

Quality of Education: The Case of Jimma University

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Abstract The primary objective of this study was to investigate the quality of education, research and service in Jimma University. To attain this objective, a cross sectional survey method was used and the target population of regular students, teachers, department heads, and units of student support services. The findings of the study revealed that Jimma University has used different means to disseminate its mission, vision and values to its staff through various approaches. The University has also made its level best to enhance the quality of education through the implementation of continuous assessment, active learning approach, e-learning, remedial and affirmative action and application of community-based training. However, there was a variation among colleges and Institutes in their performance and hence the academic program and quality assurance director should do its level best to maintain uniformity among these units of the University. Students were also highly complaining the services provided in the university such as cafeteria, dormitory, student clinic and guidance and counseling and it requires the office to develop the capacity of counselors, nurses, lab technicians, pharmacists and cafeteria workers.

Keywords Quality of Education, Teaching and Learning, Vision, Mission, Goals, Research, Community Based Education

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Education is a corner stone of nation's development as it is crucial in producing skilled labor force that accelerates the pace of nation's social and economic advancement[14, 17,19]. Furthermore, Meulemester and Rochat[19] stated that most economists would probably agree that it is the human resources of a nation, not its capital or its material resources that ultimately determine the character and pace of its economic and social development. Principally, for developing countries, where growth is essential, if the countries are to climb out of poverty, education is particularly important. With this understanding therefore, most nations including Ethiopia today have been investing much on expanding education to their citizens[2].

Diversified body of literatures witnessed that higher education institutions play fundamental role in nation's civilization through producing professional that can facilitates growth in different economic and social sectors. Previously it was often viewed as an expensive and inefficient public service that largely benefited the wealthy and privileged. Now it is understood to make a necessary

contribution, in concert with other factors, to the success of national efforts to boost productivity, competitiveness and economic growth. Viewed from this perspective, higher education becomes an essential complement to educational efforts at other levels as well as to national initiatives to boost innovation and performance across economic sectors[24].

One of the major missions of higher learning Institutions (HIEs) is to train qualified and competent professional that are capable of playing considerable role in the socio-economic advancement of the country and protection of democratic culture and society. However, it is naïve or foolish to expect HEIs to play these roles without quality education and training. Many agree that due to massive expansion of HEIs in Ethiopia, the quality of education and training has been very much compromised and cognizant of this fact the government seems to turn its attention to improving the quality of education in HEIs. In connection with this, the Ethiopian HIEs proclamation states that quality training, education and service is one of the major guiding values of HEIs. The document further underlined that HEIs should develop internal quality assurance system as they are responsible for the quality of education and training they offer for their learners (FDRE, 2009). Jimma University also gave due attention to the quality of education it offers as ensuring the quality and relevance of teaching and learning at the university is stated as one strategic issue in its five years strategic plan[20]. This therefore, implies that studying the quality of education provided by these

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institutions is increasingly demanding.

Quality is one of the major themes in the past and continues to be the centre in the future in all affairs of higher education. According to Marjorie Lenn (1992), the assessment and enhancement of quality and attempts to define and measure quality are major issues for higher education in many countries. Globally, there is a growing demand for better higher education with fewer resources.

Quality in higher education is a sort of old wine in the new bottle. It is there from the beginning in a sense that higher education institutions have been using different mechanisms in order to maintain the quality of research, training and services they are providing. Policy making and management of higher education have traditionally been used as mechanisms of maintaining and enhancing academic standards and processes[12]. However, in the era of globalization, higher learning institutions become increasingly autonomous and characterized by tremendous change in types and number of programs but with reduced public funding, which result in stiff competition in attracting students[21]. Moreover, there is high pressure from employers and professions for aligning university education to workplace needs[6]. Therefore, the traditional quality control mechanism will be insufficient in helping a university survive in present competition with other universities (Inter-university council for East Africa, 2007). For that reason, a rigorous and systematic quality assurance mechanism that ensures the fulfillment of institution's own goals and the standards that apply for higher education institutions in general is imperative[12.22].

Strengthening the position of higher education demands well organized internal and external quality assurance system. The internal quality assurance refers to the institution's policies or mechanisms that enable it to speculate its whereabouts in achieving the intended purpose and clarifying good practices and bottleneck that threatening quality. Institution engaged in these activities to assure itself that it is on the way to fulfilling its vision and mission in terms of input, processes and outputs[10].

