

Institutional Capacity and Preparedness to Current Higher Education Trends, KCTE Trajectory Discourse

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Abstract. This paper analyzes the long tradition and present capacity of Kotebe College of Teacher Education in terms of both human and material infrastructure. This is done in light of current legal provisions of Ethiopia and elsewhere. Following this lived experience in the area of teacher education, legislative provisions, and geographical situatedness, it is argued that the College can better contribute to access and quality education to Addis Ababa City and to that of the country as a whole. To that end, data on its capacity and preparedness were garnered from documents, stakeholders, and professionals. The data leads to a concluding remark that given its capacity, tradition, legislative provisions, access demanded, and observed experiences, the College be elevated to a university of some sort-State or City State University of Addis Ababa.

Key terms: *Kotebe College of Teacher Education, capacity, preparedness, trajectory discourse.*

Background

Ethiopia, a country of rampant and chronic poverty and inequity, strives to elevate itself to middle level income in less than a decade. More often than not, realizing development objectives and ensuring sustainable development depends on quality (teacher) education that can produce professionals and leaders of today and tomorrow. To this end, teacher education institutions committed not only to traditional teaching, research, and community service but also to policy research and advice are of paramount importance. Kotebe

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College of Teacher Education (KCTE) emerges as a better option to this end, I argue. KCTE, established in 1959 to its present purpose, has been one among those few colleges (e.g., Bahir Dar Teachers College, Awassa College of Agriculture, Jimma College of Health Sciences, all these and others elevated to university). KCTE remained so till to date. The degree level training programs once exercised were discontinued for a reason neither so clear nor debated among stakeholders. Neither was this event followed by research attention. This has not been without debates of some sort. Taken together, though no documents on academic discourse, it has been debated at public and policy levels to the knowledge of this researcher. This initiated the research.

Its half a century old established tradition, and accumulated and lived experiences in the area of teacher education at all levels, its better qualified staff and facilities, its situatedness in the capital, organizational structure, to mention just a few, provoke discussion for its upgrading (at least restoring the earlier programs) and efficient utilization of existing resources. Though unreserved effort has been made in this line, the College could not promote itself to its capacity to a better and of its level service in its own terms. In fact, affiliating itself to Bahir Dar University, the College offers training at Bachelors' degree level. It established and recognized traditions especially in teacher education, capacity and readiness to better serve the public to its fullest potential, and the avenues to a university status in light of current higher education proclamation (No. 650/2009) are discoursed. This article reflects this trajectory discourse.

Purpose

Owing to the above background, five major purposes are pertinent. (1) What is the actual capacity (both human and resource) of KCTE in light of national higher education policy and practice? (2) How much is the College prepared in human, material and programs to respond to current demands of the City Government of Addis Ababa and the country? (3) How is the College viewed by stakeholders such as the public, students, professionals, alumni, and

staff? (4) With its unique programs in the country, where should the college head to in order to better contribute to quality education with maximum utilization of its resources and complementary programs? (5) On top of all, it would open for further discussion, deliberation and research by the academia.

Research Design and Methodology

Mixed research design (QUAL-quan model) has been employed, and data garnered from both primary and secondary sources. Interviews, document analysis, and observations were data tools. To elaborate, guided interview was held with education professionals, ex- and present staff of the College and officials of Bahir Dar University. The interview data focused on the capacity and preparedness of the College in terms of human, material resources and traditions in the field of teacher education. These included the capacity and preparedness of academic staff in curriculum and teaching matters, student admission and progression, governance structure, leadership and stakeholder participation, to mention but a few. The data was also sought about the facilities as compared to other universities and/or colleges operating in the country.

Documents of particular interest included legislative ones in Ethiopia and elsewhere. These, among others, include The Ethiopian Constitution (1995), Addis Negari Gazeta of the Addis Ababa City Government (Regulations No. 12/1998), Higher Education Proclamation (No. 650/2009), Legislation of the College (2007); pamphlets, and other relevant and accessible ones. National policy documents indicate strategic direction set centrally, Regional Government documents with the establishment, and duties and responsibilities of the College while the Colleges' documents indicate the vision, strategic plans, current state of the College, and lived experiences and observed achievements. Other materials reviewed dealt with theoretical and empirical issues. Since the issue raised in this research is neither researched nor debated in context, literature elsewhere helped to draw a parallel in context.

