

**DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND STUDENTS' CROSS-BORDER LEARNING
EXPERIENCES AT SELECTED ETHIOPIAN UNIVERSITIES**

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, “**Diversity Management and Cross - Border Learning Experiences at Selected Ethiopian Universities,**” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena

April 2015

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ASTU	Adama Science and Technology University
CBLE	Cross-Border Learning Experience
CBLEs	Cross-Border Learning Experiences
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
DBU	Debreberhan University
DMS	Diversity management Strategies
EMIS	Educational Information Systems
EPMG	Ethiopian Provisional Military Government
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic Ethiopia
FMOE	Federal Ministry of Education
GASO	Gumii Adaa Saba Oromoo (Oromo Cultural Club)
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HE	Higher Education
ID	Identity Number
HEI	Higher Education Institution
MOE	Ministry of Education
PR	Public Relation
SNNP	Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples (region)
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia

ABSTRACT

The key purpose of this research was to interrogate how cross-border learning experiences of students, who are culturally diverse in terms of ethnicity, language and religion at Ethiopian universities, can and should be managed. An important aspect of this study was determining the relationship between unofficial strategies which are employed at the three selected universities to address cultural diversity and students' cross-border learning experiences which resulted from them.

Conceptual and theoretical frameworks from Sociology, Education Management and learning theories guided this study which was informed by a literature study on addressing socio-cultural differences of students at national and international levels. Qualitative empirical information was collected mainly through individual and focus group interviews with information-rich participants, namely senior management personnel, *Student Service* officials, lecturers and students.

Although the contextual literature review showed that inter-group hostility amongst ethnic, linguistic and religious diverse students prevailed at universities, despite the implementation of the multicultural policy adopted in Ethiopia, empirical findings, however, indicated that management provisions in terms of lodging and catering services, co-curricular activities and teaching and learning processes promoted cross-border learning experiences that enhanced inter-group understanding, as well as the academic skills of culturally diverse students. Diversity sensitive lodging, multilingual services at *Student Service* units, inclusive co-curricular activities and diversity sensitive group learning activities, which involved heterogeneous grouping of students, promoted the development of the self and others across ethnic, religious and linguistic lines and brought about a decrease in mistrust and suspicion and hostility towards students of other backgrounds. Based on the findings, a model for officially incorporating strategies which advance cross-border learning experiences within management processes at higher education institutions was developed to further the realisation of cross-border learning experiences by means of measures which are rooted in *Student Service* units and teaching and learning processes. These should be developed as an alternative for the multicultural teaching programmes which find expression in *Civic and Ethical Education* and *Communicative English Skills* courses to advance the cross-cultural development of students.

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter commences with a succinct background to the study which consists of a historical review of the development of approaching socio-cultural differences of students in education in general, and higher education in particular. It aims at elucidating different trends of addressing student diversity at various educational settings.

The historical review is followed by an explanation of the concepts of cross-border learning experiences (CBLEs) and diversity, and a discussion of management perspectives relating to diversity of students at international, national and regional levels where CBLEs are associated with management processes. The background to the study relates the main research question and associated sub-questions with components related to the methodology of this study. It is followed by study description of objectives, the motivation of research, research approach and data collection methods, sampling strategies, data analysis, the conceptual and theoretical framework, trustworthiness and ethical considerations pertaining to this study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Current trends in education such as globalisation, the ongoing massification of education and equal education opportunities have changed the demographic composition of student populations across the globe, including that of developing countries. Higher institutions, too, became more preoccupied, not only with the provision of equitable quality education, but also with addressing diversity needs of student populations and creating appropriate teaching and learning environments (Garcia & Hoelscher 2006: 25-26).

The history of student diversity as an educational issue in higher education goes back many centuries when educational institutions started to enrol students with diverse

backgrounds from other regions and countries. It is claimed that this phenomenon first occurred when a Chinese scholar, Huen Tsang, joined the Nalanda University in India (Daniel, Kanwar and Uvalic-Trumbic 2009: 19). Considering student diversity as a social phenomenon that needs attention in educational institutions begun in the early 19th century (Glazer 1997: 8). Over time the issue of diversity developed in breadth and depth.

In the section that follows, the historical development of addressing student diversity as a social phenomenon from an educational perspective is described briefly in terms of inclusive and special educational needs experienced in Europe, the multicultural education perspective embraced by the United States of America (USA) (Glazer 1997: 7-9) and the reconstruction of education along colonial historical terms within the African context.

1.2.1 Inclusive and special educational needs perspectives

Socio-cultural dynamism in a society often necessitates mechanisms of responding to societal demands. Societal demand relating to equality and equity of education is often addressed in terms of education policy and practices (Garcia & Hoelscher 2006: 22). In England, addressing the diversity of students gained official recognition in the *Mass Education Acts* of 1870, 1876 and 1880, also known as the massification acts which demanded special educational provisions for disabled children. This provision later developed into the educational strategies of special needs education and inclusive education (Rose 2004: 7). Special needs education obtained wider recognition when the *Warnock Report* was published in 1978. It emphasised that special educational needs should focus on students' learning difficulties rather than their physical disabilities and that children with disabilities should be accommodated in the mainstream school system instead of separate schools for children with impairments (Barton & Armstrong 2007: 8). The subsequent dichotomy concerning the placement of students with disabilities encouraged investigation into non-disability diversity matters, such as race, ethnicity, language and religion, in educational environments (Barton & Armstrong 2007: 10; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2005: 220). However, since the underlying assumptions of the

inclusive education paradigm which originated from the perceived necessity to place students with disabilities, later referred to as learners with barriers to learning, with students who have no impediments instigated such research; the findings failed to provide a comprehensive basis for studying diversity which does not relate to physical and mind-centred idiosyncrasies (Barton & Armstrong 2007: 8).

European countries promoted citizenship education since the 1990s for dealing with diversity issues experienced as a result of recurrent migration and social mobility (Wrench 2007: 5; Osler 2006: 104; Rose 2003: 8). The study had a twofold purpose: Firstly, it was designed to establish peace and respect for different social and cultural groups who migrated from conflict threatened areas in Eastern Europe to Western European countries. Secondly, it focused on the development of social skills amongst youths to capacitate them for meaningful participation of citizens in an ever-changing world. The social skills included communication, cooperative partnership, and managing conflict through negotiation and shared leadership (Iborra, Garcia, Margalef & Perez 2010: 51). However, citizenship education was not significantly different from inclusive education and special needs education because it also aimed at integrating non-dominant groups (mainly immigrants) into a dominant culture. In short, citizenship education as a means for managing diversity and its implementation strategies failed to address the multifaceted diversity perspectives of the world (Cross 2004: 390-391; Seigel 2003: 11).

1.2.2 Western perspectives relating to cultural diversity

In the USA, the issue of culturally diverse students has often been related to the aftermath of *Civil War* social movements and 1840s Catholic student movements that equalled that of Protestant counterparts (Dancy II 2010: 72-73; Glazer 1997: 9). The country employed different approaches to address student diversity. These approaches include strategies such as cultural pluralism, inter-cultural education, and multiculturalism (Mda 2000: 231; Figueroa 1999: 283; Glazer 1997: 8).

Although the terms inter-cultural education, pluralist education and multiculturalism have often been used interchangeably when referring to cultural differences and diversity in education, they differ conceptually. Their interpretation can largely be attributed to historical-social contexts where they were introduced (Cross 2004: 391). Glazer (1997: 10) is of the opinion that inter-cultural education and pluralist education were interchangeably used in the American education system of the 1940s and 1960s to signify a degree of respect that had to be shown to non-dominant groups.

Cultural pluralism refers to a social context in which different ethnic and cultural groups with distinct values, beliefs and practices are welcomed to co-exist as citizens of one nation. However, in practice, students' racial, cultural and ethnic differences were paid little attention despite the fact that pluralist integration and homogenisation received attention (Spencer 2006: 248). According to the *Intercultural Education Network* (IEN) (n.d: online):

[I]nter-cultural education promotes the understanding of different peoples and cultures. It includes teachings that accept the normality of diversity in all areas of life. It makes every effort to sensitize the learner to the notion that we have naturally developed in different ways. It seeks to explore and examine and challenge all forms of "isms".

Studies on inter-cultural education found that despite institutional efforts to facilitate inter-cultural education, students on campus remained divided (Wright & Lander 2003: 240; Figueroa 1999: 283; Glazer 1997: 10).

Multiculturalism has been associated with the mass immigration and the *Black Americans Movement* of the 1960s. In terms of education, it focuses on structural changes at educational institutions to enable socially and culturally diverse students to attain their educational goals regardless of their ethnic and racial distinctiveness (Figueroa 1999: 283; Glazer 1997: 10). According to Ameny-Dixon (n.d: online) multicultural education

consists of the assimilation (“melting pot”) and the pluralist (global) perspective. The former aimed at non-dominant groups waiving their cultural identities and becoming part of the “dominant Anglo-Western European culture. Pluralist education, on the other hand, “promotes equity and respect among the existing cultural groups”. It also emphasises the recognition of and respect for differences in a society of different backgrounds (Spencer 2006: 207; Lambert, Mogahaddam, Sorin & Sorin 1990: 388). However, the strategies discussed above did not necessarily transcend the strategies of special needs education, inclusive education and citizenship education (see section 1.2.1), since despite some pretty notable intentions, they nevertheless, in practice, were geared towards integrating non-dominant groups into the dominant American culture (Mda 2000: 231).

1.2.3 African perspective

In Africa, the issue of difference in student populations has been considered in terms of relationships between indigenous African education and the European education system. Abagi (2005: 299) contends that indigenous African education implies the socialisation of the young into the norms, religious, and moral beliefs and ways of life of African society. After the colonial era which, in terms of education, was characterised by inculcating Western thought and practice, diversity matters in education have largely been concerned with deconstructing the colonial educational system and reconstructing the indigenous knowledge into the curriculum rather than tackling internal diversity problems (Abdi 2005: 27; Shizha 2005: 69; Cross 2004: 402; Hoppers 2000: 10).

1.2.4 Socio-cultural diversity and CBLEs at higher education institutions

In this section, the current conceptualisation of the phenomenon of diversity in social context and its relation to higher education institutions are examined to highlight a relationship between management strategies and CBLEs.

1.2.4.1 *Diversity as an issue in educational institutions*

The concept 'diversity' originates from the Latin term *diversus* which either refers to variety or a kind other than one's one. Social diversity had often been conceptualised in terms of racial, ethnic, and gender differences (Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 219). Through time, however, its interpretation became more complex and encompassed a wide array of components such as race, ethnicity, gender, culture, language, religion, physical traits, sexual orientation, birthplace, economic status, and education (Cross 2004: 391; UNDESA-IIS 2001: 1). In educational environments, these differences have often been viewed as factors that would "influence the skills, knowledge, experiences, values and strengths" students bring to an educational institution, as well as how they tend to learn (McCown, Driscoll, Roop, Saklofske, Schwean, Kelly, & Haines 1999: 98). McCown et al. (1999: 98) argue that seeing student differences as diversity issues would enable higher education administrations to understand how students learn and how they establish social cohesion and inform their development of management mechanisms that relate to student diversity and learning needs.

In education, diversity issues found expression in the introduction of multicultural education in the 1960s and the 1970s in the USA and some European countries respectively (see Goodman 2011: 3; Mda 1999: 219). It was practised until the late 1980s. It was governed by the theories of multiculturalism, inclusive education and citizenship education (see sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2) which focused on facilitating the learning opportunities of the disadvantaged groups in mainstream schooling systems. The concept 'diversity management' was formally used to relate to workforce diversity in the USA during the 1980s (Wrench 2007: 3; Kirton & Greene 2005: 123). Dancy II (2010: 77) is of the opinion that "historically, diversity programmes called for special consideration in employment, education, and contracting decisions for minorities and women".

In terms of education, "managing diversity" was seen as a strategy to improve the academic achievement and access to education of socially disadvantaged groups. Since the 1980s, due to the impetus of massification of higher education (Onsman 2010: 262;

McCown et al. 1999: 92), diversity programmes have flourished in many universities and colleges across the globe. As an attempt to accommodate students from a wider social and cultural spectrum, institutions started to put in place different diversity management strategies. This situation paved the way for a distinct conceptualisation of the phenomenon diversity management in the 1990s (Wrench 2007: 1).

