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THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN NURTURING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN ERITREA

El papel de la educación superior en el desarrollo de la ciudadanía global en Eritrea

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ABSTRACT

This study argues that there are important potentialities in the interplay between critical pedagogy and course content in Eritrean Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for cultivating graduates who are prepared to act as global citizens. To understand whether these potentialities are being realized, an examination of HEIs' pedagogical practices is necessary. Thus, through document analysis and semi-structured interviews, this study asked, how do students and staff at Eritrean HEIs experience these institutions' pedagogical practices? Despite different challenges, the study concluded that Eritrean HEIs, through their use of mixed pedagogical practices that illustrate both critical and semi-interactive pedagogical experiences, are indeed equipping their students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act as responsible global citizens. Without generalization, the research to some extent can be considered as explanatory to other developing states and nation-states with similar conditions as Eritrea.

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KEY WORDS: Eritrea, Higher Education, Pedagogical Practice, Globalization, Global Citizenship.

RESUMEN

Este estudio argumenta que existen potencialidades importantes en la interacción entre la pedagogía crítica y el contenido de los cursos en las instituciones de educación superior de Eritrea (IES) para formar a unos graduados que se están preparados para actuar como ciudadanos globales. Para comprender si se están desarrollando estas potencialidades, es necesario examinar las prácticas pedagógicas de las IES. Así, a través del análisis documental y de entrevistas semiestructuradas, este estudio se preguna, ¿cómo experimentan los estudiantes y el personal de las IES de Eritrea las prácticas pedagógicas de estas instituciones? A pesar de los diferentes desafíos, el estudio concluye que las IES de Eritrea, a través del uso de prácticas pedagógicas mixtas que ilustran experiencias pedagógicas críticas y semi-interactivas, están equipando a sus estudiantes con los conocimientos, habilidades y actitudes para actuar como ciudadanos globales responsables. Aunque sin poder generalizar, la investigación puede considerarse como explicativa de otros estados en vías de desarrollo y estados-nación con condiciones similares a Eritrea.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Eritrea, Educación Superior, Práctica Pedagógica, Globalización, Ciudadanía Global.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The world today is characterized by increasing ethnic and cultural diversity of nation-states (SUA'REZ-OROZCO, 2001; BANKS, 2004) and new economic and cultural orientation (MARGINSON, 2010). According to STROMQUIST (2002), education in general and higher education in particular is the main actor in the introduction and sustainability of any new economic, social and cultural order. Higher education is key element in the formation of global environment, being foundational to knowledge, skill and values, to sustaining complex communities within and across its borders (MARGINSON, 2010). That is why higher education, being the main tool for justice, is aimed to contribute to the socialization of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens. Higher education in Eritrea is meant to produce graduates equipped with a skill for employment as well as global citizenship (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2012). This indicates that education in Eritrea is meant to simultaneously nurture qualified graduates to respond the existing world market (STROMQUIST, 2002), and to engage in rational and enlightened thinking to make the world a better and safe place (STREITWIESER & LIGHT, 2010). This study focuses on the role of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) pedagogical

practices in nurturing the skill for global citizenship.

The study seeks to explore the experience of staff and students in their HEIs pedagogical practices. It argues that the type of pedagogical practices HEIs use greatly affects not only the type of social and cultural order, but also the type of citizens produced within a country. On one hand, HEIs that follow banking education produce a loyal citizen so as to adapt and cope with any hegemonic structure (FREIRE, 2010; BURBULES & TORRES, 2000; GADOTTI, 1996). On the other hand, HEIs through critical pedagogy are responsible for teaching individuals the skills that will enable them to critically examine things, participate in the struggles of the present and future within and beyond their cultural communities and work for their transformation (KELLNER, 2002; FREIRE, 2010). It can be noted that pedagogical practices determine the way individuals think and act even for their own benefit and freedom.

Studies from around the world show that there has been increasing pressure to ensure the capacity of higher education students to think and act globally in order to effectively challenge and address any political, socio-economic, and environmental problems on a global scale (STONER, PERRY, WADSWORTH, STONER, & TARRANT, 2014; MARGINSON, 2010; BANKS, 2004; ROMAN, 2003; BANKS & BANKS, 1995). However, there is no any published research regarding the role of higher education in the production of global citizenship in Eritrea, confirming the policy of the Ministry of Education.