The above mentioned scenario depicts the need for a country to have a system by which its higher education institutions continuously evaluating their performances by themselves as well as having of external body that validate the operation of the institutions on the basis of predetermined criteria. In response to this, Ethiopian government established an independent agency, namely Higher Education Relevancy and Quality Agency that deal with the quality assurance and the enhancement of quality and relevance of higher education in Ethiopia (Federal Republic Democratic Ethiopia[FDRE],[4]).

Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency [HERQA], in order to conduct audits, which is one of its activities[7], stipulates higher education institutions to submit self-evaluation document[8]. Accordingly, each higher education institutions in the country are demanded to prepare self-evaluation document based on ten focus areas directed by HERQA[9]. The ten focus areas for institutional

audit are:

- Vision, Mission and Educational Goals: Having clear, relevant, and realistic vision, mission and goals and making them known to stakeholders is highly demanded from higher learning institutions.

- Governance and Management System: Appropriate, effective, participatory and autonomous governance and organizational structure that facilitate the successful accomplishment of the University's vision, mission, and goals of the institution.

- Infrastructure and Learning Resources: Availability of sufficient and appropriate physical facilities (classrooms, offices, lecture halls, cafeteria, dormitories, clinics, sport fields and so on); and learning resources (library, computer centers with appropriate software and hardware, audio-visual equipment, internet access, laboratories, workshops, open/mobile clinics) to run programs effectively.

- Academic and Support Staff: existence of sufficient and appropriate academic and supportive staff of the University's programs is the single most determinant factor of quality education. Thus, the following points need to be in place so as to judge the status of the university in relation to staff. These are: adequate number of qualified staff; appropriate student-staff ratio; suitable staff in terms of mix of qualification, gender, experience; policy of appointment and promotion; transparent staff appraisal system and continuous staff development practice.

- Student Admission and Support Services: An effective Higher Education learning need to have clear and transparent admission and placement policies; adequate and suitable student support services and academic counseling, and effective student council and students' involvement in the university's affairs.

- Program Relevance and Curriculum: Having of need based, problem solving and harmonized curriculum.

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment: use of appropriate teaching, learning and assessment that will enable the production of self-reliant and competent graduate in the labor market is required from an effective higher education institution.

- Student Progression and Graduate Outcomes: The quality of education provided by higher education can be seen from the view of the extent to which it documents the students' learning progress and the effectiveness of the graduates.

- Research and Outreach Activities: besides training students, higher education institution expected to undertake problem solving research, deliver consultancy and engage in community service.

- Internal Quality Assurance: Higher education institution need to have a planned and systematic way of monitoring and revising programs, and infrastructure in order to enhance quality of training, education and services it is providing.

Though Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency[HERQA], identified the aforementioned parameters as indicators of quality education, for the sake of manageability and feasibility of the study we have framed

the indicators/parameters with eight of them as shown in the diagram below. The researchers wanted to exclude the issues of student progression and graduate outcomes as well as research and outreach activities with the argument that though they are important they can be implied by emphasizing on the inputs and processes.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Since education plays a paramount role in the development endeavors, it necessitates countries of the world to give due emphasis to education quality at all levels. As stated by Newton[16] one of the legacies of the 1990s is that quality became a central concern in higher education. The Jomtien Declaration in 1990 and the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000 also recognized quality of education as a prime determinant for growth and development. The Dakar Framework for Action further avowed that quality was ‘at the heart of education’– a fundamental determinant of enrolment, retention and achievement. UNESCO,[11] (in Pigozzi,[15]) also resolutely reaffirmed the importance of good quality education as a priority and it promotes access to good quality education as a human right and supports a rights-based approach to all educational activities.

If so, there has to be mechanisms that are helpful in maintaining quality education at higher learning institutions. Regarding this, Materu said that there had been various mechanisms used by different countries of the world to ensure the quality of higher education which include the

external examiner system in the UK and other Commonwealth countries, the American system of accreditation, and government ministerial control in much of Europe and elsewhere in the world.

Similarly, Ethiopia is currently reforming and expanding its higher education system to maintain quality of education. The Higher Education Proclamation (351/2003) was issued with the aim of launching wide range reforms to the higher education system and setting up key agencies to guide and oversee the education sector. These organizations are the Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) and the Higher Education Strategy Center (HESC). In addition to these, the Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) has been implemented in order to assist in quality improvements within public Higher Education Institutions. Thus, the agencies started working towards improving the quality of education at higher learning institutions, though; it is difficult to say that all aspects of education quality can clearly be addressed with absence or lack of scholarly and scientific researches. In addition to this, all the public universities in Ethiopia (of which one is Jimma University) are undergone the reform processes (BPR) with the intention to provide quality services to its customers and started internally evaluating its effectiveness. Accordingly, Jimma University has undergone a reform process (BPR) and started evaluating its effectiveness both internally and externally with the target to improve the qualities of the services provided by the university.