As indicated above, a guided interview was held with senior academic staff. These include one senior academic staff who served the College at various capacities including deanship. Interviews were also held with one senior staff who left the College with an academic rank of assistant professor, and two officials with academic rank of associate professor from Bahir Dar (i.e., the affiliating) University. The interviews were conducted individually at the convenience of respective interviewees. With the consent of each interviewee, data was tape recorded, note taken, and later transcribed. It took an average of an hour. All data were subject to descriptive analysis on thematic basis. All instruments were prepared in English by the researcher and pilot tested for their reliability and clarity. They were pilot tested taking colleagues who are thoughtful, critical and similar to intended research participants.

Data Analysis, Discussion and Conclusion

With the above background and methodological underpinning, I make analysis and discussion of state of higher education in the country in general and that of KCTE in particular. Legislative provisions, current status, and controversies will be presented. This will be followed by the trajectory discourse. All discussion, status in terms of staff profile, facilities, academic programs, student matters, research and publications, and lived experiences of the researcher mirrored in line with legislative provisions heed to conclusion.

Traditional higher education in Ethiopia spans over 1700 years (Saint, 2003), as old as 4th Century Aksumite Christianity Kingdom. Modern higher education, inbreed of the traditional heritages is, however, the reality of the second half of the 20th century. The establishment of University College of Addis Ababa in 1950, later renamed Haile Sellasie I University, now called Addis Ababa University, is the landmark. Because higher education has been in slow growth, there were only two universities (Addis Ababa and Haromaya) and few colleges (e.g., Arba Minch Water Technology, Awassa

College of Agriculture, Bahir Dar Teachers' College, Jimma College of Agriculture, and KCTE).

Among the three regimes¹ owing to modern higher education, the current government has significantly embarked on the expansion of the sector with the cardinal principle of equitable regional distribution. This happens so in order to produce qualified manpower for the labor market, and to realize the rapid development intentions of the country. Qualified manpower has to be produced and made available. To that end, both public and private² institutions of higher education, flourishing today, play irreplaceable role. If public universities are taken as a case in point, 22 universities have become operational up until previous academic year and nine more this academic year (2012/2013 academic year). These universities came into existence by merging existing colleges (e.g. Bahir Dar University) or by establishing new ones (e.g., Jijiga University). Of interest to this paper, nearly all public universities compose a college/faculty of education.

In addition, many public teacher education colleges have emerged both through upgrading the then teacher training institutes and establishing new ones. Arba-Minch, Debre-Berhan and Harar are instances of the former case while that of Abiyi Addiyi, Bonga, Gilgel Beles of the later. This raised the number of teacher education colleges to 25. Regional and/or linguistic equity remains the cardinal principle to this expansion, as well. These colleges, established by respective regional state or the federal government, are under the auspices of respective regional state or city administration, as the case may be. KCTE, once among those colleges operating under the then Commission for Higher Education continues operates under Addis Ababa City Government since 1997. Different from similar colleges that offer diploma level training, KCTE trains teachers of all levels – pre-primary,

¹ *The Imperial Regime (1950 – 1974), The Military Dergue (1974 – 1991), the Ethiopian Peoples' Republic Democratic Front, EPRDF, led (1991 – to date).*

² *Tremendous expansion is taking place in this sector as well.*

primary, and secondary schools. What brought exception to KCTE is discussed under the context of the college below.

Turning back to university matters in present day Ethiopia, they designate those higher education institutions offering degree level [3 – 5 years] and above training programs in at least three schools with an intake capacity of 2000 students in the regular program. These institutions are expected to carry out research and disseminate findings (the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation, No. 650/2009). This being the 'ideal', universities can be established from the outset by the regulations of the Council of Ministers or the Regional Government Council (Art.8, Nos. 1&2) provided that they ensure equitable regional distribution. Many of the newly established universities are responses of the former provision. Two important ideas that have relevance to this study emerge. They are size of student enrolment, and empowerment of regional states to establish university. No university has emerged out of the second provision. Related discourse in this regard will be KCTE promoted to a university. There are a couple of reasons. For one, it has the capacity of enrolling students well over the minimum size. Second, its service and tradition in teacher education are well founded and tested for over half a century. Third, no university is established by the City (Capital of the country and of the Continent). Fourth, ministerial offices, regional and international community, and residents of the City need quality education of all levels. Equity can also be a case. KCTE's established and tested experiences can be a means to address these concerns. To further the argument, discussions of issues related to access, policy provisions, and contextual scenario are made.