Thus, this paper asks the central question, how do students and staff at Eritrean HEIs experience these institutions' pedagogical practices? An examination of this question will allow for a consideration of the potential ways in which these HEIs pedagogical practices lead students to become global citizens. The study makes an input in filling the lack of research and shaping the methods in practice regarding the production of skilled global citizens in Eritrea. Although this research may not be generalizable, to some extent the study can be considered as explanatory to other small states especially developing states and nation-states with similar conditions as Eritrea. In addition, the study extends the literature on global citizenship and pedagogy by investigating how HEIs foster global citizenship, and it can be used as a base for further studies on teaching for global citizenship.

2. ERITREA'S SITUATION

Eritrea is a small country of 6 million people and six administrative regions located in the Horn of Africa. Eritrea has nine ethnic groups, each with its own distinctive culture (including its own language). Eritreans are predominantly Christian or Muslim and most live in rural areas and make their living through farming and herding.

The history of Eritrea is a history of oppression and struggle for independence. Eritrea was a colony of different foreign countries which shaped its socio-economic, political and cultural conditions; the main being the Italian, the British and the Ethiopian colonization. All these colonizers, as a means of their divide and rule policy, tried to divide the people of Eritrea by religion, region and any other possible dissimilarities. However, it was not fully successful. The people of Eritrea have been living scattered all over the country regardless of their differences. "Economic lifestyles, cultures, faiths and ethnicities have mostly coexisted peacefully. Church and mosque have stood side by side, occasional clashes notwithstanding" (INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, 2010: 17). This coexistence enabled the people of Eritrea to be able to unite together to fight against different oppressors.

After the start of armed struggle in 1961, the Eritrean people united to together and fought for Eritrea's independence, which was achieved in 1991 after 30 years bloody war with Ethiopia. In the 1970s, during the liberation struggle, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLE) established schools called "revolution schools" and adult literacy programs in the liberated areas of the country. These provisions were based on critical pedagogy and emphasized all the principles of global citizenship including social justice and creativity (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2008). During the armed struggle, the EPLF was also able to create an egalitarian society within its fighters where religion, ethnicity and other differences were neutralized (HALE, 2012).

Despite the many challenges such as new nation, border war with Ethiopia (1998–2000), and others, since independence, the Government of Eritrea is expanding services including education services all over the country (RENA, 2006). The current national curriculum of Eritrea is designed to provide citizens with holistic development that considers and respects the multicultural nature of the country (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2008). It is from this historical and current context that this research departs.

It could be argued that the future coexistence of the Eritrean nationalities and religious groups depends on the way educational institutions cultivate students to appreciate and/or tolerate their diversity, resolve their differences and use their different backgrounds. Within the religious, ethnic and other sector-based conflicts in different regions of the world including in the Horn of Africa, it is logical to question "are the Eritrean HEIs nurturing graduates that tolerate each other and live in peace and harmony regardless of their differences?" This question also gives a glimpse whether the HEIs are producing graduates that could respond to the global socio-economic and political conditions.

3. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1. Globalization and global citizenship

Globalization is a contested terrain with different definitions and perspectives from different writers. Some people perceive globalization as increasing the homogeneity of societies, whereas others see it as increasing hybridization of cultures and diversity (TORRES, 2002). However, most of the definitions concur with the idea that globalization is "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (GIDDENS, 1990: 64). This indicates that globalization is blurring national boundaries and nation-states are losing their authority (STROMQUIST, 2002). With the increasing economic integration and technological advancement, it is believed that the influence of globalizations is making countries closer to each other ever than before. This interconnection of countries is also creating both positive and negative effects in all dimensions--socially, politically and economically. On one hand, globalization enables people to share ideas, knowledge and practical experiences to fight against comment problems and enjoy a better life; and on the other hand, globalization increases personal, political and cultural differences of people. Therefore, individuals' differences become their problems unless they are handled wisely (TORRES, 1998). Nonetheless, given the opportunity for liberal education, it could be argued that peoples' homogeneity still outshines their differences. It is a matter of learning to tolerate and appreciate the differences and engage in constructive dialogue. It is a matter of fostering global citizenship.

