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Collegiality and Its Implications for the Teaching-Learning Process at Higher Education Institutions (HEIS) in Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University in Focus

Dr. Firdissa Jebessa Aga

Researcher, Institute of Educational Research, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

Abstract:

This study aimed at investigating the practices of collegiality and its implications for the teaching learning process at higher education institutions with particular reference to the situations at Addis Ababa University. In doing so, the existence of desirable values, beliefs, and staff collaborations that cherish collegiality have been explored. The study is, therefore, founded on the belief that collegiality is the enabling environment for learning, improvement, and is the home for individual and institutional success particularly in achieving a university mission. This is because collegiality empowers the frontline implementers to be committed and show fidelity under whatever condition. Data were generated from 23 purposively selected academic staffs of the University by dispatching a questionnaire, by conducting an interview with three staffs, and by critically reviewing literatures. The results have shown that there were less collegial environments in general and less collaborative and supportive culture between senior and junior staffs in particular. It seems that 'collegiality' is a word more often heard than practiced in our universities in general and at AAU in particular. The implication could be solo race, and scanty accountability for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes at the University. It is, therefore, recommended that the University should make relentless efforts for enhancing and strengthening a sense of shared values, collegial work cultures and spirits, collaborative, selflessness, learning and improvement orientations among academic staffs, the cumulative effect of which creates and sustains quality of teaching-learning, research, and services of the University in general and that of the staffs in particular.

Keywords: Collegiality, teaching, learning, higher education, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

1. Introduction

Staff collegiality is a desirable value and culture in which the behaviour of the staffs is directed towards the commonly valued ends. The systems of HEIs in general and teaching and learning in it in particular require a spirit of collegiality that both reflects and fosters mutual respect among all groups within the system. Such a spirit is the basis for collaborative work environment which in turn enhances smooth relationship, informal learning, and performance of the academics.

The environment of a university in general and the teaching and learning in it in particular demands establishing interpersonal relations, and a spirit of collegial value and beliefs that both reflect and foster mutual respect among all the staffs within the university. This serves two purposes: i) it enhances informal learning, and ii) it empowers the staff members to be committed for the betterment of its practices in line with their personal and shared values. When these are absent or not to the required level, staffs feel indifferent to enhance shared values and beliefs.

Virtually, the learning institution is 'characterized by staff that continually learn from each other and from experience and, by so doing, solve problems and improve on a continuous basis' and is known for their collegial and open for evaluation culture. A culture of collegiality enhances shared responsibility of staff for institutional outcomes, shared goals, information exchange and collaboration. If collaboration and sharing information is not the norm of the institution, however, teachers hesitate to consult colleagues because that may be considered a sign of incompetence and/or inefficiency (Nias, 1198).

Overall, collegiality enhances shared learning and common successes in the university mission. In this paper, the collegial practices and implications on teaching and learning have been explored. The paper has four parts: introduction, literature review, analyses, summary, conclusions and implications.

1.1. The Problem

The environment at higher education institutions demands collegiality with a culture of transparency and willing assent of each staff to be committed for the success of institutional missions under whatever conditions. Staffs at universities should be able to teach, do research, and give professional services in a collegial environment: the social, structural, economic, cultural, political, and administrative environment.

There, however, are some observations that 'collegiality' is a word more often heard than practiced in our universities in general and at AAU in particular. Staff learning, therefore, is insufficiently visible and barely enhances individual and institutional capacity to cope up with the rapidly changing environment, locally and globally. It seems that there is generation gap as seniors and juniors infrequently collaborate as expected. In line with this, Firdissa (2008) indicates that there were less collaborative work and collegial culture among staff members in Ethiopian HEIs. The situation might have existed for long or might have resulted due to the changing landscape of higher education nationally and internationally, which favours solo race; efficiency and speedy adaptation to the fast running world of life and work.

Unless collegial values are enshrined within the university system in general and at the level of the staffs in particular, rare support and collaborative work and joint developments will be maintained. This is because nonexistence or dearth of collegial environment:

- Threatens the overall individual and institutional endeavors and efforts and paralyzes the required value at the university, and
- Results in rare informal learning and development of the staffs, which gradually makes the staffs stand still rather than showing improvement in line with the fast running world of life and work. It seems that very little conscious efforts have been made by our universities to create collegial environment to take place.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to investigate the situation of collegiality as a system, and among the academic staffs at the Addis Ababa University and explore enabling factors for collegiality with a purpose to suggest some good practices for our universities. In doing so, the study tries to find answers to the following basic questions.