Issues of Access

Higher education expansion, massification to the world in the later half or the 20th century, brought about marketization, and less able and unprepared/ill prepared students, to mention, into the system. Faced with these global phenomena, colleges and universities are required to meet the aforementioned expectations and thereby bring in rapid development

through their teaching and research. No exception to Ethiopia. The observed and overheard complaint among the academia on students' [poor] academic background, ill preparation so to say, is a consequence. This happens at a time access is still remaining elitist (i.e., below 5%) though the world is moving to universalization (i.e., over 30%). A number of countries (e.g., Canada, Norway) have reached universalization. Unarguably, Ethiopia remains very far behind massification let alone universalization. This entails further expansion of universities and more access to the age cohort given state provisions. KCTE, with its capacities, traditions, and geographical situatedness, can be a point of discourse and of an avenue to that end.

To support my argument, I speak on policy provisions. The Education and Training Policy (1994), The Constitution (1995), the Higher Education Proclamation (No. 650/2009), and other legislative documents are explored to that purpose. The Constitution states that services [education included] should be accessed in equitable terms without any discrimination.

The Education and Training Policy (ETP)

Justifying that education is a very important factor to human development and of high priority in the overall development endeavor of the government, it states that higher education institutions are expected to be efficient, effective and responsive to public interest and funding, among others. With an overall coordination and democratic leadership by boards consisting of stakeholders, those institutions should be competent enough in the designing and implementation of training programs, in generating their own income and use it to strengthen the educational process, in meeting minimum standard and duration of programs, to mention.

The policy also presumes that education raises both private and social benefits (Art.2.1.2) as stated in these objectives. (1) To satisfy the country's need for skilled manpower by providing training in various skills and at different levels (Art.2.2.5); (2) To make education, training and research

appropriately integrated with development by focusing on research (Art. 2.2.6).

The Policy spelled out an overall coordination and democratic leadership by boards consisting of stakeholders. Also, those institutions should be competent enough in the designing and implementation of training programs, in generating their own income and use it to strengthen the educational process, in meeting minimum standard and duration of programs, to mention. With regard to financing of education, just, efficient and appropriate financing to promote equity and quality of education was stated. Consistently but in a detail manner, the Higher Education Proclamation (No. 650/2009) states the general provisions, establishment, guiding values, duties and responsibilities of major stakeholders, governance arrangement, budget and finance. These issues will be used as contextual lenses in the following section.

The Context: KCTE

Following is a detail description of past and present state of the College. This will be followed by literary and lived comments. I begin with physical account. The College located 12 km to the northeast from the center has showed steady growth and development in its facilities and manpower capacity. Staff living quarters, labs and resource centers, play grounds, and wider compound are among its potentials for both program and facility expansion.

Having the purpose of producing teachers for junior secondary schools and named as Teacher Training College, it was originally established in 1959 within the AAU premise. With the technical and financial assistance of UNESCO, it continued to serve as a sole institution to prepare junior secondary school teachers till 1968. The following year, named as Addis Ababa College of Teacher Education, it was transferred to the Ministry of Education (MoE), temporarily moved and housed in Addis Ababa Technical

School. It again moved to Kotebe vicinity in 1976 and renamed Kotebe College of Teacher Education (KCTE pamphlet, 2008; Carolyn, 2010).

In 1979, following the Proclamation for Higher Education (No. 109/1977), the MoE handed over the responsibility of running the College to the then Commission for Higher Education. It came as one of the then few colleges operating under the Commission. Owing to the approval of the Commission, it elevated itself to a full-fledged degree offering College in 1989. To use Wagaw's (1990) words, the former teacher training school at Kotebe in Addis Ababa has been raised to a full-fledged degree granting college. With this provision, the College started to run that level training in six school subject areas³. Such training was consistent to its original purpose. The addition was producing secondary school teachers, which continued for a brief period (till 1996) since all but Health and Physical Education were discontinued. The following year, the College has been aligned to Addis Ababa City Government. Attributed to this was federal structure which brought about regionalization and decentralization of education. This event of transfer was a cast to some parties, including staff but a blessing in disguise to others. It has to be underscored that no research documented the transfer or otherwise, at least to my knowledge. The argument in any case remained the underutilization of resources and established culture in the field of teacher education.