Diagram 1. Conceptual framework of Education Quality indicators in Jimma University

Thus, it is timely and zealously demanding to undertake scholarly researches in these regards to prove or disprove the results of internal as well as external evaluations and to seek for further improvements. Hence, it is with such driving intensions that the researchers wanted to investigate the quality of education in Jimma University.

To this end, the researchers have used the following basic research questions as leading frames in investigating the education qualities of Jimma University.

1.2.1. Basic Research Questions

1. What is the current quality status of education in Jimma University when examined in light of the eight focus areas framed above?

2. Is there a difference between teachers' and students' perception about quality of education in Jimma University?

3. Is there a difference among colleges in promoting quality of education?

4. What efforts have been made so far to enhance quality of education in this university?

5. What are the perceptions of students towards the services provided by Jimma University?

6. What are the major constraints impeding the quality of education in Jimma University?

1.2.2. Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The main objective of this study was to investigate the quality of education, research and service in Jimma University thereby to recommend options for overcoming the constraints.

Specific Objectives

Specifically the objectives of this study were to:

- Explore the current status of education quality in Jimma university in terms of some of the focus areas
- Dig out if there is a difference among teachers and students regarding quality of education, service and research undertaking
- Identify if there is a difference among colleges in promoting quality of education, services and research
- Analyze efforts made so far to enhance quality of education in this university
- Assess the perceptions of students towards the services provided by the university
- Identify the major constraints impeding the quality of education in Jimma University

1.3. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would:

- Create awareness for all concerned bodies about the current quality status of education in Jimma University.
- Benefit the university administrators in compiling information that can be used in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the programs that geared towards maintaining quality of education.

- Contribute towards enhancing and ensuring education quality in higher education through policy measures emanating from recommendations of the study.

- Serve as a springboard for further investigation on the issue under discussion.

1.4. Scope/Delimitation of the Study

This study was confined to assess the quality of education in Jimma University. It explored quality in terms of the eight dimensions or areas of focuses identified by HERQA. Therefore, conceptually this research was delimited to investigate the quality of education in Jimma University by emphasizing on these dimensions of quality in the teaching learning process. Moreover, mechanism that can help in improving the practices and factors that affect the practices were also addressed.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

The following term is operationally defined hereunder with the intention to indicate its meanings in the context of this study.

Quality: Though it is conceptualized differently by various educators, in this study quality is defined as "fitness for purpose". It is the extent to which the set goals have been achieved.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Research Design

A cross sectional survey was used to assess the quality of education, service and research in Jimma University. The study employed qualitative approach to capture qualitative aspects of quality from different stakeholders.

2.2. Area of the Study

Jimma University is one of the biggest public higher learning educations in the country, which is located at south west part at a distance of 355 km from the main city. The University has undergone organizational structural reform that would enable it provides efficient and effective services two years back as a result of BPR implementation. Accordingly, there are five colleges and two Institutes and these all are the focus of the study.

2.3. Target Population

Representative samples from regular students, students union, teachers, department heads, and unit heads of student support service were included in the study.

2.4. Sample Size, Sampling Techniques and Procedures

The total numbers of regular students currently enrolled in the university is beyond 10,000. A growing body of literature recommends that in situation where the total number of population exceeds 10,000; its 10% become representative sample. Therefore, 10% of the total students were considered

whereby proportional number of males and females were given due attention. Regarding teachers, the total academic staff population is about 960 excluding recently hired ones. 20% of them, i.e., 192 academic staff were drawn randomly for the study. Moreover, to get valid and representative samples, multistage sampling approach was utilized. This helped us to ensure the inclusion of departments from the colleges, and representative number of students from each batch of a particular department and teachers as well. Since, it is difficult to consider the whole departments under colleges, a minimum 50% of the departments in each college were selected randomly using lottery method.

2.5. Data Collection Instruments

The study employed different instruments so as to assess the quality of education, services and research of the university. These are interview, self-administered questionnaire, focus group discussion, document analysis and observation.

Self-administered questionnaire: open ended questionnaire were employed to solicit basic information from students and teachers.

Interview: Interview guidelines were used to guide in depth interview with top officials of the university (presidents and vice presidents, and senior directors), deans, directors, coordinators, and heads.