In such interconnected modern world, citizens need knowledge, attitudes and skills to become effective citizens in the global community and participate in the construction of a civic culture that is a moral and just community (BANK, 2004). Although global citizenship is a multifaceted term, three interrelated dimensions are commonly accepted (MORAIS & OGDEN, 2011). These dimensions are social responsibility (concern for others, for society at large, and for the environment), global competence (understanding and appreciation of one's self in the world and of world issues), and civic engagement (active engagement with local, regional, national and global community issues).

The argument of MORAIS and OGDEN (2011) shows that global citizens should have multidimensional skills starting from self-awareness to global awareness in order to engage in local and global issues. It could be argued that this is the basis of education which is commonly defined as the process of changing behavior patterns of people. Here, behavior is used in a broad sense to include thinking, feeling as well as overt action that corresponds with the complex world that we are living in today. According to MORAIS and OGDEN (2011), global citizenship gives emphasis to self-awareness. Many educators

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(FREIRE, 2010; TORRES, 2002; HOOKS, 2010) also agree that awareness is the beginning of any transformation. Citizens can only participate in local and global issues and challenge any injustice and inequities when they start reflecting on their own and recognize their condition. Likewise, it is their awareness that drive individuals' willingness to exercise self-restraint and personal responsibility in their demands and choices, and affect the health and wealth of societies and the environment (TORRES, 1998).

Moreover, STONER, et al. (2014) stated that a true global citizen is a person who is: (a) aware of the interconnections within community, national, and global contexts and the role personal decisions play in each context; and (b) engaged and capable of driving social change towards democratic ideas and values and civic culture. All these dimensions and traits correspond with the understanding of OXFAM about global citizen. OXFAM sees global citizen as someone who:

> is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own roles as a world citizen; respects and values diversity; has an understanding of how the world works; is outraged by social injustice; participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global; is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place; and takes responsibility for their actions (OXFAM GB, 2006: 3).

According to STREITWIESER and LIGHT (2010), global citizens are individuals who are able to participate in both their local community and in a larger community of humans sharing fundamental capacities to engage in rational and enlightened thinking. Similarly, BANKS (2004) indicated that global citizenship views humans as surrounded by cultural, national and global identifications in which the local identification widens to an outermost circle including all humanity. BANKS's argument indicates that global citizenship does not reject local situations and identifications by focusing only across borders. Instead, it realizes the expansion and interdependence of knowledge from local to global arenas. This shows that students need to develop a delicate balance of cultural (local), national and global identification in order to have deep understanding of their roles in the world community. TORRES (1998) stated that these cultural, national and global identifications relate to the main analytical purpose of theories of citizenship. These identifications need to identify the sense and sources of identity and the competing forms of national, regional, or global identities. Yet the identities have to address the implications of ethnicity, religion, class, race, and gender to foster the ability of individuals to tolerate and work together with people who are different from themselves and promote solidarity beyond particular interests of specific form of identity.

3.2. Pedagogical practices for fostering global citizenship

ROUSSEAU (2009) stated that children are born naturally good as they come out of the hands of creator (nature), but the society turns them into evil. This indicates that it is

through learning, being formal or informal, that individuals associate with their fellow human being and the world. Education as a medium, part and parcel of transformation and social change plays a double role in making the world a better place or vice versa both in content and method of delivery (SUAREZ & RAMIREZ, 2007; FREIRE, 2010; TORRES, 2002). Nurturing a globally-minded citizen is a fundamental component of HEI's core curriculum often associated with critical learning experience related to the issues being encountered by modern world and ultimately leading to a change in perspective (STONER, et al., 2014). According to OXFAM GB (2006), the key elements for developing global citizenship are: a) knowledge and understanding, b) skills, and c) values and attitudes. All the above elements are interconnected to each other. As an element of global citizenship, knowledge and understanding mainly focus on the principles of social justice and equity, as well as peace and conflict. Therefore, it deals with issues of diversity, sustainable development, and interdependence within the global world. Skill refers to the ability to think critically and challenge any oppressive situation. It encompasses the skill for respect of people, the environment, and cooperation and conflict resolution. Values and attitudes within global citizenship emphasize on the sense of identity and self-esteem, commitment to social justice, and respect for diversity. The concern for the environment and belief in people as a core of social transformation are also their main domain.