This being the case, KCTE under the responsibility of the City Government, now under the Education Bureau, continued with the responsibility of producing teachers for primary schools of Addis Ababa in its diploma and certificate programs including preprimary education. Furthermore, till very recently, the College had taken the responsibility of training teachers for developing regions such as Afar, Benshangul-Gumuz, Gambella, and Somali. This, in fact, has become part of history since these regions have

³ They were: *Ethiopian Languages and Literature, English Language and Literature, Geography, History, Mathematics, and Health & Physical Education.*

established their own teacher training colleges in whose process the College has been a support.

By any (national) standard, the College stood as one of the oldest and most established teacher training colleges in the country. Hence, the fact that it is underutilized continued as a subject of debate and question at various forums including the House of Representatives. With this notion and mainly its capacity, the College has been looking for avenues to better serve the public to its fullest potential. This gave birth to an affiliation system that brought back the terminated degree level teacher training programs and others (e.g., Civics and Ethical Education, Biology) in 2007. These (i.e., degree level) training programs were a plus to existing diploma and certificate levels.

The affiliation with Bahir Dar University, the first success story in the country, to my knowledge, accessed over 1000 Ethiopians, and near to 1000 graduates who could assume teaching profession in secondary schools each year. The newly introduced diploma programs in Special Needs Education in 2007, the first in the country, and other units promoted to department (i.e., ICT and the Pre-School) are also extensions of its service to needy ones. In sum, over its history, the College has been responding to the public, reaped a positive perception for its contribution to the educational community and the country (Carolyn, 2010).

With this background, I proceed to the governance arrangement, focusing on legislative and executive matters, of the College. Made accountable to the Education Bureau, it is governed by a binary system: the Governing Board and the Academic Commission. The Board, supreme governing body, alike other public universities, composes of 11 voting members. It is responsible for the overall management of the College (Proclamation No. 650/2009, Art. 44; Regulation No. 12/1998). Head of the Capacity Building Bureau of the City Administration (chairperson), State Minister for Higher Education, President of Civil Service University, Head of the Education Bureau, the Dean, and President of Student Union of the College are (active) members.

The Board is designated by the concerned government body, the City Government in this case. The Board issues general directives and matters pertaining to policy and budget, and supervises the overall activities of the College (KCTE, 2008). Consistent to legal provision, such a Board under [regional] state shall be accountable to the appropriate organ of the state government (i.e., City Government) as federal universities shall be accountable to the Ministry (Proclamation No. 650/2009, Regulation No. 12/1998). From its very composition and size, one can, however comment that the academic staff and the public are neither represented nor have a say on the establishment procedure.

It has to be underscored that the responsibility of the board is to govern not to manage the respective institution (The Gillon Declaration II in World Bank 2003, 8). Informed governance should be based on knowledge of the complexities of the institution, including an understanding of the nature, quality and relationships among institutional programs and activities. The Board must be comprised of competent persons who understand their roles and responsibilities (World Bank 2003; The Association of Governing Boards and Colleges 2000 in Dixon and Coy, 2007, 268). No question about the professional (and political leadership competence of those members), though representation of stakeholders remains a question.

The Academic Commission (equated to Senate of a university) is responsible for formulating regulations and supervising the academic activities of the College. Chaired by the Dean of the College, it composes heads of departments (N=13), academic office holders (such as the Academic Programs and Practicum, Continuing and Distance Education, Registrar, Gender), three staff representatives, and President of Student Union (Regulation No. 12/1998). In this case, the academic community (i.e., staff and students) is better represented. The Academic Council, the lower operational unit constituting academic staff of the department, takes care of academic functions including studies, instruction and examinations of student and research matters.

The dean (as is president to a university) is the chief executive of the college. Advised by the Academic Commission, s/he is responsible to run it and be accountable to the College. The dean and the two vice-deans (in charge of Academic and Research, and Administrative and Development affairs) be they elected or appointed (the latter is the norm at present), constitute the executive body of the College. Their trust is to direct, administer, and control the duties of the College in accordance with the regulations, legislation and directives issued by the Board. Administration and financial issues are carried out by the decisions provided through the Management Committee of the College (Regulation No. 12/1998).