Diversity encompasses both composition and structure. The former refers to the numerical or proportional representation of diverse groups in an educational institution, whereas the latter explains how individuals interact with others in inter-group social environments (Dancy II 2010: 159; Fries-Britt, Younger & Hall 2010: 191). In terms of interaction, diversity relates to broad issues pertaining to diverse co-existence and upholds an all-inclusive diversity management paradigm which encompasses both similarities and differences (Booyesen 2007: 320) since people “have both multiple differences and similarities” (Kirton & Greene 2005: 132). This theoretical perspective underpins a diversity management approach in which both similarity and uniqueness are equally valued for the mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence of different social groups in an interactive institutional context (Seigel 2003: 8). Thus, the concept of the term “diversity” was broadened to include not only the structural or compositional and interactional aspects of social features mentioned earlier, but also the view that people who have their own distinctive cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds can co-exist and obtain equitable academic and social benefits from an all-inclusive learning environment (David 2010: 5; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 220). Thus, the theoretical viewpoints underlying diversity started to diverge from the multicultural, inclusive and citizenship education theoretical perspectives of the 1990s.

In the 1980s, studies on diversity mutated away from the sociological context of multiculturalism, inclusive education and citizenship education and emphasised an

(1) attempt to develop empathy and sensitivity of majority individuals towards people who have been, and continue to be, the targets of systematic acts of injustice; and (2) attempts to increase cultural

knowledge about people from these targeted groups (Gracia & Hoelscher 2008: 7).

Its reference to empathy with and sensitivity to injustice underlie the critical standpoint of challenging the legitimacy of inequality practices and nurturing and promoting human consciousness towards emancipation. Emancipation underpins not only the recognition of differences and commonalities, but also the view that peaceful co-existence with differences has mutual benefits (Hockings, Cook & Bowi 2010: 98). According to Goodman (2011: 122) empathy involves “affective and cognitive components, requiring both the capacity to share in the emotional life of another, as well as the ability to imagine the way the world looks from another’s vantage point”. Thus, from an education viewpoint, diversity signifies the view that students who value both uniqueness and differences can happily co-exist in an inclusive and accommodating school environment (Strayhorn 2010: 14; Spencer 2006: 247-248; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 220; Shizha 2005: 78; Seigel 2003: 8). In other words, it emphasises the view that in a diversity welcoming educational environment, diverse students “can recognise each other’s differences while at the same time live in peace and harmony” (Cross 2004: 395). This notion of diversity is adopted in this study.

Historically, the study of socio-cultural differences pertaining to issues such as ethnicity, race, and religion was rooted within the cultural framework of Social Studies. In the context of education these variables have often been incorporated into the Sociology of Education. The term ‘Sociology of Education’ was coined in the 1920s to refer to research that investigates the process of education that fosters moral commitment and cognitive development of students who can become change agents in bringing about a better society (Ballantine 1993: 12). Abdi and Cleghorn (2005: 4) emphasise a similar view in their statement that “Sociology of Education focuses on the relationship of the schooling process, practice, and outcomes [and] the organisation of society as a whole”. Both these explanations seem to imply the view that Sociology of Education studies the interconnection with and impact of human relations on teaching learning processes and learning outcomes within an educational social context. Literature shows that studies on

social diversity which focus on a wider scope of differences use theoretical underpinnings drawn from the fields of Education Management, History, Anthropology, Sociology, Social Psychology, including Sociology of Education (Cross 2004: 399) (for a detailed discussion see section 4.3.3).

1.2.4.2 *Cross-border learning experiences (CBLEs)*

Although the concept CBLE has not been widely explored as a phenomenon in education, its epistemological root could be attributed to inter-cultural education and multiculturalism (see section 1.2.2). The concept 'cross-border learning' has often been widely used to signify the phenomenon of crossing over a delimited geographical or socio-cultural boundary through learning (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 74). For the purpose of this study the geographical component indicates the process of crossing national and regional boundaries in higher education. The socio-cultural component is often referred to as frontier education (Krupat 1992: 5), cross-border education (Knight 2011: 16), border crossing (Cleghorn 2005: 106), cross-boundary learning (Pless & Maak 2004: 130), and cross-cultural learning (Ramburuth & McCormick 2001: 334). For Cleghorn (2005: 106), border-crossing is "the ability to shift cognitively as well as culturally from one *worldview* to another". It implies the possibility of crossing into socio-cultural boundaries of others without losing one's identity. On the other hand, 'frontier' refers to a socio-cultural context in which people with different cultural backgrounds interact. Coming together is assumed to open the door for interaction which leads to better understanding. It does not necessarily guarantee the establishment of positive relationship among interlocutors. In educational contexts, as is true for other contexts, border-crossing should create opportunities during which a diverse student community are able to share ideas, knowledge and practices that broaden their perspectives (Shizha 2005: 77). In this study, cross-border learning is viewed as a phenomenon that signifies a process of sharing experiences and knowledge that would enhance both academic success and inter-group understanding of socio-culturally diverse students across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries.

Based on the socio-cultural perspective of cross-border learning, this study considers a CBLE as a learning activity during which an individual positively engages with cultures of others without losing his/her own culture. The concept is adopted from the view that when a person learns about others with others, he/she may develop a multidimensional perspective which would deepen and broaden his/her worldview. In other words, the term CBLE is used to refer to the notion that a student in a diverse social and educational environment could critique his/her knowledge and predispositions about others based on a new understanding gained through sustainable interaction (Goodman 2011: 33). Therefore, in this study, the concept CBLE can also be seen as academic and social cognitive processes that occur when students of different ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds live and work co-operatively and comfortably and share knowledge, experiences and viewpoints which bring about mutual learning benefits (Burgess 2007: 204; Pless & Maack 2004: 134). In this regard Booyesen (2007: 64) argues that:

Although most human behaviour is embedded in internalised cultural socialisation, which forms the individual's basic frame of reference, and leads to ethnocentrism, people can to some extent step outside their cultural frameworks into other cultural frameworks in order to understand one another better and to adapt to different environments and situations.

Thus, through CBLEs students can develop their social and academic skills and benefit from the basic tenet of diversity – a harmonious peaceful co-existence with differences for mutual benefits.

CBLEs involve the concept of social space rather than that of geographical physical position in the teaching learning environment. According to Baber (2010: 226) and Jarvis (2006: 55) social space refers to a communal interactive setting which requires both individual and collective involvement of different people during interaction. Baber argues that “the definition of place is limited to measurable objective aspects of geography while space describes aspects of human territorial experiences” (Baber 2010: 226). The

concept of space, in terms of cross-border learning therefore refers to a transformation of an individual or a social group to move from his/her/their comfort zone to others' social spaces which bring about mutual social and cognitive growth. In this regard Baber (2010: 227) emphasises:

If identity of place harmonises with personal identities, place becomes interactive and cohesive. However, if individuals encounter an identity of place which clashes with personal identities, identity of place becomes a source of marginalisation and detachment.

From a teaching learning perspective, it is suggested that CBLEs have significant pedagogical value for students. Wright and Lander (2003: 239) state that if social environments are not cohesive, students “will actively seek group membership ... where the group experience offers fewer relational constraints”. However, when students are able to cross their ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries and live cohesively, they develop multiple perspectives which enhance social skills needed to live in a diverse society (Museus & Harris 2010: 30-31; Cleghorn 2005: 106; Gallos, Ramsey & associates 1997: 212). As a result, they are relieved from confining themselves to ethnic, linguistic and religious based groups which may limit their perspectives and negatively affect their cross-cultural development needed for a multicultural social life (Crozeir et al. 2008 in Hockings et al. 2010: 99; Ballantine 1993: 11). Therefore, the aim of managing diversity at a multicultural educational institution is to bring about a situation in which students live and learn cohesively and with mutual respect regardless of ethnic, linguistic and religious differences. Field (2009: 9) argues that the governance and management processes in a multicultural educational setting should, in essence, be geared towards addressing the complex inter-group relationships. In this study the relationship between diversity management and CBLEs is established and explained.

1.2.4.3 *Management underlying CBLEs*

Diversity management is a relatively recent concept used in the field of Education Management which “involves strategies that recognise [the interconnectedness] between inclusiveness and overall organisational goals and does not attempt to advantage a specific group” (Dancy II 2010: 86). Diversity management, in the context of this study is defined as a process of creating an all-inclusive and supportive learning environment through policies, programmes and practices to ensure peaceful co-existence and collaborative learning partnership among ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse higher education students (Dancy II 2010: 3). In other words, it is used to signify provisions and schemes practised at higher institutions to promote students’ cognition to value otherness and work collaboratively across ethnic, linguistic, and religious boundaries which result in the achievement of mutual social and academic goals (Bitzer 2004: 47; Cross 2004: 407). The goals can be attained not only through diversifying student groups in terms of teaching and learning but also as regards facilitating other opportunities for constructive student interaction in other contexts (Fries-Britt, Younger & Hall 2010: 184).

The current trend of diversity management approaches ranges from assimilation, integration and affirmation to transformative paradigms (Spencer 2006: 220-2210). The assimilation and integration approaches mainly promote the view that non-dominant groups should cast off their cultural identity and accept or at least integrate into the dominant culture (Lambert et al. 1990: 388; see also sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2). Since these approaches focus on the integration of minorities into the dominant culture, they hardly work towards a reciprocal inter-group relationship that underpins the benefits of cross-border learning experiences. Affirmation, contrary to the integrationist viewpoint, upholds the multicultural theoretical perspective that a non-dominant group should maintain its cultural heritage and develop its identity; and that the majority should recognise the right of minorities to be different (Lambert et al. 1990: 388). The affirmative approach has often been seen as a remedial approach in which corrective measures are taken to bring about an equitable social arrangement without affecting the underlying

sources of inequality. Since the approach is based on providing 'positive discriminatory' support to disadvantaged persons and groups, it hardly brings about change which equally benefits both the non-dominant and the dominant groups (Dancy II 2010: 86; Mitchell & Edwards 2010: 59).

Since an affirmative approach can be implemented through strategies such as campus climate forums and cultural centres which hardly go beyond developing a sense of belonging to a certain group, it views diversity and cross-border learning from the instrumentalist perspective (Museus & Harris 2010: 27). In this context, as mentioned, the affirmation activities focus on providing discriminatory provisions to disadvantaged groups and would hardly result in a long-lasting mutual understanding and trust among a socially diverse student population; it would rather perpetuate the differences. Thus, the potential contribution of this approach towards the cross-cultural development of multicultural students seems minimal. It would rather limit student interaction to engaging with students with similar cultural backgrounds.

The transformative approach, on the other hand, aims at correcting inequitable outcomes through restructuring, deconstructing and transforming the underlying diversity frameworks that produce inequalities in an educational environment (Dancy II 2010: 3; Jarvis 2006: 87; Cross 2004: 402). In the transformative approach, CBLEs are meant to promote cross-cultural human relations and co-existence strategies. According to Hurtado, Milem, Clyton-Pedersen and Allen (in (Museus & Harris 2010: 27) both similarities and differences are honoured and valued on an equal footing. They contend that although there are arguments that this level of transformation is unlikely to be attained given the existing constraints in educational leadership, transformative diversity management could nevertheless be achieved if educational leaders are committed and collaborative, if adequate resources are allocated, and if initiatives are properly planned and implemented. In this regard, Robbins and Coulter (2009: 402) emphasise that transformation may take place by means of an educational leadership which has "vision, foresight, and provide encouragement, trustworthiness, dynamism, positiveness, and pro-activeness". According to the transformative diversity management approach,

education leaders are expected to foster an educational climate in which individuals as well as groups achieve their utmost learning potential. This means that the degree to which the implementation of diversity management is transformational and all-inclusive might influence the extent to which students strive to learn across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries during their life on campus (David 2010: 7; Goodman 2011: 78).