- How do the academic staffs of the Addis Ababa University value the existence of a system of shared values and beliefs among themselves? Why?
- To what extent do academic staffs contribute to institutional decision-making procedures/processes?
- How do the academic staffs value the existence of respect and mutual support between the senior and the junior academic staffs? On what aspects?
- What are the enabling factors for collegiality at HEIs in our country?

1.2. The Methodology

This study is basically a case study mainly employing a qualitative approach. My first intention was to collect data through extensive interview. It was a dismaying incidence that senior and experienced instructors refused to participate in the interview. Sadly, two senior instructors did not show willingness to give their views. One of them explicitly said, "Please leave me...! Please leave me...!" The other one gave me appointment three times/days and finally uttered apology expressing that he couldn't make it a reality. So, I changed my mind to use a mix of questionnaire and interview supported by analysis of extant literatures. In the attempt to answering the basic questions, therefore, two approaches were followed. First, some firsthand data were generated from twenty-three and three staffs at AAU using questionnaire and interview respectively. Second, extant documents/literatures were analysed on some plausible factors that enabled collegiality to flourish in some countries and then to consider whether those factors are applicable in our case.

2. Data Sources and Collection Tools

The data sources constitute a purposively selected academic staff from the College of Education and Behavioral Studies (CEBS), Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (DFLL), Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures (AELC), and Institute of Educational Research (IER). Employing a blend of judgment (an extension of convenience) sampling and snowball sampling techniques, thirty (15 senior and 15 junior)* academic staffs were selected to fill a questionnaire, which was pre-prepared and dispatched to the subjects by hand delivery. Also, an interview was conducted with three staffs (1 each from CEBS, IER, and DFLL). Literatures on the issue were also extensively reviewed and analyzed.

2.1. Methods of Data Analysis

Qualitative analyses of the data were employed. As the data were generated by open-ended questions of the questionnaire, the interview, and literature review, qualitative approach was the main and dominant method employed in this study.

2.2. Review of Related Literature

In this part, meaning and the need for collegiality, and collegiality for informal learning have been discussed one after the other.

2.3. The Meaning of Collegiality

Collegiality is conceived differently at different times, in different contexts and for different purposes. Its inherent conceptions and purposes (enshrining desirable values and culture among staffs of an institute for shared goals) is, nonetheless, always maintained. Particularly, cultural, structural and behavioral attributes of collegiality are cited in many literatures. Particularly, Bess (1992) defines collegiality from cultural, structural, and behavioural points of view.

- Cultural collegiality is a system of shared values and beliefs including the right of participation in institutional governance and trust in the long-term beneficence of the institution itself.
- Structural collegiality implies participatory decision making with and between organizational units. It should not, however, be confused with Athenian democracy where all citizens had the right to vote on all matters affecting the

* Senior, and junior stand for teaching experiences of 11 and above, and 10 and below years respectively.

city-state. Collegial institutions have always delegated authority to individuals with recognized expertise, regardless of their formal rank. Thus, leaders in institutions could be 'mere' administrative facilitators of the common successes.

- Behavioral collegiality exists where staff behavior is directed towards institutionally valued ends. These people are known as 'good College men' and rewarded appropriately with fellowships or good accommodation etc.

Implied in the above conceptions of collegiality are shared value ends, empowerment, and commitment to direct behaviours to achieve the commonly valued ends/shared responsibilities. In this sense, collegiality consists of a shared decision-making process and a set of attitudes, which cause individuals to regard the members of the various constituencies of the university as responsible for the success of the academic enterprise. Fundamental to this concept is the understanding that a university is a community of scholars who, out of mutual respect for the expertise and contributions of their colleagues, agree that shared decision-making in areas of recognized primary responsibility constitutes the means whereby a university best preserves its academic integrity and most effectively attains its educational mission.