Despite the fact that not everyone may agree on what makes an effective global citizen, and the fact that different people may have different ideas about the key characteristics of a good and responsible global citizen, the above elements can help students to recognize their connections to people with different orientations and in other parts of the world. It is believed that nation-states' policies of higher education in general and instructors' understanding of the issue in particular have great influence in nurturing global citizenship. Teachers committed to teach for global citizenship may feel the responsibility not just to teach their students for employment, but rather prepare them with the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to change the world to make it more just and democratic (BANKS, 2004). As education can also be used to mold individuals' attitudes and oppress them through depositing nondemocratic ideas, the type of pedagogies educational institutions use greatly determine the kind of citizens they produce and type of world they create (FREIRE, 2010; TORRES, 2002).

To produce global citizens who are aware of the wider world, HEIs should use a pedagogy which could give students the knowledge and skills that provide them with the opportunity to shape their perspective (FREIRE, 2010; HOOKS, 2010; DEWEY, 1938; BANKS & BANKS, 1995; BANKS, 2004). Even though many critical educators have coined different types of pedagogies, it could be difficult and doubtful to depend on only one type of pedagogy to nurture global citizenship. However, in order for HEIs to foster global citizenship, a pedagogy that could engage students with alternative lenses and orientations of an issue should be considered. Such pedagogy should be participatory

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(HOOKS, 2010; ZABIT, 2010; TONGSAKUL, JITGARUN & CHAOKUMNERD, 2011), culturally relevant (LADSON-BILLINGS, 1995) and liberatory (FREIRE, 2010).

Nowadays the world has many areas where individuals maintain different views. As a result, students and teachers can have totally different and sensitive positions on different issues such as religion, sexual orientation, ideology, and others. This can cause misunderstanding and confrontation among students, and between students and the teacher. As already discussed above, to settle such issues, HEIs require pedagogies that can engage students with alternative lenses and orientations. Most importantly, HEIs require pedagogies that challenge the comfort zone of students and teachers, and seek for transformation (FREIRE, 2010; BANKS & BANKS, 1995). However, it could not be easy for HEIs to nurture global citizenship. The process of knowledge transmission in many countries like Eritrea has been directly from the teacher to students and its delivery was carefully sequenced for students to memorize, repeat and understand (FREIRE, 2010; LU, 2012; DASCHMANN, GOETZ & STUPNISKY, 2013). In addition, teachers' knowledge and experiences of using critical pedagogies can also be a challenge in nurturing global citizenship (BHUTTO, 2011).

Finally, in order to produce responsible global citizens, HEIs need to carefully design their pedagogical practices and address the challenges that could arise both from within and outside of the HEIs.

4. METHODOLOGY

The research is qualitative in nature with a case study design. As this study focuses on the experiences of Eritrean higher education students and staff at their institutions' pedagogical practices, qualitative research design enables to explore the contextual conditions and understand the phenomena in a broader sense for creating understanding and critical analysis (MCNABB, 2008). "Case study research is often done without attempting broad or even limited generalization, but readers of the research may find applications to other situations" (WIERSMA & JURS, 2004: 216). Hence, the study used a case study design to enable the research to contribute beyond Eritrea to other small states and developing states with similar conditions as Eritrea.

4.1. Sample

The study used a case study to conduct in-depth investigation on HEIs pedagogical practices to understand whether these pedagogical practices can really produce responsible and skilled global citizens. The target population for this study was Eritrean HEIs students and staff. Sample HEI was used for collecting data on experiences of Eritrean higher education students and staff at their institutions' pedagogical practices. Senior

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undergraduate students of Eritrea Institute of Technology (EIT) were used as a sample for collecting data. The researcher did not prefer to keep the anonymity of the case HEI because it is superficial to hide the identity of particular entities in small contexts (MOOSA, 2013) especially within the context in which the researcher approached the HEI. The case HEI was approached from a bureaucratic structure with a letter from the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) to the Office of the Vice President of the institution, and then the letter was directed to the colleges and from the colleges to departments. The case HEI (EIT) was selected by purposive sampling due to its capacity of students and programs. EIT is the largest HEI in Eritrea with the largest number of students and programs. It encompasses three colleges: Education, Science and Engineering. In addition, senior undergraduate students were selected deliberately because they had completed more than 50% of their study and could have better wealth of experience from their fellow undergraduate students.