From the above it is clear that transformative diversity management which focuses on inspirational changes in individuals and groups (Robbins & Coulter 2009: 396) is more productive for cross-cultural development of students than the affirmative approach which focuses on promoting self-assertion of disadvantaged groups (Dancy II 2010: 91).

In the higher education context, transformative diversity management develops through institutional cultural transformation. This is not an easy task, and may vary in magnitude depending on the particular context of an institution (Museus & Harris 2010: 34). Museus and Harris (2010: 34-36) outline that cultural transformation could be attained by means of proper inclusive recruitment processes, integration of cultural, academic and social experiences into the teaching learning process, development of collective practices in redressing inequities in academic programmes, and student services. In this study, the transformational diversity management approach is seen as an appropriate collective strategy that should inform management activities at educational institutions (Booyesen 2007: 52; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 236; and UNDESA- IIAS 2001: 1). The use of the concept 'collective' refers to the equal involvement of all management in promoting the cross-cultural development of students.

1.2.4.4 Studies relating to diversity management and CBLEs

A range of studies relate, even if indirectly, diversity management strategies and cross-border learning to higher education. Strayhorn (2010: 141-142) studied the experiences of historically underrepresented groups in America higher education at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) in the southern region of the USA and found that the more students interact across diverse groups, the more they are likely to develop positive inter-group

relations, friendship and mutual understanding. Guthrie, King and Palmer (2002: online) investigated the relationship between students' cognitive development and perceptions concerning diversity by using data collected from students enrolled at a four-year public university in the Midwest, USA. Using the *Reflexive Judgment Model*, which describes how people justify their beliefs when faced with difficult problems and a correlational research design, they found that prejudice measures negatively correlate with the intellectual development of students.

A study made on cross-border learning situations, both in terms of in-class and out-of-class learning activities, led to insightful results. From an in-class learning angle, Ramburuth and McCormick (2001: 333-350) conducted a comparative study of learning style preferences of students from Asian backgrounds in Australia and Australian students. They used two sets of questionnaires, the *Process Questionnaire and Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire*, to assess the cognitive and environmental dimensions of students' learning. Using descriptive statistics and multiple discriminate analyses, they found that Asian students used deep motivation and surface achievement strategies whereas the Australian students used deep achievement strategies and surface motivation in their learning. They also found that the Australian students preferred auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic learning styles whereas Asian students preferred collaborative learning environments. The study, however, does not focus on the diversity management strategy employed to bring social cohesion between two study groups and the concomitant cross-border learning outcomes.

Yan and Kember (2004: 419-438) studied outside classroom group learning behaviour of culturally diverse university students who preferred to work together on a voluntary basis. They selected samples from seven universities in Hong Kong and used individual and focus group interviews to identify the strategies that students employ during out-of-class group learning activities. The findings indicate that some students employed the strategy of avoidance in terms of grouping with students from different backgrounds, whereas others interacted with such students. The former groups minimised the time they spent on group activities, but those who engaged with students who differed from them culturally

took the learning material and their interaction very seriously. This study does not explain the nature of diversity and university management strategies.

Gurin, Dey, Hurtado and Gurin (2002: 330-366) explored the relationship between students' experiences with peers from different cultures in classrooms and during informal interaction outside the classroom, as well as the concomitant educational outcomes, using two longitudinal data bases from the University of Michigan and a national sample of college students respectively. They analysed the two longitudinal databases which concern theories of cognitive development and social psychology. The findings revealed that the actual interactive experiences of diverse students, inside and outside the classroom, made a significant and positive contribution to students' learning outcomes.

A study conducted by Hockings et al. (2010: 95-108) which assessed lecturers' action research practices aimed at improving student academic and social learning to develop meaningful and inclusive teaching learning environments at an old and a new universities in the UK, Old Bridge and Newton Universities respectively, showed that culturally, socially and educationally diverse students in university classrooms engaged in teaching and learning processes. The researchers used both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data from lecturers and students. Their findings suggest that diversity variables affecting interaction go beyond structural categories such as social class, gender and ethnicity, and comprise differences relating to lecturers' and students' work life, education and university entry routes. The study emphasises that teaching and learning activities which are "student-centred, inclusive of individual differences, relevant in the context of the subject are likely to widen as well as deepen academic engagement" (Hockings et al. 2010: 108). This study which focused on confined lecturers' diversity practices and students' diversity experiences did not include institutional diversity management strategies as their frame of reference to gauge the role of diversity experiences in academic and social learning practices.

A study was conducted by Ituarte and Davies (2007: 74-92) who investigated the link between social boundaries, self-identity and learning at two universities, New York City

and San Francisco which are located on the east and west coast respectively. They used surveys to collect data concerning cafeterias, classrooms, class projects, study circles, dormitories and recreational platforms such as sports teams and spectator events. Their findings showed that “all facets of the universities” were not free of segregation and that “language, ethnicity, race and appearance rank as the four strongest” dividers that affected students’ inter-group interaction for learning (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 87).

Some diversity related issues were investigated in the African higher education context. Sefa Dei and Asgharzadeh (2005: 219-240), for instance, conducted an exploratory study on issues concerning differences and diversity among students in the Ghanaian universities. The researchers collected data by means of individual and focus group interviews from Ghanaian students studying at different universities in the country. Students related their personal accounts of experiences of how issues of differences were approached in the teaching and learning processes, as well as the administration units at the universities. The results suggested that the status of students can be explained by their backgrounds in relation to power, authority and wealth rather than the population size of any particular group.

Research by Cross (2004: 387-410) focused on diversity at South African universities. He used institutional research (survey and data base) funded by the *Ford Foundation Diversity Programme* which has become a key stakeholder in terms of the academic discourse on diversity to assess how South African universities have tried to mitigate campus diversity challenges. The study indicated that the diversity management approaches of the universities ranged from tolerance and affirmation to a celebration of diversity.

In Ethiopia, a literature study indicated that research on diversity issues is very scarce and limited to specific institutions. Abebaw and Tilahun (2007: 49-68) studied the diversity challenges of students at Bahir Dar University. They collected data from selected participants from the university’s administration, teaching staff and student unions by means of individual and focus group interviews. The findings showed that diversity

challenges have considerably increased over time at Bahir Dar University and point out that the institution did not have planned strategies to manage diversity related to on-campus conflicts. The study considered the diversity management implementers' perspectives. It involved service providers' views and did not include the views of students who would have been affected by challenges pertaining to diversity. It did not link diversity management with prevailing diversity challenges and concomitant cross-border learning effects.

Although the studies above dealt with diversity and learning from different perspectives in different educational contexts, they did not deal with the relationship between diversity management and development of CBLEs which is the focal point of this thesis. None of them investigated the relationship between service management and the development of cross-border learning behaviour which students display as a result of service provisions and teaching and learning processes. The present study attempts to fill this gap in research.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

As shown in sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2, attempts have been made to address diversity issues by means of various strategies. However, it has been argued that since the theoretical foundations of these approaches are largely rooted within the racial, ethnic, and cultural majority–minority and ability-disability paradigms, they are not sufficiently comprehensive to adequately address multifaceted within-country diversity issues relating to indigenous social groups which have displayed sustained antagonistic relationships attributed to ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences in African countries (Museus & Harris 2010: 30; Burgess 2007: 206; Abdi & Cleghorn 2005: 19).

Students of a country are often incorrectly considered in terms of homogeneous groups whilst their socio-cultural differences are overlooked. Differences are considered insignificant with respect to their influence on educational success. Cross (2004: 407) contends that a significant difference is observed between students from the same

country and student cohorts from various countries. In a multicultural country where students from diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds receive higher education, students' experiences could be more complex and require strategies that transcend the multicultural approach.

Since the current multicultural approach emphasises the facilitation of learning opportunities for non-dominant students that equal those of the majority student population, it does not fully address the multifaceted diversity issues of students. The versatile diversity issues from a within-country perspective could be viewed in terms of geo-social and socio-historical factors. The geo-social factor relates to a situation where students receive their pre-university education within their cultural context, most probably in their mother tongues, and live in a geographically demarcated region which by and large houses a culturally homogeneous community. In such a situation, students would lack adequate cross-cultural education opportunities which would help them to cope with diversity issues and succeed in a diverse higher education environment (Fries-Britt et al. 2010: 183; Taylor, Peplau & Sears 2006: 102). The socio-historical factor would relate to a situation in which students might be stereotypical in their views of others which could be attributed to conflicting historical relationships. This would cause ethnic, linguistic and religious based tension among students which could negatively affect teaching and learning processes. The complexity of diversity issues would transcend the simplistic view that they would be solved if equal learning opportunities are given to the non-dominant group. All groups may equally miss educational opportunities that the social engagement could offer if constructive interaction amongst diverse groups does not take place.

When inter-group student interaction and collaborative learning activities are obstructed, educational institutions are expected to intervene through institutional management strategies (Fries-Britt et al. 2010: 184). In this regard Harper and Quaye (2009: 2) argue that "educators and administrators must be strategic and intentional about fostering conditions that compel students to make the most of college, both inside and outside the classroom".

In most of the reviewed studies on diversity (see section 1.2.4.4), attention was not paid to the role of management strategies at institutions to promote inter-group understanding and mutual trust through service provisions and teaching and learning management processes. This study aims at explaining the relationship between diversity management processes and the cross-border learning development of students across ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables obtained from data from three Ethiopian universities.

Ethiopia is a country of diverse cultures and ethnic groups and is considered a multicultural country. Ambissa (2010: 23) contends that “diversity along ethnic, linguistic, religious and many other markers is the reality of Ethiopian societies”. There are more than eighty six ethnic communities which are referred to as nations, nationalities and peoples in the *Constitution* of the country (Tronvoll 2000: 7; *FDRE* 1995: 75). These ethnic nationalities have recorded both peaceful co-existence and inter-group conflict scenarios ever since the early times to the present. Identity based repression and conflicts have been part of their collective history (Balsvik 2007: 37-38; Tjeldvoll, Welle-Strand & Bento 2005: 62). In the Ethiopian political context, power has been in the hands of the “Semitic speaking population” particularly the Amhara and the Tigrean ethnic groups (Marcus 1994: 219). The present government is designated as a Tigrean government (Balsvik 2007: 116).

In the Ethiopian context, the concepts “nation”, “nationality” and “ethnic group” often synonymously signify the tribal or national origin of a person (*FDRE Population Census Commission, Central Statistical Agency* (CSA 2010: 11). They designate a society which claims itself as a culturally and ethnically distinct people. People are delimited within a geo-social area by the provision of the present *Constitution* Article 46.2 which states that regional “states shall be delimited on the basis of the settlement patterns, language, identity and consent of the people concerned” (*FDRE* 1995: 102). Though not explicitly stated, the concept ‘identity’ is likely to refer to identity indicators such as, ethnicity, language and religion (see Abera 2009: 103; Afework 2009: 15). This might imply that Ethiopian people base their objectives along ethnic and/or religious lines (Abebe &

Pausewang 1994: 32). This might be the cause for the present government structuring itself into an ethnic based federal state (FMOE 2010: 10).

The above socio-cultural realities also manifest themselves at Ethiopian higher education institutions where students with diverse cultural backgrounds of the country come together for tertiary education. The *Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation* (FDRE 2003: 4976-5044), in an attempt to respond to the social diversity issue, stipulates that one of the aims of higher education is to expand higher education services that are free from any form of discrimination on grounds of race, religion, sex, politics and other grounds, and that institutions are expected to develop and disseminate the culture of respect, tolerance and living together. Thus, each higher institution is expected to align its diversity related institutional policies, rules and regulations and management strategies with these national educational objectives of developing peaceful co-existence (A detailed discussion is provided in sections 2.2.3.3.1; 2.2.3.3.2 and 2.2.3.3.3).

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The discussion in section 1.3 which deals with multicultural scenarios in Ethiopia and section 2.2.3.3.3 which focuses on inter-group conflicts among students underpin the pertinence of diversity studies concerning ethnic, linguistic and religious variables in terms of management processes. This study is aimed at finding an alternative and meaningful explanation for the management of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity in terms of CBLEs which are embedded in service management strategies and teaching and learning processes.