2.4. *The Need for Collegiality*

Collegial atmosphere/environment is the home for individual and institutional successes particularly in achieving missions. It empowers the key players (i.e., teachers) to collaborate in identifying problems and moving forward to find solutions and improving their practices. As Bush (1986:48) in Lomax (1996:20) indicates, "collegiality involves a process of discussion by staff members who share in the management of institution and are involved in setting instructional and personal goals and as well as implementing them". The same source goes on explaining that the collegiate approach emphasizes collaboration, network, and enabling each member to contribute to institution decision making. It clarifies, shares, and documents the values of collegial practices and to improve its implementation for quality. What really holds all the concerned stakeholders together is a sense of shared values: institutional culture, learning and improvement practice, the cumulative effect of which the sustains quality of teaching-learning, research, and services of the universities in general and that of the staffs in particular. Peters (1988:296, cited in Lomax, 1996:21) suggests that teams could be the 'basic organizational building blocks', and working in teams than individually could achieve 'enhanced focus, task orientation, innovations, individual commitment, and institutional self-study/learning and improvement.

The capacity for an institution's self-study; and the fit with its chosen fields of activity (or 'coverage'), can be achieved by talking with colleagues who generate and use the information, by assessing its practice in discussion with colleagues from other universities, or by comparing it with relevant aspects of the various good practices available. Meanwhile, the institution has to make space to learn from such evidence and to commission further study, ideally upon as broad a base as possible. This entails reflecting on collegial practices by creating specific 'institutional learning opportunities' such as those which arise from staff development, from study days and seminars, and above all from clear, coherent and accessible internal accounts of the outputs of self-study (Watson & Maddison, 2005:23).

In the context of action research, Lomax (1996: 21) indicates that reflecting on collegiality teaches us that empowered ownership is a key to effective participation, as a result of which instructors are to change their practices. Empowerment through action research enhances individuals and institutional 'collaborative, non-hierarchical, self-managed, sharing information, ideas and decision-making cultures. It brings a boost in confidence, a feeling of self-satisfaction and an increase in corporate planning and decision making so that it is in harmony with an enquiry geared to improving collegial management and can contribute to both personal and institutional development (Webb, 1991:18, in Lomax, 1996:22) through collegial dialogue. Collegial dialogue, experience sharing, and joint problem solving all encourage collaboration among teachers to discuss common problems, share procedures and strategies, and compare perceptions. Exposure to the ideas and practices of colleagues is a potential strategy for teacher reflection and change (Airasian & Gullickson, 1997:16-17).

Moreover, participatory research approaches including action research develop a culture of collaboration and discovery that encourages the capacity for change. Even though change is always difficult at best, it can be managed by building the capacity for change through a model of collaborative change and readiness to manage it, which implies transforming HEIs. By implication managing change involves making need-based change of the management. This embodies rethinking and recapitulation of the internal culture of the institution and reduces stress and provides avenue for collegial growth. Consequently, the institution becomes highly effective as a learning environment as it accepts self-assessment in multiple forms, is growth oriented, fosters trust, and employs knowledge-based decision making for which the creativity, energy and hard work of the individuals and groups who form the institution. Overall, collegiality is a decisive aspect of HEIs' roles to enhance appropriate and betterments to teaching, research, and professional services at individual as well as at institutional levels.

2.5. *Collegiality Fosters Informal Learning*

It is clear from the discussions made so far on collegiality conceptions and importance that learning and improvement is implicitly embedded along with the explicit missions of any university. This notion takes us to the need for informal learning, which is the keystone for transformation and change in this global world. This goes with the recognition that conventional formal educational systems alone cannot respond to the challenges of modern society and therefore non-formal and informal aspects are currently sought, as alternative routes to basic learning needs in many countries including ours. The discourse, thus, divides the world of education into two, formal and non-formal, all of which are set inside a wider context of informal learning. This entails that there are three forms of education from the points of view of organization, direction, management and interest. The boundaries among these forms, however, are very fuzzy and

blurred in the long run. But the distinctions are very real. Learning is the keystone for all forms; it is the original matter out of which all education forms are created.

As distinct from both non-formal and formal approaches, both of which are purposeful and structured, informal learning is spontaneous and incidental with assumptions of complementing and challenging what goes on in classroom settings. Virtually, the goals and purposes of most informal learning contexts tend to be broader than those emphasized in traditional schooling. Strange as it may seem, informal education projects may not regard learning as their first priority. Similarly, they do not by-and-large aim exclusively for improvement on classroom-oriented measures, but instead tend to emphasize wider goals better captured by terms like enculturation, development, attitude, and socialization. The goal of helping young people in general and junior staffs in particular develop self-identities that are consistent with desired values and beliefs of the society and an institution are often central in informal learning. For example, enhancing the young academic staff's sense of:

- Self as contributors to the university community;
- Self as valued members of a working team;
- Self as effective learner (schuable, 1996:7, cited in firdissa, 2008).