2.6. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed qualitatively through descriptions or narrations based on the themes formulated under each college/institute.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1. Within Colleges Analysis

In order to assess the quality of education in higher learning institutions, HERQA, 2006C identified 10 parameters. However, this survey study was focused on some of the parameters suggested by HERQA to assess quality: parameters focused on input and process.

Accordingly, the current quality status of education per college/institute was presented here under.

College/Institute	Staff awareness about the d Vision, mission and values of the University	<i>CBE Practices</i>	<i>Curriculum Development and Review</i>	<i>Teaching-Learning, Assessment and Grading</i>
College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine	<p>Cyber links, availing the information in hard and soft copy at the department level, meetings and Plasma TV display are major means of communicating vision, mission and values of the university to staff and students.</p> <p>Majority of the staff seem to have internalized the vision, mission and values of the university</p>	<p>The college has conducted SWOT analysis involving stakeholders to assess the relevance and implementation of CBE.</p> <p>The college has contextualized CBE with the help of partners from The Netherlands</p> <p>CBE is proved to be relevant</p>	<p>The curricula are need-based, problem solving and harmonized. However, some of the curricula are described as theory dominated, which was copy-paste of old curriculum from sister Universities.</p> <p>Hence it is difficult to say that all curricula are need based and problem solving as long as contemporary issues and innovative teaching and learning methods are not emphasized.</p>	<p>Teaching and learning in the college seems to incline towards student-centered approach.</p> <p>The college is doing its best in making student assessment transparent, valid and anonymous marking of exam papers.</p> <p>Examination committee at each department assess the quality of submitted examinations, giving a code according to students past achievement so as to discourage cheating, arranging for anonymous marking</p> <p>The grading system. currently utilized by the college is norm referenced across all departments</p>
College of Natural Science	<p>Staff members are also being informed about BPR, values and missions of the university on occasions like AC, DC and general meetings, conferences and workshops.</p> <p>All staff members and students did not fully and equally internalized values, principles, missions</p>	<p>CBE activities are highly tied to the community problem. The college has been receiving letters of recognition from the surrounding schools as a result of interventions made by students using CBE as an entry to community service</p>	<p>For undergraduate program the curriculum is harmonized.</p> <p>The harmonized curriculum is available both in hard and soft copies. It is difficult to say that the curriculum is fully demand driven as the college does not have evidence whether or not need assessment was carried out before the development of this harmonized curriculum</p>	<p>Instructors have willing/intention to implement student centered teaching method. However, teaching methods being implemented in the college by majority of the instructors is teacher centered.</p> <p>Instructors are oriented to implement continuous assessment; it seems the implementation is not uniform as the instructors' understanding about continuous assessment is different.</p>

	and vision of the university as the effort made by the college is insignificant			
College of Social Science and Law	<p>The college has used different opportunities in disseminating information about BPR, Vision, Mission and Values of the University through AC and DC meetings, University web site, distributing the document to all the staff members in both hard and soft copies and other sensitization workshops. However, this does not mean that all the staff members have equal understanding on the matter and working towards it accordingly, such as newly employed staff members and students.</p>	<p>There is a common understanding among all the college members that CBE is very important and somewhat to be maintained, if it is in accordance with the reality of the departments.</p> <p>There is an exemplary practice of CBE in the school of law such as provision of legal services in the surrounding Woredas which is very much appreciated by the community. The major problem of CBE lies on intervention phase as students are committing unnecessary or overambitious promises to the community where the community is expecting a lot</p>	<p>In this college, most of the curricula are developed after need assessment is carried out. Hence, the curricula in the college are newly developed, need based and hence are problem solving including the post-graduate curricula.</p> <p>Some of the curricula have lost relevance due to avoidance of important elements such as practicum/attachment an example is department of Psychology.</p>	<p>In this college, everyone is well aware of the primary essence of active learning method.</p> <p>As it was responded by the heads of the department, teachers and students the approach most frequently used by teachers is a kind of mixed approach i.e. some teachers use students centred but some are still dominating the teaching learning activity.</p> <p>This is mainly emanated from variation among staff members as there are academic staff members who have no any instructional skills training as responded by some teachers.</p> <p>Teachers are attributing the absence of active learning method to lack of module, class-size, student attitude and volume of the course/content.</p> <p>There is also a good attempt to implement continuous assessment in the college, but there was confusion among staff members on its conceptualization and practices as some saw it as mere repetition of exams</p>
College of Medical Science and Public Health	<p>In order to internalize the essences of the university's Vision, Mission, Values and BPR concepts among the staff members and students, trainings and awareness creation meetings were conducted.</p> <p>However, the responses from the department heads indicate some reservations in which they said that new staff members were not communicated well and they have no understandings about the issue.</p>	<p>The college is considered as the mother of CBE and its practices can be considered as an exemplary for others. Its demand is also high at this moment as specified by the college.</p> <p>CBE is practiced in groups with periodic supervision (except instructor to supervise) but the practical attachments are made individually.</p> <p>Except for summer program CBE is practiced based on n-1 principle in the college by excluding the clinical years of students' study time. However, it does not move as expected due to several hindering factors</p>	<p>The college reported that all the curricula of the college at undergraduate level are need-based, problem-solving and harmonized at national level. But, the postgraduate curricula are not harmonized. As far as students' satisfaction with the curricula is concerned, majority of them are satisfied with it. However, there are questions raised from the students regarding the fate of the departments that are not encouraged by Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health E.g. Pharmacy</p>	<p>As reported by the college, the methods of teaching frequently used are more of student-centered and more works are done by students.</p> <p>Independent learning is more known in the college and students have engaged themselves in self-learning.</p> <p>But, the views of students seems deviated from the points raised above especially for first year. They described that teaching-methods mostly used for first year students are more of teacher-centered which was manifested by dictation supported by LCD presentation.</p> <p>Regarding the assessment, the college stated that they are well known from the very beginning in implementing continuous assessment and fixed scale grading. However, students reported that the assessment process in the college lacks transparency, not practiced as written on the course out line and has great problems</p>