All the above parties (the legislative and the executive) in higher education governance make decisions that could affect the institution in some ways. According to Association of Governing Boards and Colleges (2000 in Dixon and Coy, 2007, 268), informed governance should be based on knowledge of the complexities of the institution, including an understanding of the nature, quality and relationships among the college's programs and activities. In general, the governance can be reduced to general management principles or that issues can be resolved by asserting simple hierarchies of authority to risk conflict and eventually institutional paralysis and collapse (Shattock 200 in Hall, Symes and Luescher 2002, 36).

The fact that other governance bodies such as the Managing Council also exist in the College can be paralleled with the Proclamation, as well. In all, the above governance structures are in place at KCTE. Consistent also is the practice that academic units (departments and offices) are responsible to program initiation, development and execution. These cases supported by the Higher Education Proclamation, are in conformity to the Policy's presumption of participatory and democratic governance of educational institutions, too. The Policy also states autonomy provisions in tandem with accountability to the public for resources and the effect thereof. It spells out that educational institutions will be autonomous in their internal administration and in designing and implementing education and training programs, with an overall coordination and democratic leadership by boards, consisting of members from the community (society), development

organizations, teachers and students (3.8.4). The Proclamation states the same in Article 17 stating both autonomy and accountability while Article 18 on the former. The College observes both provisions and requirements. This section concludes with governance policy provision that is relevant to the College's practice. It states that educational organization and management will be decentralized to create the necessary condition to expand, enrich and improve the relevance, quality, accessibility and equity of education and training (3.8.2).

Academic Programs

As indicated above, the College runs various levels of teacher training namely Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, and Bachelor's Degree. The Pre-School Department, long been a unit to the Department of Education, offers one year training and certifies its graduates to work in pre-primary schools. Such training has been the only governmental arrangement in the country till very recently.

In its diploma program, the College trains teachers for primary schools following two modalities namely Cluster and Linear. In the former case, would-be teachers get trained in three school subject areas (e.g., Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) with the intention they would be teaching these subjects in the first cycle primary schools. In the latter, would-be teachers get trained in the traditional major-minor arrangement to teach in the second cycle.

In its degree programs, two areas namely teacher education and Educational Leadership are of interest. In the former, the College trains would-be teachers in secondary school subjects in major-minor mode in three modalities, vis-a-vis regular, evening-extension, and summer in-service. It has to be underscored that the educational leadership and management program for secondary school principals and supervisors, is only a summer in-service program. The other training program is Advanced Diploma. It is an upgrading program aimed at equipping trainees to school

principalship and supervisory service. It takes one and three summers for primary and secondary schools respectively. All training programs are carried out in line with the nationally set policy and strategic directives. In addition, KCTE offers varied and tailored trainings to needy groups involved in teaching/training and research. Extending such service to the community in need is its norm consistent to similar to institutions of higher learning.

Consistent to the national policy directives, the College exercises student-centered learning and continuous assessment. Active involvement of students, practical and relevant learning that promotes critical thinking and creative problem solving aiming at producing responsible and competent teachers/education personnel are emphasized (KCTE, 2008). Such scheme is consistent to the ETP which in specific terms states that continuous assessment will be employed (Art. 3.3).

Consistent to legislative provisions (ETP, 1994; Proclamation No. 650/2009; Regulation No. 12/1998), the College has long been actively taking part in undergraduate program development, curriculum preparation and review exercises. In addition, it has prepared and executed programs of its own such as Special Needs Education, the first in the country. In all, it has a good record in national policy and curriculum formulation to all programs and levels. This being the case, the College strictly observes catalogue, legislation, and regulations of the Bahir Dar University for its degree program while that of its own for the diploma program only. It sounds reasonable to Carolyn (2010) to witness the relative strength (Adapting Active Learning as compared to Debre-Berhan College of Teacher Education) of the College in this regard.

On top of all academic programs stand the health and physical education. The College has long been providing training in this field in both diploma and degree levels. Because such training had only been offered by the College, it was not terminated like others indicated somewhere above. As can partly be attributed, due facilities allow students to take part in a wide range of sports and games like football, basketball, and volley-ball. The gymnasium is

an ideal place for in-house training and competitions. Its multi-purpose field and the gymnasium serve nearby schools and community.