To address this research problem adequately, the study was guided by the following overarching research question and its sub-questions:

- **Overarching research question:** How can and should CBLEs be managed and advanced within the ambit of service and teaching and learning management strategies?

- **Sub-research questions**

I. How do student service management units at the universities implement the multicultural provision of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) and *Higher Education Proclamation* (650/2009)?

1. How do the Multicultural Higher Education Policy and implementation strategies of the universities relate to management processes aimed addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences amongst students?
2. Which of the management strategies of the universities relate to components of cross-border learning experiences?

II. How do students practise their multicultural life at the universities in terms of the higher education policy provisions set for addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences?

- 1 How do students cope with diversity challenges at the study site universities?
- 2 What socio-cultural practices do students use to establish social relationships?
- 3 What components of cross-border learning experiences can be drawn from the socio-cultural practices of the students?

III. How are group learning activities managed at the universities?

- 1 What types of group learning activities are practised at the study site universities?
- 2 Which grouping strategies underlie cross-border learning experiences?
- 3 How aware are the practitioners of the educational impact of cross-border learning experiences embedded in the teaching and learning management processes?

- IV. How complementary are management practices relating to *Student Service* units and the teaching and learning areas to developing cross-border learning experiences?
- 1 What opportunities facilitate the implementation of cross-border learning experiences within management processes?
 - 2 What kinds of challenges affect the utilisation of cross-border learning experiences within management processes in the context of this study?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of this study is to provide evidence based explanations that elucidate how CBLEs can and should be managed within service and teaching and learning management strategies of multicultural higher education in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious variables. Based on this general purpose, the study aims to attain the following specific objectives:

- I. To determine how student service management units at the study site universities exercise the guidelines set to implement the multicultural provision of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* 1994 and *Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation* 650/2009:
 - 1 To assess how the Multicultural Higher Education Policy implementation strategies of the universities relate to management processes of addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences of students.
 - 2 To identify types of CBLEs embedded into management strategies and practices.
- II. To explore strategies how students practise their multicultural life at universities in terms of higher education policy provisions set for addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences:

- 1 To describe how students cope with diversity challenges at the study site universities.
 - 2 To uncover in-campus socio-cultural practices that underlie the establishment of constructive inter-group social relationships.
 - 3 To show kinds of CBLEs that emanate from socio-cultural practices of students.
- III. To explore teaching and learning management strategies that underlie CBLEs:
- 1 To study group learning activities that underlie CBLEs.
 - 2 To find out group learning strategies that promote CBLEs.
 - 3 To discover the knowledge and practices of using CBLEs to develop the social and academic skills of students through teaching and learning management processes.
- IV. To examine how complementary management practices relating to student service offices and the teaching and learning areas are for the cross-cultural development of multicultural students:
- 1 To determine what opportunities in *Student Service* management units and teaching learning management processes underlie the cross-cultural development of multicultural citizen students.
 - 2 To point out challenges that affect utilisation of CBLEs within management processes in the context of this study.

1.6 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Most studies on social diversity focus on majority-minority relations between the native and non-native student population (see section 1.2.4.4). From the literature survey (see section 1.2.4.4), it became evident that studies on intra-national or within-country multicultural issues in general and those pertaining to higher institutions in particular are

scarce. This study would hopefully contribute towards narrowing this gap and enrich the epistemological paradigm as regards diversity research in higher education.

This research project focuses on specific diversity variables, namely ethnicity, language and religion, since these variables have been playing significant roles in the establishment of social relationships amongst diverse people; both at societal and institutional levels (see sections 3.2.1; 3.2.2. and 3.2.3). Particularly in the Ethiopian context, these three diversity variables are considered as vital demographic variables that determine the degree of social cohesion (see FDRE 1995: 97).

As this study deals with the relationship between diversity management and CBLEs embedded within management processes in a multicultural higher education context, it is believed that it would reveal a working knowledge that could be used for developing a framework that would assist in linking CBLEs to management strategies aimed at creating a learning environment that is conducive to peaceful co-existence and cross-cultural development of diverse student populations. Since this study views CBLEs in terms of management processes, the findings would assist higher education policy makers, managers at universities, curriculum developers, course designers and lecturers in preparing graduates for a multicultural work environment. The findings may also be theoretically meaningful for developing diversity policies and implementation strategies relating to other sectors in multicultural countries.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the process of designing a plan of action to collect, analyse and interpret data in order to provide evidence-based explanations about a study phenomenon (Gall, Gall & Borg 2003: 123). A researcher is expected to follow a systematic procedure to interrogate a phenomenon in a particular context and generate knowledge. In this section, the research approach, data collection methods, sampling strategies, method of data analysis, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, trustworthiness, and ethical consideration of this study are described briefly.

1.7.1 The research approach

This study attempts to explain the interconnection between institutional management strategies and CBLEs which develop student cohesion at three Ethiopian universities. It uses theoretical perspectives drawn from Sociology of Education, Education Management and theories pertaining to learning (For a detailed discussion on the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study, see Chapter 4).

A study that relates to a complex and dynamic human relations in a specific context could be explained meaningfully by means of a case study that collects empirical data by means of qualitative methods (Creswell 2012: 205; Dorynei 2007: 138; Cohen, Manion & Morison 2000: 18; Gall, Gall & Borg 2003: 435). A case study constitutes an in-depth investigation of aspects relating to, inter alia, individual, as well as groups of people, communities, institutions, and programmes (Dornyi 2007: 138). In this study views of individuals that belong to groups in terms of ethnicity, language and religion are obtained to clarify their CBLEs in terms of student services and teaching and learning strategies at selected universities.

Qualitative methods are instrumental to find answers for research questions that ask “why” and “how” and which could be answered through inferences, insights and understanding by using rigorous non-numerical data (Corbin & Straus 2008: 13; Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle 2006: 142; Corbetta 2003: 220; Yin 2003: 1). Qualitative methods are suitable to gather data when it is difficult to determine the exact number of participants in a population and if the adopted research paradigm and the research questions dictate the use of non-numerical information (Corbin & Straus 2008: 13; Lodico et al. 2006: 142; Corbetta 2003: 220). As shown in section 5.2.2.1.2 and Chapter 6 respectively an exact number of interviewees could not always be predetermined. An interpretivist paradigm (Creswell 2009: 8-9) to collate various views expressed during interviews to answer the research questions necessitated non-numerical information. A case study approach and qualitative methods were considered complementary to an investigation relating to complex socio-cultural issues pertaining to ethnicity, language and religion.

It is contended that the design of a qualitative study should be open-ended and that researchers are not required to plan every detail concerning the study procedure from the very outset. Dornyei (2007: 113). Gay, Mills & Airasian, (2006: 84) and Yin (2003: 1) agree that the design should show flexibility during the process of investigation. The researcher, as shown in sections 5.2.21.2 and 5.2.2.2, applied the study design flexibly in terms of identifying participants and collecting and processing data.

1.7.2 Data collection methods

Different data collection methods have been associated with qualitative research. These include “documentation, archive records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts” (Yin 2008: 85). For this study document analysis, direct observation, individual interviews and focus group interviews were selected as research methods on the basis of their instrumentality to gather pertinent and complementary qualitative data that would answer the research questions outlined in section 1.4. Collection of data by means of these strategies also effected triangulation which supported the trustworthiness of this study (for a detailed discussion of each method, see sections 5.2.2.1.1).

1.7.2.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is the process of examining written or visual materials, such as memoranda, reports, correspondence letters, official publications, and photographs to draw meaningful insights that relate to institutional activities of an organisation (Creswell 2012: 223); Patton 2002: 5). Gay et al. (2006: 422) point out that written documents can provide insights into how things became the way they are in institutions. Since this study focuses on the relationship between management strategies and the development of CBLEs of students in multicultural contexts, documentary sources would contribute to an understanding of management processes and related cross-border learning outcomes. Accordingly, relevant documents such as policies, legislations, diversity related rules and regulations and newspaper reports on inter-group relationships at higher institutions, were

collected and reviewed in Chapter 2 with the objective to contextualise the study project. The contextual literature review was later employed to refine aspects pertaining to observation and the questions relating to the individual and focus group interviews. Substantive evidence from the contextual review was used to validate the findings drawn from empirical data obtained from study participants (for a detailed discussion of data analysis, see Chapter 6).

1.7.2.2 Interviews

In qualitative research, conducting interviews is a key data collection method for interaction between researcher and participants to obtain qualitative data which would be difficult to obtain otherwise. Interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to understand the meaning that respondents attach to their experiences (Gay et al. 2006: 418). Interviews are useful to construct knowledge from participants' stories contained within the microcosms of their consciousnesses (Seidman 2006: 7–8; Cohen et al. 2000: 273). In this section a brief discussion of the types of interviews selected for this study is provided.

1.7.2.2.1 Individual interviews

Individual interview is associated with qualitative research and is a process of collecting data in which a researcher asks questions and only one participant gives answers at a time (Creswell 2012: 218). Individual interview participants are often selected using a non-probability selection strategy for their knowledge and immediate experiences pertaining to the topic under investigation (Gay et al. 2006: 113). Individual interviews were considered appropriate for this study because the selected individuals' views pertaining to cross-border learning experiences are important in getting to grips with the phenomenon and would contribute towards meaningful recommendations. Although individual interviews were initially planned to be conducted with three key participants from *Student Service* offices of the three study site universities, five officers were interviewed using semi-structured interview questions (Creswell 2012: 218; Frankfort-

Nachmias & Nachmias 1996: 232; see Appendix II-C). These interviewees included one Director of a *Student Service* office, one *Dean of the Students*, one Assistant Dean to *Student Service* office, an officer of *Public Relations* office of a university and an officer of a *Student Affairs* office appointed by a Dean of *Student Service* who did not participate in the interview. A detailed discussion is provided in section 5.2.2.1.1

1.7.2.2.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews and focus group discussions are very often taken as synonyms, although they conceptually designate different activities. The former is often associated with collecting a range of responses from a group of four to six individuals (Creswell 2012: 218; Krueger & Casey 2000 (in Gall et al. 2003: 238) under the strict guidance of an interviewer, while the latter is seen as a technique of gathering collective experiences during open discussions of a group of six to twelve people (Dornyei 2007: 131; Berg 2001:111; Cohen et al. 2000: 288). In focus group interviews, individuals who have shared understanding and experience relating to a study phenomenon are usually grouped together (Creswell 2012: 218) whereas in focus group discussions participants are composed of strangers with a similar background that relates to research issues (Cohen et al. 2000: 288-289). In this study context the groups organised for participation are referred to as focus group interview participants because they are from the same campuses and are most likely familiar with each other (Creswell 2012: 218).

Three different types of focus group interviews were organised and conducted at each university. Participants for the first focus group interviews were selected from *Student Service* officers and clerks, *Student Union* representatives and *Campus Police* members. Three focus group interviews were conducted and twenty-six *Student Service* officer participants were involved (see Table 5.3). The second focus group interviews were conducted with lecturer participants, one focus group interview at each study site university. Twenty lecturer participants were involved in these focus group interviews (see Table 5.4). The third focus group interviews were conducted with twelve student groups (four focus group interviews at each university). Eighty-nine student participants took part

in these focus group interviews for students (see Table 5.5). The detailed procedure for grouping each team is presented in the next section 5.2.2.1.2.

- *Student Service* officers and clerk participants selected from *Student Service* offices of each university and the participants of each group were therefore colleagues. The views of the *Student Service* officers are important, since they would have an influence on the CBLEs of students since they deal with students who do not share their ethnicity or language.
- The lecturer participants teach in the same campus and were familiar with each other. The lecturers' role in effecting CBLEs is significant since they interact with students from different cultural backgrounds (see section 3.6.3). Their influence on grouping students in class would also bear relation to the CBLEs of students.
- The student participants were selected from the universities and organised into groups from the same campus, on the basis of their ethnicity. The views of student participants are of cardinal importance in this study because this study concerns the CBLEs of students.

The above organisational strategy was used with the assumption that it would facilitate the gathering of data from different perspectives that would corroborate with and validate the views of fellow participants (Creswell 2012: 208).