Although the development of identity is considered important in institutions as well, it rarely takes center stage in the planning of administrators or teachers. Such objectives are not usually addressed directly in the curriculum and the success of teachers and classrooms is not evaluated with respect to these broad goals. In many out-of-institution settings, learning is explicitly tied to other agendas. For example, social interaction among peers or among colleagues is often regarded as an important value. Productive organizations for youth offer the "group cohesiveness necessary to frame and sustain social identity in terms of group norms, values, and goals" (McLaughlin & Heath, 1993:220, cited in Schuable, 1996:7-8) By and large, informal learning encompasses all learning that goes on outside of any planned learning situation - such as cultural events and incidentally happening experiences at work. It is the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment - at home, at work, at play; from the examples and attitudes of family and friends; from travel, reading newspapers and books; or by listening to the radio or viewing films or television. In other words, it is very close to what some people define as 'experiential learning' (another term which carries wide divergences of meaning whenever it is used). It is unorganized, total lifetime learning. Informal learning, thus, is entirely incidental, unstructured, and less purposeful, but the most extensive and most important part of all the learning that all of us do every day of our lives; it covers highly contextualized, highly participatory educational activities (Firdissa, 2008). In the context of HEIs, informal learning can be blossomed when the culture of shared values and beliefs (collegiality) have been enshrined.

3. Presentation and Analysis of Data

3.1. Introduction

This section deals with the presentation and analysis of the data collected from the purposively selected academic staffs at AAU: College of Education and Behavioral Studies (CEBS), Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (DFLL), Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures (AELC), and Institute of Educational Research (IER) using questionnaire, interview, and analysis of extant literatures on the issue. Out of the 30 copies of the questionnaires dispatched, 23 (from 12 junior staff and 11 senior staff) had been properly filled and returned. Out of 6 potential interviewees approached, actually 3 appeared up voluntarily. The data generated by the questionnaire and the interview deal with the level of the practice/existence of a system of shared values and beliefs among academic staffs of the University in general and at their respective institute/department in particular; the extent to which the academic staffs of the University contribute to institutional decision-making procedures/processes; academic staffs valuing the existence of respect and mutual support between the senior and the junior academic staffs; and the implications of the existing collegial practices for the teaching learning process at the University.

The data generated by questionnaire are the dominant ones. Consequently, the interview data have been interspersed within the questionnaire data where and when they match. This section, therefore, begins from the characteristics (bio-data) of the respondents and proceeds to the main data, which have categorically analyzed under the pertinent questions.

3.2. Characteristics (Bio-Data) Of the Respondents

In this sub-section, the respondents' sex, faculty/institute, years of experience in teaching at HEIs, level of education/ qualification, and rank have been presented. Sex-wise, 21 (91%) of the respondents who properly filled in and returned the questionnaire were males. There were only 2 (14 %) female respondents. It was, therefore, male dominated. The case could be due to the long-lived gender gap among employees, particularly in posts that require high-level qualification including teaching at HEIs. As the data obtained from Office of Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (OAVPAA, 2006/7) presents, there were 1286 (93%) and 104 (7%) male and female full-time Ethiopian teaching staffs respectively in the year 2006/07. In the same vein, 20%, 22%, 9%, and 5 % regular-, extension-, in service - undergraduate and postgraduate female students respectively enrolled to the different programs of the University (Office of the Registrar, 2007/08).

Respondents' Faculty/Institute	Frequency	Percent
CEBS	9	39
DFLL	7	30
IER	4	17
AELC	3	13
Total	23	100

Table 1: The Respondents' Faculty/Institute

As can be seen from Table 1, the majority of the respondents were from the College of Education and Behavioral Studies followed by Department of Languages and Literature. This was purposive and as to my convenience to get valuable data.

Experience in teaching at HEIs in years				
Under 5	5-10	11-16	Above 16	Total
2	10	6	5	23
Designated as Juniors		Designated as Seniors		

Table 2: The Respondents' Years of Experience in Teaching at HEIS

Table 2 shows that 12, and 11 respondents were 10 and below, and 11 and above respectively. Conventionally, therefore, those who have teaching experiences of 10 and below have been designated as 'juniors' whereas those who have teaching experiences of 11 and above have been designated as 'seniors' in this study. The fact that 21 (93%) of the respondents had 5 and above experience in teaching at HEIs in years implies that they could internalize the intent of the issues about collegiality and give valid response.