College of Business and Economics	<p>Staff members were communicated about the reform from the beginning along with the university's vision, mission and values. They disclosed that during development of BPR, departments were communicating the BPR documents to all staff including those on study leave via their e-mail.</p> <p>Besides, having essence of BPR as an agenda for staff meetings and letting departments develop their own vision, mission and values on the basis of that of university are gearing toward internalization of the essence of BPR and University's vision, mission and values. However, this doesn't mean that all stakeholders speak the same word about the BP</p>	<p>All participants of the study from the college admired the philosophy of Community Based Education. However, they uncover the limitations it has particularly in relation to its implementation.</p> <p>Community fatigue, Coordination problem and Resistance from teachers are the major challenges</p>	<p>The curricula are need-based since the review was done on the basis of need assessment.</p> <p>The curricula were harmonized and problem solving by their nature and team charters were developed in such a way that it equips students with the competences required in the real world of work. However, staff involved in the FGD put in question the truthfulness of this notion. They argued that the curricula were not based on the national demand. They were the copy-paste of the old curriculum. By and the large, the course name, objectives and contents were not matching with the detail contents, meant that contents were directly copied from the old curricula</p>	<p>the methodology utilized was more of teachers dominated approach even if they agreed on team charter to make the lesson students centered learning.</p> <p>Students participated in the FGD described teaching approach as solely teacher dominated.</p> <p>Interview with the heads and document received from the department showed that departments were progressively working on implementing Continuous Assessment. Factors like large number of students, teaching load, and handling different groups that make difficulty in arranging invigilators and classroom for tests negatively affected its effective implementation.</p>
College of Engineering and Technology	<p>Soft copies of the BPR documents were distributed to the departments. Moreover, it was attempted to communicate the basic essence of BPR on various staff meetings. In connection with this, some departments have the belief that values, missions and visions of the university were well communicated. However, it was not denied that all staff members do not have sufficient insight about the BPR and roles expected of them as well</p>	<p>Though some efforts have made to implement CBE, it seems that the implementation of the program lacks quality due to shortage of resources and staff members' attitude towards the program.</p>	<p>According to the dean, industries need was assessed (need assessment was carried out).</p> <p>Thus it is possible to say that the existing curriculum is need based. However, the teachers have a doubt and reserved to say that curriculum is demand driven. They argued that some courses focus more on fundamental sciences that the students can hardly use in the world of work</p>	<p>Teaching method being implemented in the college is teacher centered. Large class size, shortage of class rooms, instructional skill's deficiencies on the part of the teacher are argued as major factors for poor practice of student centered teaching method in the college.</p> <p>Efforts made to implement continuous assessment in the college are insignificant for the same reason as teaching method</p>

