



Research Conference Takeaways as Policy Issue Suggestions 1st National Conference

Theme: Private Higher Education for an Inclusive Development

April, 2023

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

Background

Highland College hosted its first national research conference with a theme "**Private Higher Education for an Inclusive Development.**" The conference aims to demonstrate that private higher education institutions should prioritize research and community service in addition to teaching. The conference has encouraged teachers and students of the college to gain awareness, knowledge, and experiences on research work, enhance education quality, contribute to the country's development, and demonstrate that higher education institutions should prioritize research and community service.

Policy Issues

To make inclusive development really in sight of achievement for our nation, we want to forward the following key conference takeaways as a suggestion for policy issues extracted from the speeches, discussions and dialogues of the conference held by Highland College on 28 April, 2023.

1. Private higher education institutions should install the practice of conducting research as a culture rather than a duty so as to realize our national inclusive development. (Mentioned by Mr. Amdework Amsalu, Research and Community Service Coordinator of Highland college, link:) in his introductory remarks, Mr. Amdework further asserted: “as to my knowledge, most of the private higher education institutions consist of employees who are novice to methods of doing problem-solving studies; however, if we really seek getting closer to inclusive development, all private higher education institutions must understand that this is only through prioritizing problem-solving research endeavors we can be able to reflect on our national challenges and opportunities and to come closer to our social responsibilities.
2. Private higher education institutions can reiterate the importance of conducting research for Ethiopia's inclusive development by organizing research conferences like Highland College. (Mentioned by Dr. Eyob Ayenew, who was the guest of honor from the MoE). Dr. Eyob further stated that education needs to be geared in such a way that it can produce problem-solving, creative and innovative workforce to build an economically

prosperous country. To this end, a balanced education system is crucial for national development, with private and public institutions intertwined.

3. Education can and should produce people who love their country, uphold unity and fraternity; to this end, it should be geared towards equity and inclusiveness. (Mentioned by Tirusew Tefera, Professor and Laureate in Education from Addis Ababa University; who was one of the keynote speakers to the conference). Professor Tirusew further claimed that education should also promote diversity, tolerance, peace and development as important elements of inclusive development. Then, private higher education institutions need to address disability, ethnicity and gender issues so as to narrow inequality.
4. Being public or private should not matter higher education institutions in playing their crucial roles to prepare future scientists, policy-makers, business leaders, entrepreneurs, and public servants. Our concern should be about access, relevance and quality of education under any form of ownership. (Mentioned by Dr. Dawit Asrat from Bahir Dar University; who was one of the keynote speakers to the conference). Dr. Dawit further indicated that contemporary contexts have made these crucial roles of HEIs less relevant, necessitating adaptation in missions, teaching, learning, research, and community engagement.
5. Improving labor market institutions, transforming the informal economy, promoting non-farm employment, and offering skill training for rural migrants could resolve significant issue of unemployment in Ethiopia. (Mentioned by Adelahu Fentie, a paper presenter of the conference).
6. Higher education institutions and MoE should focus on alleviating the challenges of teachers in their qualifications, continuous development programs, research and community service engagement, job satisfaction and technology utilization. (Mentioned by Amsalu Molla, a paper presenter of the conference).
7. Private higher education institutions should re-consider their budget constraints, low research and innovation interests, and limited engagement with local communities that hinder their full potential to contribute to Ethiopia's national inclusive development. (Mentioned by Bayleyegn Ayalew, a paper presenter of the conference).

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8. There is a need to formulate academic integrity policies, establish directives, use anti-plagiarism software, use exam codes, and conduct a system-level strong anti-academic dishonesty campaign to reduce academic dishonesty and improve quality education. (Mentioned by Dr. *Esubalew Getnet*, a paper presenter of the conference).
 9. Private higher education institutions should maintain campus cleanliness, their instructors should handle student needs, and registrar, finance, and program offices should manage complaints, improve educational facilities and meet student expectations so as to maintain student satisfaction. (Mentioned by Manaye Adela, a paper presenter of the conference).
 10. Government must re-think the prevailing policy implications so as to improve the current status of private higher education institutions. (Mentioned by Temesgen Ayele, a paper presenter of the conference).

Extra link:

<https://www.facebook.com/bduethiopia/posts/pfbid052XsmPuKfRa3RidkYyRczCo33NAmD3zHzUX9WgPfiE9D3znbkYhhQp8v4LRzXDpdI>