Academic officers are appointed, in fact, based on their affiliation to the local government and politics (Anteneh, 2016). The involvement of the professoriate in policy and governance can be categorized as low, and even more leaning towards sidestepping, indifference, and at times a critique of the government (Kedir, 2009 as cited in Gebremeskeland Feleke, 2016).

Concluding Remarks

Propelled by the ideology of social inclusion, distributive justice and poverty reduction rationales (Semela, 2011), Ethiopian higher education has mushroomed in the last quarter of the century. It has registered a remarkable growth and expansion in the last 25 years compared to its entire history since the establishment of College of Addis Ababa, the first HE institution, in 1950 (Saint, 2004). Until the 1990s, when the current government took power, there have been only two universities and some colleges in the country (Anteneh, 2016). Currently there are more than 45 public universities and hundreds of colleges and TVET institutions.

It is difficult, at its current state, to discern if the Ethiopian public HE system is an eclectic one in a coherent model or a salad of differing models. Market-oriented language and structure dominate the organograms of state-controlled universities (like corporate communication, process owner for president, university-industry linkage, different enterprises ...). Interestingly, the presidents are appointed rather than elected and their association with political leaders and affiliation with local politics is more important than merit (Anteneh, 2016). Institutions are almost fully state-financed and are under direct control and supervision of the state.

The HE proclamation (2009) and all ESDPs clearly mandate the universities to serve the development agenda of the nation within the framework of national human resource planning aligned with the national socio-economic goals (like the GTP). In actual practice, however, program opening, closing and monitoring has long been left to the faculty - with minimal intervention of the state - despite a recent circular that nominally centralized program opening and closure.

Despite the above contradictions, however, the dominant higher education model in Ethiopia has been the state-centered one. The higher education system had been a closed system, characterized as 'out of touch' with the country's socio-economic environment (Behailu, 2011, P.14). In all the three eras discussed, the academic oligarchy has had a negligible role in shaping the HE governance (Gebremeskel and Feleke, 2016). The same applies to the private sector though it is recently having a growing role.

Assessing the institutions through the framework used by Dobbins, Knill, and Voigtel, (2011), one can say that the Ethiopian public HEIs do not have the financial, personnel, and substantive autonomy - hence state-centered. This phenomenon has had a myriad of impacts on the access, relevance, quality, and outcome of the sector.

With regard to access, the country had two universities enrolling insignificant percentage of the age cohorts in the previous two regimes. The sector had been constrained by various governance and political issues during those regimes as discussed above. Currently there are more than 45 public universities and the private sector boasts its presence with 98 institutions (ESDP V). According to ESDP V document, the country enrolled 9.4% at the end of ESDP IV and targeted to enroll 15% by the end of ESDP V. This was the period when HEIs saw their golden years in terms of expansion. These figures show a big leap from the previous regimes that ruled the country for more than double the time of the current regime, and even from the African average of 6% (AAI, 2015) though it obviously falls way short of

the world average of 26% (AAI, 2015). Access, though constrained in the previous regimes, seems to have an encouraging attention in the current government.

With regard to relevance, the previous two regimes had almost adopted the curriculum of the West as was the case during the imperial period (Balsvik, 1979 as cited in Kebede, 2006) and a Marxist-Leninist curriculum from the socialist bloc ("block" should be the word) during the military regime (Semela, 2011). The current regime has made significant efforts to localize the curriculum by delegating development and implementation of curriculum to HEIs and by involving local professionals (HE proclamation, 2009). Higher institutions can initiate programs, draft their curriculum, and deliberate on it through in-house and national workshops where they have the opportunity to consult local and international expertise. This has been more flexible compared to what was practiced during the previous regimes, but it has not been fully free given the fact that programs are required to align with national goals and recently, the government has centralized program opening to align programs with national development plans and the labor market. Interestingly, there still is a growing perception that graduates from universities are unemployable and lack the requisite knowledge, skill and attitude for the labor market (Anteneh, 2016). Hence, relevance is at stake. The long-standing government-centered model does not seem to serve relevance in all the three regimes possibly requiring an alternative model of governance.

Of all issues, quality has been a major challenge that brought public uproar and the current government has repeatedly admitted the problem. The government has introduced various quality assurance reforms to remedy it. Interestingly, there is little pronounced improvement. Scholars provide a range of explanations for the "decline" of HE quality. Some attribute it to the role of the academic oligarchy in which marginalization in all regimes has brought about paralysis of the HE governance and the ensuing loss of quality. The academic community has developed a tendency of taking matters into its own

hands that there are subtle mechanisms of scuttling the reform agendas of the government (Teshome, 2003); whereby the faculty fulfills (at times does not even do it) the duties superficially and yet does not perform up to the expectations of its contractual terms, thereby wrecking the government agenda but also eroding the public trust of the HE institutions.

The government has put quality control and supervision structures (like the quality and institutional transformation offices) in and out of the HE institutions (like HERQA). However, their impact is little felt. Quality has become a daunting task that unless a significant change is sought in the governance of the sub-sector, mild reforms would not deliver anymore.

The HE outcome is usually associated with employment rate of graduates. Though it could be stated that graduate employment varies over disciplines, say medicine vs. engineering, where the former is more attractive than the latter, overall graduate employment has become a concern for the government and the society. It is ironic that the government articulates the economy is forecasted to absorb more science-based graduates (hence the 70/30 policy), and yet the economy did not enlarge itself to hire the produced engineers and other natural science graduates. Many attribute the burden of the unemployment rate to poor preparation of graduates and unmatched areas of training with the labor market. Regardless of the reasons though, unemployment of graduate students is high and has not improved since 1991. It stood at 5.4% in 2017 as compared to 5.5% in 1991 (World Bank, 2017) justifying a paradigm shift in the governance model.

In conclusion, we can state that the higher education governance model that the country has followed in the last six decades could be described as the state-centered model. HEIs lack the financial, personnel and substantive autonomy. The governance model did not show any significant changes to respond to changes in social demands

and the government's own strategic goals. Despite its contributions to socio-political change of the nation, where HE students are credited for propelling the transition from a long held feudal system, its contribution to economic and social growth of the nation has been stifled. This could be attributed to the governance model the sub sector followed in its entire history. There has been rapid expansion of the sub-sector in the last two and a half decades but relevance, quality, and outcome of the sub sector are being questioned given the mounting unemployment rate of graduates. These all factors call for a significant structural change in the governance of the sub-sector. After all, the governance of higher education institutions should evolve commensurate to the societal orientation on the mission of universities and ensuing relationship of the institutions with the state and the market.

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