Institute of Education and Professional Development Studies	It is possible to say that the staff members have internalized the essence of BPR and the vision and mission of Jimma University despite the variation among in accepting and resisting the change.	Concerning CBE, the Institute is developing new framework and guideline to modify the instruments and to identify its right community which are actually schools and education offices	The curricula under the institute of education and professional development studies are need based. Because they were developed after study was made at national level by the Ministry of Education and identified the fundamental problems in school leadership, supervision and school improvement program.	The most common method of teaching used among the Institute staff is student centred approach. As the number of student and class size is manageable, active learning approach is very easy to practice or use in the class Concerning the application of continuous assessment in the Institute, teachers and students have confirmed that most of the teachers were applying continuous assessment in the form of class activity, sudden test, quizzes, homework, and project work
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3.2. Cross- Colleges Analysis

As can be seen from the above table, noteworthy efforts have been made by the colleges to help staff members internalize visions, missions and values of the university though there seems to be variation among colleges. Cyber link, plasma display, meetings, workshops and the university's official web site are major ways of communicating this information. College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine seems to be in a better position in this regard whereas College of Engineering and Technology seems to achieve less with compared to others. Vision and mission are sources of inspiration for employees. Teachers and leaders of HEIs make thousands of decisions daily, often without the data needed to make informed choices. Leaders with clearly articulated goals are often more effective problem solver. When tackling messy problems often faced in colleges, the visionary leaders' vision becomes substitutes for information (Hallinger and Heck, 2000).

The result of the evaluation further revealed that all staff members did not equally, uniformly and sufficiently understood the values, visions and missions of the university in all colleges and working towards it. This implies that if the university has to materialize its visions and missions, the colleges need to work more in assisting staff members internalize the issues in focus. Clearly defined vision allows HEIs leaders and teachers to identify important features hidden within swampy problem situations. This provides a sounder basis on which to formulate situations. It also enables these leaders to take a more consistent approach to solving diverse problems by linking problem interpretation to core values. The power of personal vision lies on both its impact on one's behavior and its potential to energize others. Clearly articulated vision shapes action, invests our work with meaning and reminds us why we are educators. When vision is shared with employees, it becomes a catalyst of transformation (Hallinger and Heck, 2000). Vision is also identified as an important facet underlying organizational learning. Within the model of organizational learning, the capacity of educational institutions to learn new ways of

thinking and practicing is tied to the extent to which leaders are visionary. However, the result of this study generally shows that even though there are attempts to make staff know the mission and vision of the university a lot has to be done in this regard.

Majority of the staff members and students appear to accept the principle and philosophy of CBE except its actual contribution to students due to its poor quality of implementation. Significant attempts have been made by the colleges to customize CBE to fit in to the nature of their programs and ensure its relevance to the quality of training they offer. In this regard Colleges of Health and Medical Sciences and Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and Social Science are at better position. Moreover, its implementation is also not uniform (some follow n-2 formula Eg College of Technology and Engineering while others n-1) across the colleges. The major impediments to the implementation of CBE are weak supervision, community fatigue and unfavorable attitude of some staff and students towards the program. This implies that if CBE has to achieve its goal, a lot should be done by the colleges to overcome its major impediments.

As far as curriculum is concerned, except some, majority of the curricula are harmonized, need based and they are also available both in hard and soft copies as an input to ensure quality of their programs. In connection with this, the Ethiopian HIEs proclamation states that quality training, education and service is one of the major guiding values of HEIs and HEIs should develop internal quality assurance system as they are responsible for the quality of education and training they offer for their learners (FDRE, 2009). It was also revealed that some of the undergraduate curricula are not need-driven as need assessment was not carried out. However, the post graduate curricula are demand-driven as the university made need assessment before their development. It seems that there is no variation among colleges with regard to the relevance of the curricula. In addition majority of the curricula also seem to be not problem solving as the teaching approach is more of theory oriented. This implies that if the university has to realize its

mission, those curricula which are not demand driven should be exhaustively identified and reviewed as well. The colleges should also work to balance theory and practice of their teaching approach so as to make their training problem solving.

Most of the colleges have the position that teaching learning has to be student centered and active as well. But still many of them are applying teacher-centered approach of teaching. College of Natural Science and Institute of Education are performing better in making the teaching-learning interactive and student centered. This is due to the reason that in these colleges instructions are technology supported (smart class rooms), staff members are encouraged to participate in pedagogical skill trainings and relatively manageable number of students in classrooms. But college of Engineering and Technology, Business and Economics and Public Health and Medical Sciences have shown insignificant improvements.