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Masters degree	16	70
Doctorate Degree	7	30
Total	23	100

Table 3: Respondents' Level of Education/ Qualification

Table 3 shows that 70% and 30% of the respondents had masters and doctorate degrees respectively. There was no one who held only bachelor degree from among the respondents. This shows that qualification wise; the respondents could internalize the intent of the issues about collegiality and give valid response, as they are well qualified.

Rank	Frequency	Percent
Associate professor	3	13
Assistant Professor	9	39
Lecturer	11	47
Total	23	100

Table 4: Respondents' Rank

As can be seen from Table 4, the majority of the respondents (47% of those who responded) had a rank of lecturer followed by 39% and 13% assistant professorship and associate professorship respectively. There was no anyone who had a rank of professorship and assistant lecturer ship or blow.

3.3. The Level of the Practice of A System of Shared Values and Beliefs among Academic Staffs

Pertaining to the level of the practice of a system of shared values and beliefs among academic staffs, different views were reflected. Whereas some acknowledged the existence of the system and the practice of shared values and beliefs among academic staffs, others commented negatively. The following Table, therefore, presents the positive, the negative, and the common views of the respondents on the issue.

Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Essential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The practices of sharing relevant values and beliefs are moderately exiting at the university. There are certain shared values as a tradition of the University. For instance, freedom of thought (academic freedom), fair judgments (decisions), honesty, and fidelity. However, the extent these values are practiced among academic staff and by the system in general appears limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared values and beliefs are in rare cases. All the academic staff members just have their own personal values and practices. Academic hierarchy is strongly adhered to by most senior staff. Peer learning and peer evaluation/exchange of support is not very much appreciated One junior staff commented: "There is looking down upon students and junior academic staff rather than seeing them as equals and appreciating their contributions". 	<p>At department level there is a strong shared values and beliefs concerning the fulfillment of the mission of the University. However, this seems very weak at the overall University level as the efforts are fragmented and lack systemic approach.</p>

Table 5: The Level of the Practice of a System of Shared Values and Beliefs among Academic Staffs

3.4. Academic Staffs' Contributions to Institutional Decision-Making Procedures/Processes

On the issue of academic staffs' contributions to institutional decision-making procedures/processes also, positive, negative and common views have reflected by the respondents.

Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Essential
<p>Although the contributions are below expectation due to a number of factors, the academic staffs through departmental meetings, academic commission, and senate, contribute a lot to decision making in academic matters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I am afraid very much about the existence of staffs' contributions to institutional decision-making procedures/processes!" said one respondent. This is hardly practiced as the academic staff usually receives decisions made just by the top management wings most of the time. Unless a member is assigned or entitled to a certain position, the system doesn't allow individual contribution 	<p>Individual staff members are not assumed; pertinent decisions are made by way of representation in the senate. Even though senate legislation clearly stipulates staffs' right for participation in decision-making, practical implementations, nonetheless, are below expectations.</p>

Table 6: Academic Staffs' Contributions to Institutional Decision-Making Procedures/Processes

The level of academic staffs' contributions to institutional decision-making procedures/processes has not been developed as expected. Whereas at least by jurisdiction (University senate legislation) there are academic staff representation at all levels of decision-making starting from department up to senate level, the implementation seems inadequate.

3.5. The Existence of Respect and Mutual Support between the senior and The Junior Academic Staffs

There are different views on the issue of the level of the existence of respect and mutual support between the senior and the junior academic staffs. In most cases, junior staffs despicably commented the practices, whereas the seniors acknowledged the existence of respect and mutual support between the two groups. The following Table, therefore, presents the different views.

Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Essential
<p>The relationship among staff members at AAU is not bad. There is some moderate harmony. Particularly, respect for each other is observed during meeting, discussions, etc It, nonetheless, needs to be improved in the operation of the overall system.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "I don't see any mutual support between senior and junior academic staffs. No one expects support" said one junior staff. There seems to be a kind of keeping one another at a distance. It is in rare cases to see them supporting one another in many aspects. The type of relation between junior and senior staff members is that of rivalry and of least mutual support. The respondents attributed their reasons to the fact that the senior staff members: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> assume the production of a new generation as potential 'threats/competitors' for them; are lesser flexible in opinion and action are not transparent, cooperative and amicable. do not show inviting faces when a junior staff seeks for a sort of academic support. Do not acknowledge the juniors' innovativeness and perseverance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The value of respect and mutual support (not on the bases of fear and coercion) is important in a work environment. Such value develops primarily as part of culture at a society or community levels for a common good to the members. The situation observed at AAU is a general reflection of the society. I believe in mutual respect and support. Because it is the symbol of intellectual maturity.