The total sample size of respondents was 15 students and 8 staff. These respondents were selected using simple random sampling. As this research focus on nurturing of skills that could be fostered across all disciplines as a set of critical lifelong learning, out of these respondents, a quota sampling was used to ensure college (field of study) representations in the study.

4.2. Data collection

To investigate the experiences of higher education students and staff at their institutions' pedagogical practices, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interview and review of related and relevant documents. Semi-structured interview was used in order to obtain enough information by making the research questions flexible and asking additional questions based on the response of the participants (BRYMAN, 2008). An interview protocol was prepared for students and teachers containing purpose of the study, instructions and interview questions. The interviews asked the respondents about classroom interaction, the role of teachers and students as well as the challenges that HEIs face in the teaching-learning process. The interviews were conducted in English for teachers whereas Tigrigna (a local language commonly used by Eritrean people) was used for students to allow better communication and expression of ideas. The research participants were also asked to sign a consent form containing the general information of the study, participants' rights and their consent to participate in the study. The interview protocol and the consent form explained that participation to the study is voluntary, and the response that participants give is kept confidential. Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants. The interview was recorded upon the permission of the interviewees.

The study mainly reviewed four documents: 1) staff teaching appraisal by students, 2) National Board for Higher Education (NBHE) report on HEIs visit, 3) HEIs guidelines,

and 4) HEIs handbooks and statistical reports especially for issues concerning HEIs pedagogical practices and the experiences of students and staff on these pedagogical practices.

4.3. Data analysis

A narrative text and critical discourse analysis were used to analyze the data collected through interview and document review. The narrative is a descriptive account of the situation under study connecting the case and the research objectives in a readable, informative, and evaluative way (MCNABB, 2008). Through establishing themes and sections and assigning data to them, a structural skeleton was first established to provide for meaningful interpretation and discussion (MCNABB, 2008). Then a comprehensive narrative of the study was produced. Critical discourse analysis primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (VAN DIJK, 2008). Thus, critical discourse analysis was used to reflect the pedagogical experiences of staff and students in relation to any oppression and inequality within and outside the classroom interaction. Finally, the data was written with the researcher's interpretation and conclusion with a reference to the literature review and empirical studies.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Striving for a learner-centered pedagogy

Teachers should interact with their students in a permanent dialogue characterized by horizontal relationship (FREIRE, 2010; HOOKS, 2010; TORRES, 1998). Such relationship then enables students to participate freely and expand their academic, socio-economic and political horizons. However, the participants of the study agreed that not all teachers encourage students to be part of the teaching-learning process and share their knowledge and experiences.

The study showed that the Eritrean HEIs use mixed pedagogical practices given that modified lecture method is the dominant one. The lecture is modified to enable students to participate in the class interaction as much as possible, given the constraints of lecturing. Other interactive methods such as class discussion, collaborative inquiry and field visits are also used. Moreover, the data from the documents review indicated that the HEIs recognize the importance of interactive pedagogy as it is clearly put in the faculty evaluation mechanism of the institutions. The instructors' teaching appraisal forms emphasize the participation of students as an important part of the teaching-learning process (NBHE, 2008). For example, in the staff evaluation form (by students), out of the 21 close-ended questions related to pedagogical practices, more than half of them are concerned on how

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teachers make their class interactive. The statements include:

a) Instructor's attitude in encouraging questions, answers, discussions and different viewpoints.
b) Instructor's encouragement of cooperative learning (sharing knowledge) among students.
c) Effectiveness of practical/field works and internships in understanding the course (if applicable) (NBHE, 2008).