Regarding students assessment, some colleges have shown dramatic improvements although others are still applying the traditional approach to assessment, i.e. only mid and final exam. In this regard, Institute of Education, College of Natural sciences and college of Agriculture and veterinary Medicine are in a better position. In these college students assessment is progressive and accounts for 100% of the total assessment. The case in colleges of Business and Economics, Engineering and Technology and Public Health and Medical Science need attention. Particularly, in College of Engineering and Technology shortage of qualified and experienced staff and large number of students are the major candidates for difficulties in implementing active learning and continuous assessment. According to higher education proclamation of Ethiopia HEIs have the mandate to develop programmes of study and provide higher education; prepare and supply qualified graduates in knowledge, skills, and attitudes on the basis of needs of the country; and award academic qualifications in accordance with its programmes.

Furthermore, the proclamation states that these institutions have the mandate to develop and implement relevant curricula and research programmes; create new or close existing programmes; set up its organizational structure and enact and implement its internal rules and procedures (FDRE, 2009). Contrary to this statement the findings of this study reveal that some of the programs run in the university have less relevance to when seen in light of the country's need. This might indicate the need to review these curricula so as to make them more relevant.

Colleges' effort in initiating self-learning is not promising. This is manifested through low attention given to e-learning, module writing and preparation of relevant materials that can be uploaded on the e-learning plat form. As far as e-learning is concerned, colleges of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and Engineering and Technology are in a better position.

Good culture of public defense of proposals, having thematic areas and multidisciplinary research and

dissemination of research findings to the end users. Having fast and short registration process, first day first class, SMART classroom, facilities for enhancing self-learning and inclination for making student-centered instruction are the good qualities of the colleges.

Evidence based contextualization of CBE practices is among the strong side of the college (for instance, discussion made with stakeholders to reduce community fatigue). Letting students type their senior papers which has dual purposes: help students develop computer skills and minimize misuse of resources by paying students for typing services. This practice according to Pigozzi 2008, match with developing the skill of learning by doing as a means of quality assurance in higher education.

3.3. Perceptions of Students on the Services Provided

3.3.1. Cafeteria/ Food Services

As far as food service of the university is concerned, it was said that there are improvements in reducing the students stay time to get the services (for instance, reducing it to less than 3 minutes). It was also stated that there is flexibility in revising the menu and every decision is made inclusive of students' representatives/Students' food committee. It was also observed that students' representatives were there while 'Enjera' and breads were received from suppliers. In addition to this, the representatives have got the right to participate in decision making as indicated on the format developed for receiving deliverables from the suppliers. As stated by one of the officer in this area, students have the right to reject those items that have problems of quality and no payment is done for such deliverables without confirmation from them.

The attempt of providing personal and academic services for students is a means of arranging conducive learning environment which is of course confirmed from the findings of this study, Pigozzi 2008. However, students described that it is deteriorated after BPR implementation. The director's office and other coordinators also said that serious problems are created by the suppliers which in turn created inconvenience to follow the menu program. Students further elaborated that, though students' representatives are available while receiving the items from the suppliers sometimes there are gaps observed. On top of this, the students concluded that the food services are poor in quality, quantity and variety and it needs due attention.

Regarding the sanitation status of the cafeterias and the surrounding environments, the office stated that improvements are brought in this regard even though there are acute and unsolved problems (for instance, sewage problems reached at chronic stages). But the situation is promising in the college of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine.

There is also shortage and unwise use of water, poor quality chairs and insufficient Chairs as compared to the numbers of students in the cafeterias. Furthermore, lack of

uniforms, rooms for washing and dressing for the cafeteria workers are some of the factors negatively affecting the service delivery.

3.3.2. Dormitory Services

Regarding dormitory services there are impressive progresses seen to improve the services. For instance, the availability of DSTVs which reduced grievances among students, beauty salons and mini libraries as well as computer labs opened around the dormitories.

Nevertheless, there are also areas that still need improvements like shortage of water supply, improper use of the resources, sanitation problems in some dorms and blocks, few numbers of proctors that lead to lack of frequent follow up to understand the status of the services provided, reluctances from some students to clean their dormitories and environments. According to Pigozzi 2008, provision of conducive living and learning environment is one important indicator in the framework of measuring quality.

In some cases, there is also large number of students in a single dorm in which more than 42 students are forced to live in one hall/dorm which may also lead to serious problems if it is not well cleaned. In the main campus, improper use of resources (for instance, embezzlements of water pipe parts that lead to shortages of water) is very common.