Table 7: The Existence of Respect and Mutual Support between the senior and the Junior Academic Staffs

3.6. Aspects on Which Senior Academic Staffs Help (at Least Informally) the Juniors

The support/help the junior academic staffs get from the senior appears minimal/limited. Those who positively rated the existence of the issue, nonetheless, listed the following points.

- In sharing experiences, ideas and practices.
- In encouraging the junior staff to carryout researches, to upgrade their academic status.
- When conditions permit (staff meetings, panel discussions, committee works, publishing articles, informal social gathering)
- In some departments, junior staffs get associated with the senior to teach courses (until they get experience). In other cases, both may work in projects where they share experience. In most cases, there is no systematic and regular mechanism for induction of the junior staffs. They are left to learn hard way by themselves.
- The comments of the juniors disclose that the rarely happening supports by juniors were when there was evidence that the juniors would be of some help for continuing the existing mediocre.

A study by Firdissa (2008), on aspects and frequency that senior academic staffs at AAU (informally) help junior ones, has also produced similar results as have been summarised in Table 8 below.

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1. To develop self-identities that are consistent with desired values of the university	29	.00	2.00	.9310	.53
2. To enhance their sense of self as contributors to the society	29	.00	2.00	1.3448	.55
3. To enhance their sense of belongingness to the University community	29	1.00	3.00	1.5862	.68
4. To enhance their self as valued members of a working team in the University	29	.00	3.00	1.3793	.78
5. To enhance their sense of self as effective learners	29	.00	3.00	1.5517	.83
6. To induct to their profession and the working environment	29	.00	3.00	1.7586	.83
7. To develop professionally	29	.00	3.00	1.6552	.81
8. To en-culture desirable attitude	29	.00	3.00	1.5517	.63

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics on Aspects and Frequency That Senior Academic Staffs (Informally) Help Young Academic Staffs

Table 8 shows that senior academic staffs (informally) help young academic staffs, in most cases, sometimes, particularly in terms of the issues listed. The questions that generated the data were coded as always (4), most of the time (3), sometimes (2), and hardly ever (1). The ratings, therefore, fall within the range of 'some times' and 'hardly ever'. Whereas the issue needs further investigation, the case shows that senior academic staffs (informally) did not (in most cases) help young academic staffs. This finding aligns with the qualitative data, which have indicated that there were generation gaps and the supports were said to be conditional. The situation calls for the need for smooth relationship between the two groups as it helps to minimize generation conflicts as well as unnecessary distance between the two groups having common goals as citizens and professionals.

3.7. Implications of the Existing Collegial Practices for the Teaching Learning Process at the University

The Implications of the existing collegial practices for the teaching learning process at the University are far reaching at the system, practice and individual levels. The views of the respondents have been summarized in Table 9 below.

Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Essential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The experience shares and the advice gathered will help to play role models for juniors and students. One senior staff indicated, "How we act seems to be the one easily taken and recalled for a very long period of time". Whether this is a valuable judgment, nonetheless is arguable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "As to me" said one junior staff "it implies that the senior staffs think the junior staff should stand independently". At present the practice doesn't help to enhance the teaching learning activities, to create the real academic atmosphere in the University. This can be possible only if the existing collegial practices are improved. Three senior staffs also commented, "AAU is becoming less friendly" as the staff members are divided among various cliques and groups. The groups further commented, "The lives of some staffs seem to cease without clique formation". This affects everybody as it does not encourage easy and friendly interactions among the staffs and secure atmosphere at the system and individual levels. At the extreme, the situation affects the teaching and learning process resulting in valuing learning by heart and less regard for creativity. The result is producing less creative and responsible citizens. 	<p>It was commented that even though nobody is indispensable, there must be strong collegial relationship. Naturally, junior replaces senior staffs. The best approach is developing collegiality, mutual collaborations and learning from one another. This helps to build on good values and achievements. However, this is not adequately practiced in the University. The level of collegiality directly and indirectly affects the teaching and learning processes.</p>

Table 9: Implications of the Existing Collegial Practices for the Teaching Learning Process at the University

Whereas collegiality and support among staffs are cornerstones for the improvement and effectiveness of the teaching learning processes to happen, the observed state as can be depicted from Table 10 implies the reverse. It was learnt "The lives of some staffs would cease without clique formation". The cumulative effect of the observed state could be producing less creative, less friendly, less concerned, and less accountable citizenry.