The feedback of students on the teaching-learning process in general and the above issues in particular can be summarized that teachers use interactive instructional methodology. The report of the NBHE regarding the pedagogical practices of the HEIs indicated that almost all the HEIs follow similar approaches of pedagogical practices which are essentially grounded in theory followed by practical sessions, projects and fieldworks (NBHE, 2012). The report also showed that teachers attempt to incorporate different teaching aid materials such as projectors, printed materials and digital resources in delivering their lecture. This is consistent with the response of many instructors who argued that they do whatever it takes to make their class interactive. Samuel, an instructor from the College of Education, clearly explained this noting:

> To the best of our abilities we use learner-centered pedagogy not only to transfer knowledge, but also to model our learners so as to use them in their future carrier if they are assigned to school. However, as various factors including the available teaching materials and large class-size are not convenient to fully employ interactive pedagogy, we try to structure the lecture model to allow students' participation.

Caleb, an instructor from the College of Science, puts it this way:

> My class has 44 students. Though I use lecture method, as an enlightenment process, I give due attention to class attendance, continuous assessment and class interaction of the students. I encourage students to participate in class and recognize them not necessarily within one period, but across times. Most importantly, I try to connect the subject matter with the real world practices in different ways. One example is that in my class there is essay requirement. Students go and observe things related to the theoretical part of the class and write their reflections.

The above excerpts indicate that teachers work to involve their students despite the existence of different challenges. They try to connect the theoretical part of the class with the real world situations even linking to socio-economic and political activities of the people. Nevertheless, large class-size is one problem for students' class interaction. Although lecture method can be modified to engage and recognize students, the instructors could not get enough time to include all students at a time. The time is shared between lecturing and participation of students. This limits students' participation.

The study found that there are instructors that use interactive methods of teaching

such as class discussion and inquiry methods, and totally modify the lecturing method for student-student and student- teacher interactions. This is usually done in senior classes where there are few students and experienced teachers. Omer, an instructor from the College of Engineering, stated that such class provides an opportunity to discuss with the learners, know their interest and reflect on the teaching-learning process. He said:

> I want to lead my students to development or maturity. I want them to be independent learners taking full responsibility of their learning. Hence, I apply different teaching methodologies and give them activities which foster such responsibilities. However, I know that guiding and leading students in all aspects-academically, psychologically and socially to be mature and responsible citizen needs knowledge of their biography. If I am going to interact with a learner and apply interactive pedagogies such as culturally relevant pedagogy, I have to know the learners very well. Therefore, I encourage them to reflect on themselves and their environment using group presentations, study groups and field visit opportunities.

Witnessing the pedagogical practices, the students emphasized that the pedagogical practices of the Eritrean HEIs depend on various factors such as experience of the teacher, available resources and class-size. All the students agreed that they usually follow the path of their instructors. With interactive instructors, they become critical and independent learners looking the connection between the course content and its real world applications. Hence, teachers have to break all these barriers and motivate students regardless of their situations. Regarding this issue, Helen, student from College of Science, said:

> Although the main teaching methodology used is lecture method, it differs from teacher to teacher. Many teachers organize their time for lecturing, class discussion and other interactive activities. However, there are also teachers who lecture to finish the course content, and give students very little time for asking questions or discussion. This is without considering the issues of class-size and available teaching aids which have major effect in the teaching-learning process.

As it is indicated in the above arguments, the creativity of a teacher makes teaching-learning process meaningful, despite the existence of many challenges. They show that it is the people, their pedagogical skill, desire and enthusiasm that make the difference; whereas the teaching methodology can be enhanced with the participation of the learners. In line with this, BHUTTO (2011: 91) stated, "lecture method can be used in higher education with proper modification to make it two-way learning process allowing frequent questioning or discussion from both sides especially learners." It is believed that this has been used in many HEIs especially in developing countries where resources are limited. The important point is the opportunity to interact since effective teaching-learning process takes place in the course of existing real collaboration among students themselves and with their instructors.

Moreover, the study showed that students like to take learning at their hand instead of being offered to them by the teacher. However, this does not mean that the teacher has to be excluded from the class since students need to be directed and followed properly. Explaining this issue, Saron, an instructor from the College of Education, said:

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> The more students take learning at their hands, the more they like it. At the end of the lesson, I give my students a summary article in groups. We work in a group dynamics. I team up students with some diversity in age, sex and performance. Then I work very closely with them to transform this group dynamics and see through the development of the group into a team. It is obvious this needs hard work, follow up and dedication. Students do it with enthusiasm and team work. They like it especially when it comes to a culture of group work and free writing.