In this study, focus group interviews were employed to collect verbally expressed views of focus group interview participants in terms of their opinions, attitudes and experiences concerning CBLEs by means of semi-structured interview questions posed by the researcher (Cohen et al. 2000: 288). The answers to the interview questions prompted further questions to accommodate the collection of information on emerging issues (Creswell 2012: 218; Seidman 2006: 15).

1.7.2.3 *Observation*

Observation is a technique of recording real world experiences and impressions in the natural environment as a source of information in studying research phenomena. It provides firsthand information concerning the physical environment, human organisations, social interactions and programme processes (Creswell 2012: 213; Cohen et al. 2000: 305). It is also effective to collect data related to human interests and behaviours (Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger 2005:119). Observation is useful to get an insightful explanation about what actually happens in a situation. In this study, non-participant observation technique was used to view participants' natural environment and its implication to students' cross-border learning development without manipulating the setting (Gay et al. 2006: 413). A detailed discussion of observation is provided in section 5.2.2.1.2.

1.8 STUDY SAMPLING STRATEGIES AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Since context plays a significant role in qualitative study, a sampling strategy pertaining to it should involve the process of identifying the study environment as well as the participants. In order to make a qualitative investigation manageable, the number of the study participants should be small and non-representative of the whole population (Creswell 2012: 206; Cohen et al. 2000: 102). This means that samples are selected through non-probability sampling methods and that inference to the whole population cannot be made in terms of the findings of research.

Qualitative sampling techniques are used to select a small number of participants who are thought to inform the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the study phenomenon. Participants are selected for their expertise knowledge concerning the topic under investigation (Gay et al. 2006: 113). Qualitative research often uses non-probability sampling procedures such as convenience, quota and purposive sampling techniques (Gay et al. 2006: 112-113; Cohen et al. 2000: 102):

- The convenience sampling technique is often used to select whatever study unit from a conveniently available study population at a given time and place.
- Quota sampling is a process of selecting a study sample that may not be representative in size but is similar to the study population in terms of characteristics (Berg 2001: 32; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996: 184-185).
- The purposive sampling strategy is the process of selecting a study group from a given population based on the experience and knowledge of the researcher about the study group.

Purposive and convenience techniques were selected for this research as they permit the selection of appropriate study groups and key informants who possess contextualised and detailed experiences concerning the topic of investigation (Gay et al. 2006:112; Lodico et al. 2006: 266; Berg 2002: 32).

Based on the above research assumptions Addis Ababa University (AAU), Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU) and Debreberhan University (DBU) were purposefully selected as case study sites from 31 public universities in Ethiopia at the time of the design of the research. (Now there are 34 public universities in Ethiopia). Similarly, five individual interview participants (a *Director*, a *Dean of Student Service*, an *Assistant to the Director of Student Service*, a *Student Affairs* officer and a *Public Relations* officer), 26 *Student Service* officers and clerks, 20 lecturers and 89 students were selected through convenience and purposive sampling strategies.

This study was conducted in three phases, namely the literature review, pilot study and main study phases. First a thorough document review was made (see Chapter 2) in order to contextualise the topic of this study, as well as to contribute towards triangulation of the findings of the empirical data analysed in Chapter 6. This was followed by a global review of literature which focused on broad perspectives of diversity management for addressing student social differences through management processes and Chapter 4 which outlined the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. The reviews and

the conceptual and theoretical frameworks informed the design of the research and the development of data collection strategies. Second, the design of the study and the instruments were piloted at ASTU. Based on the pilot study, the research instruments as well as the study design were refined for the main study. Third, the main study was conducted using the refined procedure and instruments. During the main study, individual interviews were arranged and conducted by the researcher at each study site university. While individual interviews were in progress, focus group interviews participants were selected and organised into groups by research assistants at each university. The focus group interviews were conducted after the individual interviews. Observations related to office practices of the *Student Service* staff and student participants were made informally according to separate schedules after the researcher had established good rapport with conveniently selected officers and voluntary student participants. A detailed discussion of sampling strategies is presented in section 5.2.2.1.2.

1.9 DATA ANALYSIS

In qualitative research, data analysis finds expression in a systematic presentation of collected information in a meaningful pattern for evaluation and interpretation purposes (Darlington & Scott 2002: 145). It is characterised by the process of coding or classifying, examining, and giving meaning to data (Corbin and Straus 2008: 64; Yin 2003: 109).

Coding in this study is a process of identifying conceptual or thematic labels according to which data can be organised and analysed (Darlington & Scott 2002: 145). A thematic analysis strategy is recommended for analysing policy related issues where the policy agenda can be considered as a source for identifying categories. Categories help researchers to visualise the data as a whole rather than analysing them case by case (Dey 1993: 110). Since this study collects data from different study sites in terms of a similar policy for addressing student diversity needs, the thematic analysis strategy provided a meaningful explanation with regard to service management strategies and teaching and learning processes at the study sites. Data collected from documentary sources and study participants were thematically analysed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 6

respectively and were integrated to explain the relationship between diversity management strategies and CBLEs of students across ethnic, linguistic and religious variables. Section 5.2.2.3 provides more information on data analysis.

1.10 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The terms “conceptual framework” and “theoretical framework” often appear together in research. Conceptual framework refers to a scaffold of interconnected ideas used to build up a high level idea which is much greater than the sum total of the components and that could build a theoretical ground of a study (Mouton 1996: 195; Dey 1993: 46). A theoretical framework is a generalised assumption to be verified and tested through research findings (Bryman 1988: 97). In research, the complementary relationship between the two concepts is more significant and useful than their differences in illuminating a study phenomenon. It is logical that theories develop from continuous investigation and repeated conceptual outcomes of research processes.

The conceptual framework and theoretical framework of this study is discussed in Chapter 4 which follows a chapter which contextualises the phenomenon of CBLEs in Ethiopia, and a chapter which presents a global overview of diversity management.

The theoretical framework of this study constitutes a model for diversity management and cross-border learning within the broader conceptual framework which includes theoretical links between diversity management and learning, Sociology of Education and theories of learning.

1.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness or dependability refers to a process of validating the accuracy and credibility of findings (Creswell 2012: 259). Accuracy refers to consistency of procedure and the extent to which variations can be tracked or explained in terms of scientific methods (James, Milenkiewicz & Buckham 2008: 93), whereas credibility implies that

findings can be defended by means of external evidence that would verify conclusions (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen 2010: 502).

In this study, the trustworthiness of the research is illustrated by the repetitive consistency of the study procedure at the three study sites (see sections 5.2.2.2 and 5.2.3) and by means of substantiating logical correctness of the conclusion by using evidences from literature reviews, theoretical and conceptual framework and findings from empirical data analysis. In addition, data obtained from different participants of three study sites by means of document analysis, individual interviews, focus group interviews and observation were triangulated to maximise the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Gay et al. 2006: 423-424). More information on trustworthiness of the study is provided in section 5.2.3.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues have become a major concern among researchers and study participants these days. Establishing an ethical framework therefore safeguards both the researcher and participants, facilitates the research process, and eventually enhances the credibility of a study report (Glynis 2009: 17). A researcher should set in place a mutual code of conduct and should strictly abide by it not only to get access to the study environment and participants but also to obtain trustworthy information that would lead to credible findings. Gay et al. (2006:73) contend that “research studies are built on trust between the researcher and the participants, and researchers have a responsibility to behave in a trustworthy manner ...”

In this study, the researcher first secured a certificate of *Ethics Clearance* from UNISA and presented it with an application letter to the *Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (DFLL)* at Addis Ababa University to get a letter of cooperation with the study site institutions. In order to obtain consent to access the study sites and participants, he submitted to each *Dean of Student/Director of Student Service* of the study sites another application letter attached with copies of the letter of cooperation from DFLL, the *Ethics*

Clearance certificate from UNISA, the research instruments (interview questions, focus group guide questions and observation protocol), and a statement of the research code of conduct. In the ethical code of conduct, participants were ensured of their indefinite privacy and anonymity. After the researcher secured the letter of consent to conduct the study, in order to obtain their consent, he consulted the individual participants and focus group interview participants (*Student Service* officers, clerks and *Campus Police*, lecturers and students) at each study site with the help of research assistants. A detailed discussion on ethical considerations is provided in section 5.2.4.

1.13 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The first chapter provides a background to the study and highlights methodological strategies employed in conducting the study. The background to the study briefly describes the historical development of addressing socio-cultural diversity of students at global and national levels and demonstrates the research gap with regard to an educational link between management processes and CBLE development of students. This chapter also briefly describes issues related to the methodological approach, data collection methods, sampling strategies, methods of data analysis, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

The second chapter deals with a contextual literature review which attempts to elucidate the contextual base of the study. It discusses policies, provisions and implementation strategies related to multicultural higher education that underlie service and teaching learning management processes at national level in general and at sample universities in particular. Policy strategies are examined in terms of developing inter-group relationships of students across ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables. It shows that ethnic, linguistic and religious differences of Ethiopian students have been treated in terms of assimilation, integration and multicultural approaches during the Emperor Hailesilassie I era, the Dergue regime and by the present EPRDF government respectively (see sections 2.2.1; 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.1).

The third chapter presents a review of literature focusing on global perspectives of addressing student social differences through management processes, and interrelates social diversity, diversity management and learning. It explains the social and educational impact of ethnic, linguistic and religious variables in terms of policy frameworks and establishes the relationship between diversity management processes and cross-border learning development of students. This chapter also informs the development of the research design presented in Chapter 5. A detailed discussion on the literature review is provided in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 focuses on the conceptual and theoretical frameworks drawn from Sociology of Education, Social Psychology, Education Management and learning theories. These theoretical grounds are used to explain the interconnection between management activities and CBLEs. This chapter is presented separately with the aim of constructing a link between the conceptual and theoretical frameworks and management and learning processes which embed cross-border learning experiences. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks are also used to inform and guide the study in terms of data analysis and interpretation (see section 4.4 and Figure 4.1).

Chapter 5 aims at elucidating the design of the research in terms of selection of research methods, sampling and data collection strategies, method of data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations pertaining to this study. The research design is procedurally framed in order to find answers to the main research question and sub-questions stated in section 1.4 which inquires how service management strategies and teaching and learning processes of higher education institutions can comprise CBLEs for an ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse student population. The analytical framework of this study is provided in Figure 5.1.

Chapter 6 focuses on an analysis of empirical data collected from participants in accordance with the study procedures described in section 5.2.2.2 and provides detailed evidence-based answers to the research questions forwarded in section 1.4. As will be indicated, the findings of the study shows, *inter alia*, that the three study site universities

(AAU, ASTU and DBU) employ similar CBLE generating actions in service management units and teaching and learning processes which induce a mutual inter-group understanding among the multicultural student population. The practices of addressing student diversity needs through management processes are found to be unaccentuated if compared to formal multicultural education, since the strategies are embedded in activities that are primarily aimed at administrative and academic purposes. The participants provided mixed opinions that range from scepticism to an uncritical recognition of educational advantages of identity based service and club activities. Students employed the non-violent adaptive strategies as diversity coping strategies. In this chapter, empirical findings are triangulated with the literature reviews presented in Chapter 2 and 3 and the conceptual and theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 7 synthesises the research processes. It provides a discussion of the findings and culminates in conclusions and recommendations. In the recommendations a model is presented for formulating a diversity management policy and incorporating CBLEs within management strategies and teaching and learning processes (see Figure 7.2).

1.14 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

The key concepts below which appear in the research study are clarified to avoid ambiguity and to illuminate the context in which they are used.

1.14.1 Cross-border learning experiences

The concept “cross-border learning” has been drawn from the phenomenon of crossing over a delimited geographical or socio-cultural boundary in learning (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 74). The geographical concept of the term designates the process of passing over national and regional boundaries for educational purposes. The socio-cultural perspective of the concept is often expressed as frontier education (Krupat 1992: 5), cross-border education (Knight 2011: 16), border crossing (Cleghorn 2005: 106), cross-boundary learning (Pless & Maak 2004:130), and cross-cultural learning (Ramburuth & McCormick

2001: 334). The socio-cultural aspect of cross-border learning is relevant for this study. In this study cross-border learning can be defined as the academic and social cognitive process that takes place when students of different ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds work co-operatively and comfortably and share their knowledge, experiences and viewpoints for mutual learning benefits (Burgess 2007: 204; Pless & Maack 2004: 134; Hawkins & Heather 2001: 181). Thus, the concept cross-border learning experience refers to engaging learning activities during which students cross both their own identities and those of others to develop knowledge and skills, as well as mutually beneficial in inter-group relationships with out-group counterparts.