3.8. Enabling Factors for Collegiality

The subjects have also enumerated a number of enabling factors for collegiality. Whereas many of the points listed are in the form of suggestions, they are believed to shed lights on the trends and the need for learning and improvement. The following are, therefore, among the enabling factors for collegiality that the subjects have listed.

- Transparency of leadership.
- Fairness and participatory approach in decision making.
- Good policy framework.
- Encouraging team projects, teaching, and research.
- Creating occasions/forums for the staff to: a) come together and discuss academic and social issues, and b) reflect their views about the management roles that may affect their day-to-day activities.
- Ensuring that each staff has equal access to: a) major activities taking place in the university, and b) utilities of the university.
- Enhancing trust among staff members.
- There must be accountability at every level for everything done.
- Relations of mutual support/instance of regarding others as equals.
- Merits, not personal relations, should be conditions for promotion cases.
- The human/creature elements should be considered in teaching learning.
- A system of needs assessment has to be practiced in every field.
- Enhancing easy and positive communication among the staff should be enhanced.
- Sense of mutual support and shared value of ownership for the job and the academics at large.
- Commitment towards producing a better staff for the future of the country.
- Informal discussions should be enhanced as it sustains learning from each other.
- Training time like Higher Diploma Program (HDP where professional issues are discussed at length should be made in place.

4. Summary, Conclusions and Implications

4.1. Summary of the Major Findings

This study intended to explore the level of collegiality at the Addis Ababa University. Data were generated from a purposively selected 23 academic staffs at the College of Education and Behavioral Studies (CEBS), Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (DFLL), Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures (AELC), and Institute of Educational Research (IER) using questionnaire. Also, interview was conducted with three staffs one each from CEBS, IER, and DFLL. The data generated by the questionnaire and the interview deal with the level of the practice/existence of a system of shared values and beliefs among academic staffs of the University in general and the staffs' respective institute/department in particular; the extent to which the academic staffs contribute to institutional decision making

procedures/processes; academic staffs valuing the existence of respect and mutual support between senior and junior academic staffs; and the implications of the existing collegial practices for the teaching learning process at the University. This sub-section, therefore, presents major findings of the data analyses.

- The level of the practices of a system of shared values and beliefs among academic staffs in particular and at the system level in general appear to be limited. Whereas some moderate practices of sharing relevant values and beliefs were acknowledged by few senior respondents as a tradition of the University for instance, freedom of thought (academic freedom), fair judgments (decisions), and honesty; the majority of the respondents, mainly the junior ones, have the opinion that shared values and beliefs are nonexistent.
- The level of academic staffs' contributions to institutional decision-making procedures/processes has not been developed as expected. Whereas at least by jurisdiction (University senate legislation) there are academic staff representations at all levels of decision-making starting from department up to senate level, the implementation seems inadequate.
- There are different views on the issue of the level of the existence of respect and mutual support between the senior and the junior academic staffs. In most cases whereas the seniors indicate that the relationship among staff members at AAU is not bad, and there is some moderate harmony, the juniors indicated that the type of relation between junior and senior staff members is conditional. In some/very few cases there is support between them when there are mutual benefits between the two groups not for the profession and the institution. At the extreme case, the juniors argued that the atmosphere is full of minimal respect among seniors and juniors, peer learning is not a common practice, and academic hierarchy prevails. In most cases, there is no systematic and regular mechanism for induction of the junior staff. They are left to learn hard way by themselves.
- Whereas the few cases of experience sharing and the advices of the senior staffs may imply the existence of role models for juniors and students, it was in rare cases to find that. The minimally rated support/help that the junior academic staffs get from the seniors were in terms of sharing experiences, ideas and practices; and encouraging the juniors to grow professionally. The overall trend, nonetheless, shows that there are some sorts of divisions among staff members. The practice doesn't help to enhance the teaching learning activities, to create the real academic atmosphere in the university. Whereas collegiality and support between the seniors and the juniors are cornerstones for the improvement and effectiveness of the teaching learning processes to happen, the observed state implies the reverse. The cumulative effect of the observed state could be producing less creative, less friendly, less concerned, and less responsible and less accountable citizenry.
- Among the enabling factors that the respondents enumerated include: transparency of leadership, fair and participatory decision making, good policy framework, team teaching and research, forums for discussions, equal accesses to facilities and information, trust among staff members, accountability, merit-based promotions, effective communication systems, mutual support and shared value of ownership for the job and the academics at large, and commitment towards producing a better staff for the future of the country.