As stated here, the activities and direction of a teacher is important to students to interact with students who are different from them. These differences could generate their own different ideas and experiences guided by the instructor. The team formation by itself goes beyond the class activities to trust, love and cooperation. That is why the student respondents emphasized that group work without follow up and team work is not rewarding because the group may lack coordination and few students could do much of the work. To conclude, the study indicated that there is a mixture of both critical pedagogical experiences as well as experiences that illustrate limited students' interaction in the teaching-learning process. Moreover, it showed that a teacher has an important role to spearhead the lesson in a way that could recognize students' conditions.

5.2. Orientation towards global citizenship

As it is already stated, the production of skilled global citizens has to do not only with course content, but most importantly with interactive learning experiences connecting the theoretical part of the course with the outside real world (STONER, et al., 2014). This is because students can get better understanding of the course content and the outside real world. The study noted that the reflection that students connect their classes with their local situations goes to the global level. Confirming this issue, Aaron, a student from the College of Engineering, explained:

> There are instructors who have changed my perspective by connecting their class with the outside world. I remember my English and statistics instructors who used to teach us by connecting their classes with different stories from the society. They used to share their life experience which was a big lesson to me. These instructors taught me love, kindness, morality as well as how to handle things in different situations (challenges).

The explanation of Aaron asserts that life is a lesson by itself. Besides, the lessons that life gives are applicable everywhere regardless of the society, culture or country because they are part of the life that someone lives. The words of Aron, love, kindness and morality are the base of every society in the world. They are the foundation of many religions and philosophical thoughts. Most importantly, they are basic characteristics of responsible global citizens (OXFAM GB, 2006; STONER, et al., 2014)

As it is indicated above, there are many dynamic instructors who believe teaching is a two-way action-- giving and receiving (FREIRE, 2010; HOOKS, 2010; TORRES, 1998). These instructors have nurtured students on how they should construct their own

knowledge and push deeper combining what the students already know and what they get from the class. Responding to the knowledge, experiences and skills that the students gained besides the area of specialization that they are studying, Sophie, a student from the College of Science, explained:

> We do have field visits to places or institutions related to the course content. In such cases, I explore the overall situation of the place or institution we visit and write my reflection. Sometimes, it is challenging when the theoretical and practical situations are different. This makes me feel that either way has to be adjusted; but it is not simple as there are many issues related to which one is correct and which one is not, and if one has to be adjusted, how.

As much as the course content, the pedagogical practice is inspirational bringing challenging moment in which students can learn lifelong lessons from their surroundings. It enables students to understand and see things in different perspectives and it is up to the learner to explore deeper so as to understand the situation clearly instead of judging from a shallow point. One case that Isaac, a student from the College of Education, brought was the issue of class attendance in schools. Isaac narrated:

> In a secondary school visit, I noticed that there were many students absent in the class. I was surprised because it is important that students should be at class in order to be part of the teaching-learning process. Besides, it is one of the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Education in Eritrea. However, when I asked the reason, I understood that the social life of the people is based on agriculture and the students need to help their families to collect the crops. Since the season was the right time for harvesting, I felt the situation of the students.

The above excerpt reveals that students can learn to show empathy putting their situation into the life of others. It is in such situation that individuals could be aware and understand the condition of others and able to engage in local and global issues (MORAIS & OGDEN, 2011). Isaac had not solved the argument that what happens if students are absent from school to earn their living. All these situations lead to further reflection and deeper understanding of the situation digging further to the life and participation of the society (STREITWIESER & LIGHT, 2010).

Referring on the orientation of the HEIs students to global citizenship, Abraham, a student from the College of Engineering, preferred to compare the social life at the HEIs with other places. He expressed:

> I always wonder the HEI campus is always peaceful. Although this seems common everywhere in Eritrea, it is particularly different here. Almost all the students at the HEI are young. I see many young people especially boys fighting in groups and commit different crimes. However, here in the HEI, I always see students live together with harmony and peace regardless of their differences.

It is argued that this has to do mainly with the level of education of the students, and their social and intellectual development to tolerate each other. In other words, it has to do with the ability of the students to analyze things critically. In such a way, students are

changing the way they communicate and the way they do things taking full responsibility to make things better than they were.