1.14.2 Social diversity

Social diversity has often been associated with racial, ethnic, and gender differences (Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 219). The concept, however, has now been developed to encompass wider areas of differences such as race, ethnicity, gender, culture, language, religion, physical traits, sexual orientation, birthplace, economic status and education (Cross 2004: 391; UNDESA-IIS 2001: 1). In educational environments, these social differences affect the cognitive and affective development of students (McCown et al. 1999: 98). In this study, the term “diversity” is expressed in terms of intercultural interaction and co-existence of students from different socio-cultural backgrounds in an all-inclusive tertiary education learning environment (David 2010: 5; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 220).

1.14.3 Diversity management

Diversity management is a relatively recent phenomenon in the field of Education Management. It focuses on the development and implementation of management strategies for creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment that would ensure peaceful co-existence and collaborative learning partnerships in ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse higher education student populations (Dancy II 2010: 3). It is measured in terms of the appropriateness of the approaches applied to address diversity

by means of management processes that can promote students' social cohesion (Cox (1994) in Dancy II 2010: 86).

1.14.4 Ethnic group

The concept “ethnicity” has remained controversial and elusive in academic circles. It is often used to describe natural and biological sameness, while in some contexts it stands for a latent commonality among a group of people sharing the same origin and traits (Spencer 2006: 45; Smith 1997 in Hussein 2005: 3). For Schmid (2001: 10) ethnicity is a sense of uniqueness from other people in terms of culture, language and history. Giddens 1989 in Gillborn (1990: 40) views an ethnic society as a group of people who consider themselves as culturally distinct from other groups in a society and who are, at the same time, seen by those others to be so. The terms ‘ethnicity’ and ‘ethnic group’ are used in the study to designate a dynamic group that has its own common origin, history and culture (Woolfolk 2010: 157; Hussien 2005: 3).

1.14.5 Group

The concept “group” is used in this study in two forms. It is used to depict a collection of people who interact regularly based on shared interests and also to indicate a collection of people who share any ethnic, linguistic or religious identity and have some sense of belonging that sets them apart from other groupings of people (Stolley 2005: 83-84). Sameness, in terms of the latter, is often expressed by the term “in-group” while otherness, in this regard, is indicated by the term “out-group”. In-group therefore refers to a group of people with whom one identifies and feels a sense of belonging and loyalty whereas “out-group” implies other students, who on the basis of their homogeneity in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious differences, or a combination of any of these variables, consider themselves to be a homogeneous group (Gupto, Castelo-Rodríguez, Martínez, & Quintanar 2009: 251).

1.14.6 Non-dominant group

The concept “non-dominant” is borrowed from Human (2005: 3) who uses it to refer to identity groups other than dominant groups. The term is often used to substitute the concept “minority” which is often viewed as a negative connotation. In this study context it is used to designate student groups from ethnic groups other than the Oromo, Amhara and Tigrean students.

1.14.7 Student

Learning and understanding can take place in different environments. Those who come to know are often referred to as learners or students. The concept “learner” designates a person who acquires knowledge in an informal or formal educational situation. Moon (2004: 5) considers the word “student” to be distinct from “learner”. He argues that a student is a person involved in a formal education process whereas a learner may not find him/herself in a formal educational situation. For the purpose of this study, the term “student” is used to refer to higher education students.

1.15 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the historical development of addressing socio-cultural differences in educational environment was outlined along with relevant trends of social changes in educational environments at global, regional and national levels. In this regard, a research gap was identified in terms of the relationship between management processes and the development of CBLEs that would, if researched, contribute to the cross-cultural development of multicultural higher education student populations. The gap was substantiated by a brief review of significant research outputs in the area of diversity management and learning, and the research problem was presented. Based on the description of the research problem, an overarching research question and related research sub-questions were posed, along with the objectives of this study. Methodological matters that guided this study were presented in terms of the research

approach and data collection methods. The sampling strategies, data analysis, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, trustworthiness and ethical considerations were outlined in terms of this study. The next chapter focuses on a contextual review of this study and aims at illuminating the contextual significance of the study project.

CHAPTER 2

TREATMENT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES OF STUDENTS IN THE ETHIOPIAN HE SYSTEMS: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter and the following chapter deal with an analysis of literature related to managing student socio-cultural differences in a higher education context as a prelude for developing a conceptual and theoretical framework presented in Chapter 4 which is presented to theoretically interlink management strategies and teaching and learning processes with CBLEs within a multicultural context. In Chapters 2 and 3 literatures are reviewed from two different but complementary perspectives. Whilst Chapter 2 is more particular in nature since it emphasises a review of documents and literature regarding treatment of ethnic, linguistic and religious differences of students in the Ethiopian education systems to locate the study within a national context (Creswell 2012: 466), Chapter 3 focuses on a review of global literature addressing relevant issues in higher education service management strategies, including administrative units and teaching and learning management processes. The latter chapter attempts to establish an interconnection between education management and learning that results in CBLEs.

The main aim of Chapter 2 is to contextualise the topic of this study by analysing national documentary sources and studies related to multicultural issues in the Ethiopian education systems in terms of policy frameworks and implementation practices across a historical line. This is done with the assumption that the review would provide an insight into diversity issues, climate and perspectives that presently prevail in the higher education institutions of the country, including the study site universities. It is contended that contextual understanding provides

the context of action [the multicultural Ethiopian situation], the intentions of the actor [the universities], and the process in which action is embedded [policy implementation strategies and

management practices]. ... Contexts are important as a means of situating action, and of grasping its wider social and historical import (Dey 1993: 32-33).

Understanding the context of this study would thus provide an insight into explaining the particular topic of the study within the Ethiopian context. It differs, inter alia, from the UK where large number of international students are taught by native professors, and Hong Kong where native students are taught by large numbers of foreign academics (Bodycott & Walker 2000: 81). In the Ethiopian context, the teaching and learning processes are by and large carried out by native lecturers who teach native students who are from different socio-cultural backgrounds (see section 1.3). The intra-national context of the study is appropriate for conducting research on within-country diversity management processes.

The review focuses on national and institutional published and unpublished documentary resources for elucidating strategies used in addressing student ethnic, linguistic and religious differences in Ethiopian educational systems in general and in higher education in particular. This chapter intends to provide a nationwide overview of policy frameworks and implementation strategies employed by the previous Ethiopian regimes as well as the present EPRDF government. The review provides grounds for the selection of study sites, participants and data collection strategies as well as substantive evidence and a theoretical basis against which the empirical data collected through different data collection instruments are interpreted in Chapter 6. Thus, apart from showing trends of development in addressing socio-cultural issues in the Ethiopian education systems, this Chapter provides significant background information to illuminate the Ethiopian multicultural perspective that connects CBLEs with management processes in multicultural institutional environments.

Some of the documents used in the analysis were collected from sources available in local languages and dated according to the Ethiopian calendar which is different from the Gregorian calendar. The contents of these documents were translated into English and their dates of publication were converted to its Gregorian calendar equivalent for the

convenience of international readers. The titles of these documents were translated into English for citation purposes in the text and are fully documented in the reference section. Their titles in the original languages are provided separately to assist future researchers.

The presentation of this chapter commences with a brief historical overview of strategies used to address cultural differences among student in the Ethiopian education systems since the introduction of formal education and higher education. The documents of past systems are reviewed under the era of the Emperor Hailesilassie I and the Dergue regime since they provide the background for the current situation. The historical accounts are then compared with the present practices to assess progress made in terms of promoting inter-group understanding and developing social cohesion among multicultural student populations.

2.2 POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR TREATING STUDENT DIFFERENCES: A NATIONAL OVERVIEW

The historical account of addressing students' socio-cultural differences in terms of policy during Ethiopian regimes is provided separately to ensure clarity. The history of formal education in Ethiopia, higher education in particular, is a recent phenomenon if compared to the history of education elsewhere across the globe and that of some other African countries (Teshome 2005: 1; Saint 2004: 84). The development of higher institutions stemmed from the general schooling system which has a longer history than that of higher education. The historical path of treating student differences is explained in terms of the general schooling systems. In the review, the policy assumptions of governments targeting social diversity as an issue in the schooling system are drawn from relevant policies, proclamations, regulations and education objectives set to extend manpower in the field of work.

It has been contended that a governance system which is applied in a society is often promoted in the schooling system. Shizah and Abdi (2005: 242) argue that "policies and legislation on education are based on the historical, political, and ideological persuasion

of the ruling party at any given time”. This theoretical assumption holds true for Ethiopian governments where the governance systems prescribed for the society have been dictating the nature of the educational systems (see section 1.3).

The Ethiopian governments’ perspectives of addressing student differences ranged from a total neglect of student differences during the Hailesilassie I era to the much emphasis being placed on some diversity issues of the present EPRDF government. For instance, social differences related to ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences had neither been recognised during the Minelik II (1886-1912) era nor during the Hailesilassie I (1930-1974), whereas they were given recognition during the Dergue regime (1974-1991) and much attention by the EPRDF government since 1994.

2.2.1 The Hailesilassie I era

The introduction of western education, so called modern education, into Ethiopia is strongly attached to Minelik II (1896-1912) because he opened the first government school in Ethiopia in the late 1880s. It is known as the *Minelik Secondary School*. Ethnic, linguistic and religious bias was decisive in that the school reflected the Coptic Christian religion and the Amhara culture, in line with the governmental views. The school was established to train the children of chiefs and the nobility, who were mainly from the Amhara ethnic group which predominantly followed the Coptic Christian religion, to become country leaders (FMOE 2002: 1; Krylow 1994: 231; MOE 1984: 1-5; Wagaw 1979: 120; Trudeau 1964: 9). It could be inferred that the students were homogeneous in ethnic, linguistic and religious terms since they were mainly from Amhara royalty, and that social differences were considered to be insignificant at that stage of Ethiopian education system.

The initial schooling system was developed by the establishment of more schools and the introduction of significant changes during the Emperor Hailesilassie I era, from 1923 - 1974. Nonetheless, even when student homogeneity declined and schools started to accommodate students of heterogeneous backgrounds, the non-Amhara children were

expected to be assimilated into the Amhara culture. Krylow (1994: 232) witnesses that “in the early times the success of non-Amhara [depended] on accepting [the] ‘Amharanised’ way of life”. Krylow (1994: 232) refers to this process as ‘Ethiopianisation’ which essentially meant ‘Amharanisation’. The concept ‘Amharanisation’ emerged from the Amhara ethnic group which had been politically dominant ever since the formation of Ethiopia as a country in the late 19th century. With regard to language, Amharic had constitutionally enjoyed the privilege of being the national language and had been taught as the language of unification since the 1880s (*The Report of the Education Sector Review: Challenges to the Nation* 1972: III-3; MOE 1984: 7).

During the Hailesilassie I era, schools were not only expanded, but some colleges and a university was established. The latter was governed by a policy which dictated that Ethiopian students had to be Ethiopianised in character and Christianised in religion (Abebe & Pausewang 1994: 35; Krylow 1994: 231; Trudeau 1964: 10). During the regime, “all talented students, whether from the poorest socio-economic background or from the nobility, had equal opportunities” to education at all levels (Trudeau 1964: 15) if they accepted the Coptic Christian faith and communicated in Amharic. It was mandatory for students to score a pass mark in Amharic in order to join the university (De Stefano & Wilder 1992: 10).

In general, the main aim of education during the Minelik II and Emperor Hailesilassie I periods was to Ethiopianise the content of education, convert non-Christian children to the Coptic Christian religion and to promote the ‘national language’, Amharic, as the medium of instruction at all levels (see *The Report of the Education Sector Review: Challenges to the Nation* 1972: III-4). This frame of thought was reflected explicitly in the 1955 *Ten Year Plan* which stated that proficiency in Amharic was mandatory for Ethiopian students and dictated that Amharic had to be the medium of all school communities. The policy went beyond educational institutions and attempted to dictate language use in communities when it declared that “it is essential that as soon as possible every man, woman and children in every province should have a minimum of basic education

including the ability to speak, read and write Amharic effectively” (*Ministry of Education and Fine Arts: Ten year plan* (1955) (in Trudeau 1964: 26).