The varying entry and exit procedures make it different from other similar institutions. Unique from other teacher education colleges in the country, KCTE today trains teachers to all levels- namely Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary schools- qualifying with certificate, diploma and degree levels respectively. Trainees for the former two levels are recruited from the City by the College itself (by a committee in which the Education Bureau is represented and schools take active part). The graduation of these trainees is approved by the Academic Commission of the college. On the other hand, trainees for the latter level and program are recruited all over the country by the Ministry. Graduation of these entrants will be approved by the Senate of Bahir Dar University. The very nature of its training programs and trainee recruitment and placement, allow the college to celebrate diversity: ethnic, region, academic preparation, gender, etc.

With all diversities in student entry and exit approval procedures, program levels, and modalities, the college its inception has graduated well over 40,000 teachers and educational leaders. Added to this is the college's capacity to hold well over 10,000 students in all programs and modalities. The concluding remark of this section will be, with such complementary academic programs, capacity of student admission, several decades record of student graduation, and persistent tradition, to mention a few, it is judgmental to heed its full and elevated service.

Academic Staff Profile

The College's staff profile (including gender mix) will be compared with the profile to a university, as set by the MoE, i.e., 30% PhD, 50% MA/Sc, and 20% BA/Sc which is just a theory⁴ to my observation. Of total (148, all

⁴ If BDU, the affiliating University, taken as a case in point, 8.46% hold the rank of assistant professor and above, 56.63% lecturer, the rest were graduate assistants.

nationals) academic staff, 31 (20.95%) are females whose ratio equals 3.77. In terms of academic rank, 13 (i.e., 8.8%) were assistant professors, 109 (i.e., 73.6%, F=24) lecturers, 5 (i.e., 3.4%, F=1) assistant lecturers, 7 (i.e., 4.7%, F=1), graduate assistants while the remaining 14 (i.e., 9.5%) technical assistants. Also worth mentioning is the fact that 28 staff (F = 6) are on study leave out of which 16 (F = 3) are working for PhD, 9 (F = 1) for MA/Sc, and 3 (F =2) for BA/Sc. Turning to qualification, 5 (i.e., 3.4%) hold PhD, 116 (i.e., 78.4%) hold MA/Sc, 16 (i.e., 10.8%) hold BA/Sc. In addition, KCTE has situational advantage to easily attract part-time staff (51 this semester, for instance). To conclude, being located in the capital (i.e., geographical situatedness), KCTE is not only well staffed but also can attract more qualified and experienced ones as compared to universities and colleges elsewhere. These and other capacities, enabled the college to enjoy reputable recognition and acknowledgement of stakeholders including the Ministry, the City Government, the Education Bureau, sister institutions, and universities.

Student Admission, Support and Progression

Two admission modalities (one for certificate and diploma, and one for degree) are in place. To elaborate, degree program entrants are placed centrally by the MoE. These students, randomly assigned, come from all over the country. The College only processes placing them into departments. On the other hand, the College recruits (from shortlisted students graduated from schools in the City who report to the College) for the diploma and certificate programs. The College scrutinizes those applicants' documents and shortlists those who can sit for entrance examination (both written and oral). This gives more chance (using affirmative action) to female candidates. The above two modalities of student recruitment apply only to the regular programs. Student recruitment and placement to all evening extension and summer in-service diploma programs is exclusively carried out by the college itself. Such scheme is consistent to the Proclamation which in specific terms states that students will be required to sit for examinations for admission by the relevant higher education institution (Art.

3.3). Extended argument in this line will be that the College has the experience to recruit students. This can be taken as a seed to preparing entrance exam to itself, and may be to others as deemed necessary.

As is customary to the College and emphasized in the Proclamation (No. 650/2009), the College provides guidance and counseling services to students on emotional, educational, and social problems. The services include assisting students to understand their problem and themselves better; help them feel, think, communicate and act more effectively; assist female students develop communication and coping strategies and skills, to mention. The College also regularly orients students on how to study, cope and perform successfully. In addition, the College has also put in place award system to high performing students. The College also claims to mainstream gender in every plan and activity. Affirmative action during admission, awareness raising (and tutorial) sessions during the training are among the services extended (KCTE Pamphlet, 2008).

With the notion of aligning assessment to curriculum, student performance is assessed continuously through a scheme of Continuous Assessment. This scheme includes classroom participation, assignments, project works, tests, mid semester and final exams. Such scheme is consistent to the Proclamation which in specific terms states that continuous assessment will be employed in respective higher education institution (Art. 3.3). This has been again consistent to the requirements of a [well-] defined system to the adherence of the academic staff. So consistent to the Proclamation is the complaint handling procedure in the College in this regard.