Similarly, Merry, a student from the college of Science, argued that attending higher education makes students socially responsible. This is because the people and government expect these students to be role models for other lower level students such as senior secondary schools. They believe that the educated are responsible to take the values of the society higher and make things better. This makes teachers to connect their lesson to the people and their life, and the students to reflect on the history, life and development of their people, and enhance the good things while challenging the negative ones. Then the students are able to care about the local and global situations because they complementary to each other (BANKS, 2004; OXFAM GB, 2006). Besides, social responsibility including concern for the society is an important dimension of global citizenship (MORAIS & OGDEN, 2011).

In conclusion, many teachers equip students with different knowledge and skills that help them to see the world in a very critical way. There are teachers committed to develop students for employment and with the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to make the world a better and safer place (BANKS, 2004). They teach students to explore things deeper and learn by themselves.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Conclusions

The globalized world has come with plenty of socio-economic and political challenges, and education in general and higher education in particular is key means of addressing these issues. This study focuses on whether the pedagogical practices of HEIs can really result in one of the Eritrean Ministry of Education's intended outcomes – fostering global citizenship. The study examined the pedagogical practices of the HEIs from the perspectives of staff and students at these HEIs.

Despite different challenges, certain spaces do exist for students at Eritrean HEIs to be nurtured with the knowledge, skills and attitudes for global citizenship. It is important to nurture these spaces in order to enhance the development of skilled and responsible citizens who could respond to the socio-economic and political challenges the world is facing. The study revealed that nurturing these spaces and potentialities needs participatory and coordinated efforts to ensure the contribution and recognition of each student.

The study found out that Eritrean HEIs use a mixture of both critical pedagogical experiences as well as experiences that illustrate limited students' interaction in the

teaching-learning process. The HEIs use pedagogical approaches that equip students with the necessary theoretical knowledge followed by practical sessions, projects and fieldworks. The institutions mainly use lecture method although modified to connect theory with practice and enable students to interact in the teaching-learning process. Interactive teaching methodologies such as class discussion, inquiry method and others are also used mainly in classes with low number of students. The HEIs attempt to incorporate different teaching aid materials to facilitate the teaching-learning process and attain the expected and desired objectives. Moreover, the study revealed that the handling of lecture method differs from teacher to teacher. Many teachers modify their lecture; whereas others use lecturing as it is and dominate the class by themselves. The students and instructors believe that this is mainly due to the experience of teachers, their pedagogical skills and/or motivation.

The study concluded that teaching methodology determines the role of students and teachers. Teachers who use interactive (or semi-interactive) pedagogies usually carry a multiple role and identity. They motivate, guide and recognize students, and become co-learners. Sometimes, they go deeper and explore the biographies of their students. Simultaneously, the students become part of the teaching-learning process and they feel trusted, loved and recognized. In such condition, learning flows from the teacher to the students, students to the teacher, and students to the students. This then provides students with the knowledge and skills to shape their perspective to act as global citizens. Whereas in a class with a teacher that silences students' voices, students feel bored and disappointed. In an oppressive class where students do not have any input, students memorize the course content only for the sake of examination. This shows that they hardly try to understand or connect the course content to the real world conditions. The data indicated that there are many critical educators who are committed to teach students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that go beyond the individual classroom to their society and the world. These teachers challenge the students to challenge themselves and their environment to become agents of social change.

6.2. Implications

The study implies that education in general and higher education in particular through their pedagogical practices greatly determine the type of citizens they produce. Through participatory pedagogies, HEIs can produce global citizens who are aware of the socio-economic, cultural and political conditions of the world. The implication for other developing states is that the production of skilled and responsible global citizens can be carried out simultaneously with the production of a skill for employment. With the inclusion of critical pedagogies, students can be taught the knowledge, experiences and attitudes that could shape their perspective beyond their specific programs and outside of the class linking to real world problems. Hence, with nurturing skilled and responsible

global citizens, the problems that we are seeing in the world can be reduced significantly. Regardless of their racial, cultural, religious and other identities, people can learn to tolerate each other and live in peace and harmony because everyone in this world is born naturally good (ROUSSEAU, 2009).

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