This policy was short-lived, because the teachers were either monolingual Amharic speakers or speakers of other languages who had difficulty to use Amharic by themselves (Trudeau 1964: 27). Most probably the failure of the 1955 ten year plan instigated the 1972 education review which declared that education had to be accessible to the “Ethiopian people as a whole” (MOE 1972: I-6). It was claimed that the review would bring about national integration while preserving the ‘diverse’ cultures of the country (MOE1972: 1). The education review, which was called the *Second Five-Year Plan*, did not succeed mainly for two reasons. Firstly, formal education still had to use Amharic as a medium of instruction. Amharic was considered to be the national language and the symbol of national unity by the regime even though it was alien to most speakers of other languages (Wagaw 1979: 1; MOE 1972: 1). The policy remained impractical because it required a large mass of teachers who could speak the language and were literate in the Amharic alphabet called *Fidel*. Secondly, the teachers who spoke Amharic were monolingual and needed translators to teach Amharic to communities who did not speak the language. The 1972 education review was the last attempt of Emperor Hailesilassie I to integrate students by means of linguistic and religious homogenisation. Nonetheless, the king was overthrown during the 1974 revolution.

2.2.2 The Dergue era

The educational processes of the Hailesilassie I era were truncated by the 1974 revolution which brought the Dergue regime to power. The word *Dergue* is an Amharic concept used to refer to the *Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces* (Military government) which ruled the country from 1974 up to 1991. The regime proclaimed a socialist education philosophy and declared to abolish the feudal assimilationist education system that had burgeoned social, cultural and religious inequality in the country. Dergue claimed that it revamped the education system to bring about equitable education for all people.

The Dergue regime had literacy teaching materials produced in fifteen Ethiopian languages using the Amharic alphabet during the nationwide literacy campaign. In line with this development, Dergue also proclaimed that “the Ethiopian Democratic Republic ascertains the equality, development and respect of the languages of the nations and nationalities” (*EDR 1988*: 18). Indeed it made a significant reform to the education system compared to the monolithic religious and linguistic based assimilationist educational policies of its predecessor (see section 1.2.2 and cf.2.2.1). The number of schools and students showed a significant increase (De Stefano & Wilder 1992: 15-16) and the socialist changes paved the way for students from different socio-cultural backgrounds to receive higher education.

Dergue claimed that it had abolished social stratifications attributed to ethnicity, language and religion which prevailed during the Haileseilassie I era, both in the education system and in the society at large. In its *Constitution*, Article 35 (1), it was stated that “Ethiopians regardless of their ethnic, gender, religion, type of employment, social and other differences are equal in front of the law” (*EDR 1988*: 34). It was assumed that this constitutional decree found expression in the education system which decreed that students from other linguistic backgrounds may not be humiliated for using their mother tongues in informal communication situations at school compounds. It also succeeded in secularising the education system as opposed to the modus operandi of the imperial regime (see section 2.2.1).

With regard to higher education institutions, the Dergue regime declared a socialist education policy through the *Higher Education Institutions Administration Proclamation No109/1977* (*EPMG 1977*) which was intended to enforce the instrumentality of higher education in the fight against capitalism and contribute towards the development of socialism. The proclamation declared that the aim of higher education institutions was “to teach, expand and publicise socialism ... and to make every effort to develop and enrich the country’s cultures free from imperialist and reactionary content” (*EPMG 1977*: 125). Thus, the production of literacy booklets in the fifteen Ethiopian languages and the educational opportunity provision were based on equality and could be considered as a

step forward in addressing diversity issues at educational institutions during the Dergue era (De Stefano & Wilder 1992: vi; MOE 1984: 20).

However, the regime was criticised for a number of drawbacks in its strategies of addressing student differences in the education sector. Although it claimed to have brought a revolutionary change to the education system, its policy framework was criticised for remaining similar to that of the Hailesilassie regime (TGE 1994: 2). In fact, some diversity issues were addressed by following the footsteps of the previous government. For instance, even though Amharic was relegated from being the national language to the level of office language, it remained not only the medium of instruction in schools up to junior secondary level (grades 1-8), but also the means to success for obtaining employment in the country after graduation up to the downfall of the regime (Saint 2004: 84).

Both the Hailesilassie and the Dergue regimes claimed that they had installed progressive educational systems. The latter particularly asserted that it provided more equitable educational opportunities for citizen students regardless of their ethnic, linguistic and religious differences. However, the development of education in the country witnessed that the former regime fostered assimilation whereas the latter promoted integration of students from different socio-cultural backgrounds into one integrated dominant culture (see section 2.2.1). In practice, Dergue viewed the population in the country as a unified entity and ignored the prevailing reality of differences in terms of ethnicity, language and religion in the school environments (see FMOE 2002: 2; TGE 1994: 2; Wagaw 1979: 1). The difference was that the Hailesilassie era used ethno-linguistic and religious favouritism to bring about social assimilation, whereas the Dergue regime employed a secular education but exploited linguistic favouritism under the cover of socialist ideology to bring about social integration. The assimilationist and integrationist policy approaches were succeeded by multiculturalism in 1994 when the present EPRDF government explicitly singled out multiculturalism as an educational motto in its policy framework (FMOE 2002: 2).

The EPRDF government which overthrew the Dergue regime in 1991 took an antithetical path to that of its predecessors in addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity issues in the society in general and education in particular. The changes are briefly described in the next section.

2.2.3 The EPRDF government era: The present scenario

The EPRDF government explicitly set national constitutional, legal and policy frameworks which it believes respond to the long standing diversity needs in Ethiopia. One of the policy responses was the endorsement of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) which stipulated a multicultural framework for treating student differences and which was aligned with the socio-cultural diversity of Ethiopian society (TGE 1994: 6). The discussion in this section aims at describing the context of this study by using documentary sources which specifically deal with ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity issues in the higher education context since the pronouncement of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (TGE 1994).

2.2.3.1 The multicultural policy statement

In this sub-section the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) which was introduced by the EPRDF to address student diversity needs in the education sector is analysed in relation to constitutional and policy provisions that were declared at national level and policy implementation strategies that feature at institutional level.

Socio-cultural differences in the country were given recognition and legitimacy in the *Ethiopian Transitional Government Transitional Charter* of 1991 and the subsequent, *Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Constitution (FDREC)* of 1995. Both the *Charter* and the *Constitution* uphold the equality of nations and nationalities and their cultures, including languages and religions. The constitutional rights to be different anchor the policy frameworks that regulate the functions of all sectors, including education. The socio-cultural diversity issues in formal education were positioned within a multicultural

paradigm of the EPRDF government which provides constitutional grounds geared towards addressing various diversity concerns in the country in terms of its “unity within diversity” view. The explicit statement concerning the multicultural constitutional provision with regard to the socio-cultural diversity of the peoples could be considered as a significant development compared to the beliefs of the previous regimes which emphasised assimilation and integration (see sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2).

The *Constitution* of the present government defines the concept “ethnic group” as a

nation, nationality and people ... who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological makeup, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory (FDRE 1995: 97).

In order to address the long standing ethnic, linguistic and religious identity issues pertaining to “nations and nationalities” (which are referred to as ethnic groups in this study), the EPRDF government established ethnic based regional states (De Stefano & Wilder 1992: 15; Abate 2004: 6). This clearly differentiated the EPRDF government from the past regimes (see sections 2.2.1; 2.2.2).

The constitutional provisions and premises informed the formulation and implementation of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994). The policy brought about a significant change in the whole education system, including the higher education system. Concerning language, it stipulates the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction for primary education. As a result more than 24 languages are now being used as medium of instruction for primary and junior secondary education and some languages are taught as subjects in high schools and higher educational institutions. For instance, some widely spoken languages such as Afan Oromo and Tigregna have been incorporated into the higher education curriculum as study disciplines at different higher institutions.

The implementation of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* in higher education was supplemented by the *Higher Education Proclamation no 351/2003* and *Higher Education Proclamation no, 650/2009*. According to the proclamation, the entry assessment score for students from the “emerging regions” should be lower than that for students from the relatively affluent regions. The “emerging regions” presumably refer to peripheral regional states and disadvantaged peoples who were assumed to have little access to education compared to the relatively affluent regional states. It has been claimed that the policy has set an equitable education strategy that responded to diversity issues at higher institutions by providing remedial and affirmative measures for disadvantaged regions, social groups and individuals (Teshome 2005: 2). Since the provisions of equitable access and institutional services are provided on identity bases, it can be said that the education system emphasise an affirmative strategy of multicultural approach to address diversity issues in higher institutions (see also FMOE 2010: 79).

The *Higher Education Proclamation 351/2003* was further supplemented by the *Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009* (FDRE 2009: 4979-4981) of which *Article 4 (8)*, and *Article 7 (11)* dictate that the aim of Ethiopian higher education is to promote a “multicultural community life” and value “democracy and multiculturalism”. Both proclamations underline decentralised equity education for all social and cultural groups in the country in order to make higher education accessible to most of the emerging regions and social groups (FMOE 2005: 6; FMOE 2010: 80). A documentary source from the FMOE shows that considerable developments have been observed in addressing educational equity in education in general and higher education in particular in Ethiopia. The number of universities increased from eight during the early 1990s of the government to 31 public universities at the time when the proposal of this study was developed. These are distributed in almost all regions and big cities of the country. This quantitative increase and even distribution of higher education show efforts to make higher education more equitable and accessible to students from diverse social groups in the country (for statistical figures see EMIS/FMOE 2011: 169).

It has been argued that access to higher education for those regions which did not have adequate access to higher education in the past has been enhanced and that both the *Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) 2010/11-2014/15* and the *Education Sector Development Programme IV (ESDP IV) 2010/11-2014/15* have emphasised equity in higher education (FMOE 2010: 64; MOFED 2010: 91). Strategies have been established to facilitate access to higher education for students “most of whom are in the emerging regions or belong to specific groups: the pastoralist, semi-pastoralist and indigenous groups, [youths] with special needs and vulnerabilities” (FMOE 2011: 6).

The above affirmative provision is meant to increase student composition at various higher institutions and the government’s continued provision of allowances for those whom it considers as disadvantaged social groups. This approach is inherently consistent with the multicultural policy premises. Nevertheless, since an affirmative approach attempts to bring about equity by treating differences exclusively, it may fail to bring about a mutual understanding between the advantaged and the disadvantaged groups. It might perpetuate differences by nurturing group identity. Since the students are citizens who live together, the multicultural policy provision and the extended student composition would presuppose the need for a more accommodative approach that would avoid antagonistic relationships amongst students and promote mutual understanding between the disadvantaged and the better-off.

2.2.3.2 Multicultural policy implementation: institutional strategies

In the Ethiopian higher education context, different multicultural implementation strategies have been put in place by universities in line with the multicultural perspective of the *Higher Education Proclamation (2009)*. These include affirmative enrolment schemes, diversity responsive academic rule and a multicultural oriented curriculum in teaching and learning programmes (see sections 2.2.3.3.1 and 2.2.3.3.2).

One of these strategies is related to student enrolment which is described as “a policy of admitting a representative mix of students from the country’s eleven administrative

regions to each university campus” (Saint 2004: 92). From these eleven regions nine regional states are ethnic based states and the remaining two are city administrations (see section 1.3). The ‘representative mix’ strategy has been set by the MOE in order to assign students from different regional states to different universities of the country. In order to supplement the implementation of “representative mix” in the *Growth and Transformation Plan* (GTP) it is stated that higher institutions should “develop schemes for the provisions of affirmative action for those who need additional support (females, youth with disabilities, emerging regions, etc.) such as special admission criteria, tutorial support and scholarship opportunities” (MOFED 2010: 91). In relation to developing supportive schemes, the lodging policy strategy of Addis Ababa University, for instance, underlines that “there will be an attempt to mix students as far as possible to give students the opportunity of experiencing different cultures and approaches to life” (AAU, Housing and Dining 2013: online).