With this scenario, thanks to its staff, facilities and, established tradition, KCTE is doing its level best towards producing better prepared teachers. In all, this service at present is provided to a student population of 11,505 out of which 3,681 (F=1,830) attend regular, 4,354 (F=2,070) the evening extension, and 3,470 (F=1,734) the summer in-service program. Taking the regular student population into account, one can boldly argue that KCTE qualifies well over the standard set of a public university.

Research undertaking, workshops and teaching materials

The College promotes these exercises pertaining to problems in education in general and of teacher education in particular. One instance is the two days (research) seminar held on 12-13 May 2011 in the college vicinity. Since its staff – past and present – actively take part in such exercises, the College in its journey thus far has organized various research seminars. The College has been very popular in organizing and attending in-house and other seminars especially in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In addition, a number of the academia has prepared teaching materials that are helpful both to students and educators.

Facilities

Next, capacities of the College in terms of facilities that can serve as a springboard to my argument are presented in brief. These, among others, include laboratories and libraries. There are six biology labs, four chemistry labs, three physics labs, one geography lab, three English Language labs (including ELIC¹), one pre-school lab, four ICT labs (including Computer Center), two music labs, two sports labs (including Gymnasium) and a multi-purpose field.

Its two libraries (consisting of Braille and Internet sections in them) have a collection of 45,000 books in various fields and disciplines. Both libraries can accommodate 1000 users at a time, and are 24 hours open. Services provided by the library include reading, loan, reference, and internet (KCTE Pamphlet, 2008). Though not clearly stated in the Policy, plainly speaking, these facilities situate the College among the established ones. The proper utilization of educational support inputs are developed to ensure relevance and standards (in conformity to Article 3.7.2 of the Proclamation), so to say.

I conclude this section by drawing some policy contentions exercised by the College. These, among others include that higher education at diploma and first degree levels will be research oriented, enabling students become

problem-solving professional leaders in their fields of study (Art.3.2.4); that educational organization and management will be decentralized to create the necessary condition to expand, enrich and improve the relevance, quality, accessibility and equity of education and training (3.8.2); that educational institutions will be autonomous in their internal administration and in designing and implementing education and training programs, with an overall coordination and democratic leadership by boards consisting various stakeholders (3.8.4); and generating their own income and use it to strengthen their programs (Art. 3.9.7). With this, I proceed to triangulation of the above data with what is garnered through interview.

Interview Data

Following are extractions of interviewees' responses. As stated above, two senior academic staffs (one currently working and the other left the College), two senior academic staff of the affiliating University attended it. Unanimously positive was the response of all interviewees in terms of the College's capacity (human, material, and infrastructure), established tradition, and preparedness to a better and high status service for the benefit of the City and the country. However, there were differences on future arrangements.

As learned from Interviewee I, two options were suggested to promote the College. They were either to promote the College and let it function as independent institution, or to let it operate under Addis Ababa University. S/he did not uncover preference to the former. To continue so or be promoted, to him/her, will be in the hands and good will of the people. As regards to beneficiaries of the current affiliation system, three parties namely the City Government, teaching staff, and the public/government were mentioned. Put explicitly, Addis Ababa City Government benefits much from its human capital (teaching personnel) in programs the college runs; staff gets job satisfaction and improved status. Access to the age cohort and leverage of teaching staff shortage were justifications, as well. Also mentioned were similar experiences of other countries where one university

affiliates others such as Illinois at Chicago and many others in Germany. *(Male, Age=43, 19 years service at BDU, Associate Professor in Psychology, Ex- Vice President for Academic & Research Affairs, interview held on 09 May 2010, 2:00- 3:15).*

The second interviewee stressed the College's capacity, too. S/he reported, "What I know very well is its staff profile, laboratory, library, academic and classroom facilities." As to future arrangement, s/he responded that KCTE should grow to Education University, not to be affiliated to nor merged with others. Some countries have Educational Planning and Management University while others Teacher Education University [Ghana and India, for instance]. No reason that it cannot stand as an independent university, s/he commented. Such status to him/her was preferred to merger. It was preferred because KCTE will not be looser by eroding its tradition and by subordinating its culture of others. That is, to keep up its better practices, teaching philosophy, culture and freedom, a university college status, has been opted. Subject area departments and pedagogical science/education may work together towards this end. A working strategy to promote KCTE to a university or a university college will be lobbying/promoting the college in light of what it can better serve the city and the nation. S/he concluded that the City Government might have that political power to make such a decision. *(Male, Age=35, 12 years service at BDU, Associate Professor in Education, Academic Affairs Executive Director, interview held on 31st May 2010, 11:10 - 12:05)*