3.3.3. Students' Clinic Services

Many scholars in the area have stressed that; student support services promote success in college by providing comprehensive academic assistance. Through professional mentoring, we nurture a sense of connection and community and provide students with access to available resources to support, encourage and nurture a meaningful college experience as the goal is to increase the retention and graduation rates of college students who demonstrate academic need and are first generation, low income, or have a documented disability. This goal is based upon the belief that all students, regardless of age, family background, learning style, or presence of a disability, should have equal opportunity to reach their full personal, academic, and career potential. It is reported that the clinic provides services to the students during the working days and hours. In addition to this, there is also a referring program to the hospital during the night time and in case of sever health problems. Thus, all the services expected at clinic level are provided to the students as stated by the clinic head and other responsible bodies.

However, there are a lot of complains from the students regarding the services provided and the ethics of the workers in the clinic. As they stated, the clinic is poorly functioning and the workers themselves are not serving them well. Furthermore, shortages of water in the clinic, insufficient numbers of professionals as compared to the numbers of students, and others aggravated the problems there. It is common to observe conflicts between students and the service providers regularly which can further elaborated the

availability of problems in the service provisions.

The setup of the clinic is not convenient to deliver proper services. Therefore, due emphasis is highly required in this area to improve the service delivery as per the standards set in BPR. It is also better to examine the clinic's services in terms of time duration.

3.3.4. Recreation Services

Concerning recreation services there are important progresses seen in expanding and diversifying the services. For instance, opening of DSTV rooms in the university compounds based on the needs of students, efforts made to provide computer and internet services around the dormitories, etc. Student lounges themselves started providing various services even though it is highly affected with shortage of seats and limited spaces to accommodate students. There is also the intension to make the living environments more attractive and clean as that of the college of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine.

Nevertheless, there are complaints on the recreation services which are related to shortage of seats, improper distribution and location of the lounges, problems on the services provided.

Thus, it is possible to say that there are promising efforts made to provide well-furnished and quality services of recreation to the students though more improvements are highly expected by the students.

3.3.5. Guidance and Counseling Services

Formerly this service was delivered to the students by professionals in the overtime bases which in turn affect the effectiveness of the service delivery as stated by officers from students' service offices. This year, the approach is being changed to providing basic guidance and counseling services by training the instructors from all departments.

However, it has some problems on its implementation for example, totally neglecting/overseeing of serious guidance and counseling issues which in turn resulted in increased numbers of students with such cases. With regard to student support and services Dagn L. 2013 identified the following: individual counseling sessions with well-trained and knowledgeable counselors, peer mentoring from upper - division students who are themselves successful in college and committed to helping their peers be or become successful, information on campus and community resources that can help students achieve their academic and personal goals, space where students can meet, hang out, and study with other students and a series of workshops aimed at helping students succeed and thrive academically and personally at.

3.4. Major Constraints Impeding the Quality of Education, Research and Services

There are some factors that are hampering the quality of education, research and student services in Jimma University. Among these, the major prevailing factors across all colleges

are:

➤ According to the BPR, colleges have the authority to run their budgets. However, the result of this evaluation revealed that the college does not have the mandate to make decisions on resource utilization.

➤ The long and bureaucratic procedure of purchasing system that result in unnecessary delayance and less quality and quantity supplies. Merging of CBE, Research and Postgraduates studies is impairing the performances of the office.

➤ Absence of detailed guidelines and references on Academic Remedial Action, Continuous Assessment, CBE and Research is negatively influencing performances across the university.

➤ A community fatigue and logistics constraint is being a major bottleneck for successful implementation of CBE.

➤ Limited fund for research (especially for Natural Science research) is also negatively affecting the participation teaching staff.

➤ There was unclear chain of command (student services director with senior director for student service and registry and office of student support in the college of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine.

➤ High teaching load, large class size and in adequate insight of teachers regarding continuous assessment and student centered instruction are major factors affecting the implementation of student-centered instruction and continuous assessment.

4. Conclusions

1. Most of the curricula in the university were developed from needs assessment from the stakeholders and possible to say it is problem solving, need driven and harmonized one too.

2. There was a fast and campaign based students' admission and registration for first year students among staffs and this implies the presence of better coordination in the university.

3. There is a maximum effort on creating external link for research and this shows the due attention given to innovation and scientific thinking in the University.

4. CBE is proved to be relevant and significant efforts have been put by colleges to customize it to their context. Nevertheless, colleges seems to remain with long journey to improve its implementation

5. Some training programs are not need based while others are.

6. There is favourable attitude from all stakeholders about continuous assessment and active learning methods. However, its implementation is yet not to the desired level.

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