4.2. Conclusions and Implications

In principle, collegiality thrives when there: a) is neither limitation nor abuse of academic freedom and autonomy; b) are no threatening and doubtful environments that challenge commitment to shared value ends; c) are appropriate/honest empowerment, commitment, and orientation to the shared goal; d) the academic institutions are viewed as places where free mind exists and is exercised; and e) is a balanced philosophical orientation of higher education institutions.

From the findings and discussions made so far, nonetheless, it can be concluded that collegiality is alive in words and less in practice. Since the system of shared values, beliefs, and respect for each other among academic staffs appear to be limited; collegiality is a "zombie" in our universities in general and at AAU in particular. The environments have been inundated with dissections, benefit-based and conditional intimacies rather than shared values and beliefs for the common value ends with a renewed sense of purpose. The situation seems to really menacing staffs, distorting their trusting each other, killing informal learning culture, which is the major learning and source of development in professional lifetime. The situation gradually makes the staffs stand still rather than showing improvement in line with the fast running world of life and work. It seems that very little conscious efforts have been made by our universities to create collegial environment to take place.

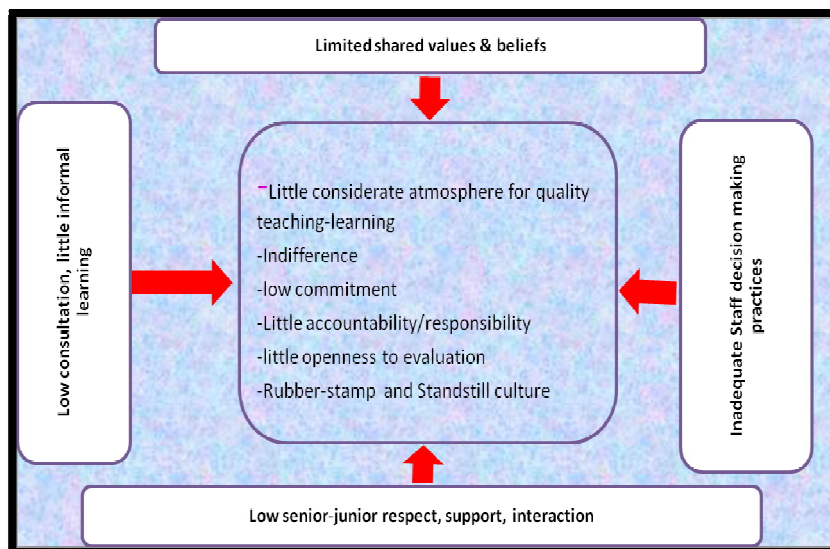


Figure 1: Implications of the Observed Collegial Practices at AAU

The implications are far reaching:

- Less considerate atmosphere for teaching learning;
- Less commitment;
- Indifference, low responsibility and less accountability;
- Low/no collaboration and consultation as the culture is filled with mistrust, putting some on critic others on defensive sides;
- Less open for evaluation culture;
- Less interaction and individual and institutional learning; and
- Lack of respect potentially leading to generation gap;

Such an environment perils, chills and kills collegiality. At the extreme, the situation implies rubberstamping sort of teaching and learning process resulting in valuing learning by heart and less regard for creativity with free mind set. The cumulative effect of the observed state implies the production of less creative, less friendly, less concerned, and less responsible and less accountable citizenry. These all call for:

- Retaining some form of worthwhile collegiality through enhancing individual staff's selflessness and courage together with a renewed and committed sense of purpose;
- Enhancing some enabling factors, among others: transparency, governmental magnanimous, academic freedom and institutional autonomy,
- Relentless efforts for enhancing and strengthening a sense of shared values, collegial work cultures and spirits, collaborative, learning and improvement orientations among academic staffs, the cumulative effect of which creates and sustains quality of teaching-learning, research, and services of the universities in general and that of the staffs in particular.

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