As reported by the third interviewee, staff capacity in terms of qualification and experience (teaching, research, community service) is not questioned. It rather was believed as promising to run the current and other more elevated programs. To him/her, the academic staff is well capable of designing, running, evaluating and updating its programs, preparing relevant teaching materials, engaging in research, etc, as well. In his/her words, *"No doubt, KCTE at the moment, with all its facilities and experiences, is one of the top teacher training colleges in the country."* S/he further said, *"What I wish ... is the college run the degree program itself though the decision is up to the*

government.” This can happen, to him/her, because the City has a high demand for qualified school teachers. This would be an input to quality education. Added to a population size well over 3 million and equitably a region, Addis Ababa- the capital of Ethiopia, Africa and also a seat of international organizations- demand a university. These could be enough causes that the City Government promotes it to a full-fledged college that can run degree level teacher training programs. (*Male lecturer, Age=55, 30 years experience, assumed various positions in the College, July 06 2010, 5:15-12:00*).

Concluding Remarks

Notwithstanding these scenarios, I proceed to concluding remarks. The fact that the current government has embarked on rapidly expanding higher education and universities based on equitable regional distribution is quite recommendable policy and policy in action. Also recommendable is that higher education viewed as instrumental both for public and private goods. These reflected in policies such as the Education and Training Policy (1994), the Constitution (1995), the Higher Education Proclamation (No. 650/2009), and the Regulation (No. 12/1998) grounded the effort towards that end. On top of all, public discussion, policy studies and revisions including institutional reformations with participation of all stakeholders should be in place, sooner or later.

As clearly stated in those legislative provisions, all aim at providing all Ethiopians equitable access to public education free of any partisanship. The Higher Education Proclamation advances similar ideas such as expansion, equitable distribution and nondiscrimination. As a result, higher education should be diversified and moving from elite to mass, and from limited centers to regions. As a matter of fact, mass higher education (i.e., between 20 and 30 percent enrolment of the 19 to 24 age cohort), a world case in the latter half of the 20th century, is not realized in Ethiopia today. Ethiopia by far remains back to achieving massification of higher education, let alone universalization. The 31 universities do not enable so to a population about

80 million. In addition, unless moving towards expanding universities quality output, realizing development plans of the country and joining the middle level income category of the world may not be an easy exercise. Establishing universities meeting the minimum requirement sounds timely.

Establishing state universities based on objective criteria, stated in the Proclamation, the City Government Council can be taken the first to exercise or test it on the ground. The cardinal principle, equitable regional distribution to nations and nationalities of Ethiopia and of the international community residing in the City as a matter of right, and response to public concern remain in the hands of the City Government. The fact that Addis Ababa is the capital of Ethiopia and of Africa Union, as often called the 'African Capital', home of international community gave it historical, diplomatic and political significance. This is a plus to the discourse. In all, KCTE is grown to historical maturity in need of legal maturity.

Not only students centrally placed but also by preference will join such institutions located in the capital. This will also have cost implication. Immediate boarding of students may not be the only option as it happens true to the diploma program students of the College today. The College's established tradition, current profile, and of the geographical location perhaps more than not can be good causes to this end, as well. Furthermore, the positive perception in the educational community and the public, the distinct experience of offering certificate, diploma and degree teacher preparation programs have much more to quality education as a whole. These added to provisions in the Proclamation are comparative advantages to the said discourse.

In sum, no question about the capacity and preparedness of the College for better and upgraded tertiary education service, no question about more universities to access the age cohort, and no question about the legal provisions that the City Government establish and run a state university. If so is the case, KCTE with its better staff profile, better facilities and established culture comes as a viable option. The current legal provisions and the City

Government's initiative to take such a lead in establishing a State or City State University should be translated into action. Doing so and efficient utilization of resources, as a matter of fact, would pave the way to other discourses on massification of higher education, quality education, governance and management of the sector, student diversity, policy formulation and implementation, to mention just a few.

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