The diversity support scheme suggested in the GTP is an affirmative scheme which provides social and academic support for students from the emerging regional states. Since the affirmative provision emphasises support based on group identity, it may disregard problems of students coming from the comparatively developed regions who may experience similar educational needs. For instance, it may disregard the academic support needs of student groups who come from the remote parts of regional states which are regarded as better-off. It could be inferred that the affirmative assumption gives little attention to collective needs of all concerned students and might perpetuate discrimination and differences.

The literature on policy implementation emphasises that the admission based on the student ‘representative mix’ should be supplemented by a parallel mix of staffing attained through recruitment procedures (see section 3.2). In the Ethiopian higher institutions the recruitment of staff abides by the *Federal Civil Service* employment guideline which underscores that “a special consideration could be made to recruit [non-dominant] groups where they are found to be insignificant in number” (*Yefederal Yemngist serategnoch yekitr afetsatsem memeriya* 2008:15). However, higher institution recruitment guidelines

indicate that academic posts are not representational; rather they are competitive and merit based (FMOE 2010: 94; FMOE 2005: 23). For instance, the strategic plans of the study site universities do not incorporate diversity planning for staffing that would correspond with the student “representative mix’ enrolment (see *AAU 2010: 21; ASTU 2011: 76; DBU 2011: 50*). The diversity insensitivity of the universities with regard to staffing is incongruent with the representative mix policy provision and would affect diversity responsiveness of the institutions.

As Ethiopian higher institutions have become more diversified in student composition, the universities have also come to be more dynamic in responding to student diversity dynamism. They have incorporated courses which they believe promote multiculturalism into their curriculums (see FMOE 2010: 62). For instance, courses such as the *Civics and Ethical Education* and *Communicative English Skills*, which have been presented across all disciplines at all the universities in the country, aim at fostering good citizenship and multiculturalism (FMOE 2005: 25; Saint 2004: 86; MOE 2002: 33; Atkins, Hailom & Nuru 1994: xi). It is generally contended that civic education would produce thoughtful citizens who would address moral issues in their communities (Biggs & Colesante 2004: 154).

2.2.3.3 Multicultural policy implementation: institutional practices

The attainment of a policy objective depends on the effectiveness of its implementation, which, in turn, depends on the capability of the implementers and a favourable implementation environment. Capable implementers would improve and contextualise policies in the implementation process in order to make it fit for purpose.

As shown in section 2.2.3.1 the present government, contrary to its predecessors, has set more accommodative and transparent constitutional and policy frameworks that underpin the promotion of multiculturalism in higher education institutions. In the light of the policy premises, universities have developed implementation rules, regulations and guidelines and curricular frameworks that govern their practices. These operational rules are considered to inform and guide social and academic practices and are meant to be

practised by members of university communities including the management, administrative units, academia and students.

2.2.3.3.1 Policy implementation of higher education management

The success in policy implementation depends on the capacity of implementers at different hierarchical levels at an institution (Trouder 2003: 123-124; Madsen 1994: 2). Although there have been limited sources that focused on assessment of policy implementation in the context of this study, there are some documentary sources that highlight the general picture of policy implementation practices at Ethiopian higher education institutions (see Abera 2009: 61; Afework 2009: 101).

According to article 7 (11) of the *Higher Education Proclamation*, one of the guiding values in the Ethiopian higher institutions is “democracy and multiculturalism”. Its article 8 (5) dictates that a university is mandated to “legislate and implement internal rules and guidelines” (FDRE 2009: 4981-82). However, some documents examined for the present research suggest that there are capacity problems in the leadership of the universities to implement policy objectives. For instance, a university official commented to a newspaper that the policy frameworks are good and sound. However, there are gaps, when the policies are put into action” (*The Reporter* 2013:18). He added: “We believe that there are personnel who might try to scare immature students and lead them to dismissal in our universities” (*The Reporter* 2013: 15). A study report by the *Committee of Inquiry into Governance, Leadership and Management in Ethiopia’s Higher Education System* (see *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Governance, Leadership and Management in Ethiopia’s Higher Education System: 2004: 27*) also relates to the above view when it stated that in the Ethiopian higher education institutions:

- *Leaders are not appointed against clear person specifications using modern selection processes*
- *The environment in which they work is not enabling: few have a mentor or coaching opportunities and training is narrowly focused*

- *Leaders and managers do not engage in a process of self-reflection and enquiry into their own practices, and so are unaware of their weaknesses.*

The *Educational Sector Development Programme IV* (SDP IV) (FMOE 2010: 63) confirms that the “higher education management and leadership system is not at the required level”. It could be inferred that it is in recognition of possible weakness in the higher education management that the government, in the *GTP*, emphasises the need for improving the management and leadership in all sectors at all levels, including the governance of higher education (MOFED 2010: 25).

The drawbacks reported above would have an effect on the implementation of the “democracy and multiculturalism” of the *Higher Education Proclamation*. The Ministry of Education has planned to bridge this gap by providing leadership training aimed at “good governance, management and leadership capacity at the systems and institutional levels for enhanced performance and accountability of higher institution personnel” (FMOE 2010: 81). However, no sources were found on the impact of the outcomes of the plan. As will be seen, the adequacy of the implementation of multicultural provisions is discussed in detail in Chapter 6 in relation to implementation practices at grassroots levels in terms of service management of administrative units, multicultural life of students and students’ diversity experiences in teaching and learning management practices at the study site universities (see sections 6.2.1; 6.2.2 and 6.2.3).

a. Management provisions governing the services to students

The effectiveness of policy implementation is mainly determined by the effectiveness of implementation strategies. In the context of this study the concept implementation strategy refers to the “procedure undertaken in order to put policy assumptions into practice” (Fowler 2009: 270). The effectiveness of strategies aimed at the realisation of policy would determine the effectiveness of outcomes at grassroots levels. The level of attention given to a policy issue could influence the selection of management strategies,

momentum of implementation processes and ultimately the attainment of the policy intents.

With regard to the implementation of the welfare provisions for students, the policies of the study site universities demand the establishment of student service administrative units that provide students with necessary services in terms of lodging, catering, recreation, health care, and extracurricular facilities to bring the government's multicultural policy into realisation (AAU 2013: 166; ASTU 2012: 248; DBU 2011: 135). Some of these services are meant to underpin educational processes and take into account the socio-cultural diversity needs of students. In this regard the *Student Service Policy Strategy* of Addis Ababa University, for instance, emphasises that “the educational goals and objectives of the University are best achieved by a diversity of learning experiences, some of which are more appropriately conducted outside the regular classroom programme” (AAU, Housing and Dining 2013: online). The learning experiences outside the classroom referred to seem to be related to learning experiences embedded in the service provisions which have been implemented with educational intent of strengthening students' academic and social learning skills.

The sample universities have put in place different legislative rules and guidelines that inform the management practices of the service providing administrative units with directives for accomplishing the multicultural provision of the *Education and Training Policy* (1994) and the *Higher Education Proclamation* 650/2009(see also section 2.2). These are stipulated in the legislations, guidelines and codes of conduct documents of the universities. For example, the *Senate Legislation of AAU of 2013* (2013: 170-171), in Articles 175 and 180 states that students have the right to:

receive institutional legal protection from any form of discrimination or harassment ..., are expected to work with their fellow students and staff in a cordial manner, and demonstrate tolerance for diversities of all dimensions ... [and] refrain from unlawful and unethical practices, such as instigation of violence [and] hate speech.

Similarly, Article 204, sub-article 6 of *The Senate Legislation of the ASTU of 2012*, states that students “are expected to act honourably based on integrity, common sense, and respect for the law of the land and public morality, ethnic and cultural diversity at all times, both on and off campus settings” (ASTU 2012: 246). Moreover, *the DBU Senate Legislation* (2011: 133), Article 145, sub-article 5 declares that

equal opportunity and access to rights and privileges are the University’s core values addressing unity in diversity [and] any type of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, and marital or retirement status is prohibited.

The provisions at the three universities seem to prohibit any forms of discrimination, stereotyping and hatred which can be attributed to diversity variables such as ethnicity, language and religion. They are aimed at promoting equality through “unity within diversity”.

Each university gives incoming students their respective institutional multicultural codes of conduct prepared in line with the multicultural policy premises of the *Higher Education Proclamation* and the *Senate Legislations*. This would mean that the practices of the administrative units in the lodging, catering and co-curricular areas are guided by the principles envisaged in these codes of conduct documents. For example, in relation to student diversity the codes of conduct of the study sites universities underline tribute, recognition and respect to different nations and nationalities, cultures, religions, and attitudes and principles of tolerance which underlie peaceful co-existence with differences (see AAU 2013: 166; ASTU 2011: 246; DBU 2011: 133 for detail information about codes of conduct of each university).

Although it would be difficult to ascertain whether the existence of these legislative provisions and implementation guidelines result in implementation and the concomitant attainment of the set objectives, the provisions would be instrumental for the service providers as well as the beneficiaries, the students. The existence of the service

provisions would enhance the awareness of service providers to recognise the social diversity of the environment and plan how to respond to it in the management activities of their respective institutional organs (see section 3.5.1).

From the students' perspective, the existence and the ultimate materialisation of provisions are significant in two ways. Firstly, they could boost a sense of security for students who would otherwise remain suspicious and cautious in the university environment to avoid intimidation and segregation attributed to socio-cultural differences (see section 6.2.2.2.1). Secondly, as a result of the provisions students with prejudices might be encouraged to refrain from stereotypical and prejudiced practices towards other students (see section 6.2.1.1.2). This could mean that the prevalence of multicultural provisions could strengthen student-institution attachment and that students who are constructively attached to an institution develop positive attitudes towards the social environment and establish better social relationships with others (see section 3.6.1) more easily. In other words, students could come to know not only their rights and responsibilities as individuals and groups but also reciprocally recognise the rights of others and be encouraged to comply with the rules in order to establish in-group as well as out-group relationships (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 76). In this regard Bell (2002: 1) contends: "If I come to a significant, that is, considered view of the world I inhabit, then I have a starting point for venturing to understand another's world. In this way there is the possibility of moving toward mutual understanding."

b. Policy objectives guiding co-curricular provisions

At the study site universities students are often provisioned with co-curricular activities. The purposes of the co-curricular activities are stated as objectives of student organisations in the *Legislations* of each university. The aim of the activities at each university is to supplement academic activities and to develop constructive relationships among culturally diverse student populations. For instance, Article 183 of the *Legislation of AAU* (AAU 2013: 176) underpins the objectives of student organisations as:

183.1.4 Supplementing the University curricula by promoting such activities as panel discussions, debates, seminars, field trips, theatre, films, art exhibitions and other recreational activities among members of the University community and the society at large; [and] 183.1.3 Promotion of mutual respect, understanding, tolerance and co-operation among University students, other members of the University community and between University administrations.

Similarly, in Article 227 of the *Legislation of ASTU* (ASTU 2012: 262-263) the major objectives of co-curricular activities include:

4. Supplementing the University curricula by promoting such activities as lectures, panel discussion, debates, seminars, field trips, theatre, films, art exhibitions and other recreational activities among members of the University community and the society at large [and] 5. Promotion of mutual respect, understanding, tolerance and co-operation among University students, other members of the University community between University administrations.

Article 152 of the *Legislation of Debreberhan Universty* (DBU2011: 140) pronounces diversity related aims of student organisation as follows:

1.2.1 to promote communications among students and between students and other members of the University community;
1.2.2 to ensure more effective consideration, by all members of the University community, of all problems concerned with the relationship between students and other members of the University;
1.2.3 to promote study, discussion and expression on an academic level concerning intellectual, social and other problems; to supplement the academic curriculum by promoting activities

such as lectures, forums, debates, seminars, field trips, theatre, film art exhibitions, other extra-curricular activities; and

1.2.4 to promote other intellectual, social, economic and recreational activities among members of the University community and members of the larger community.

These guidelines emphasise that the main objective of co-curricular activities in the universities is meant to supplement the university curricula in promoting interactive social cohesion and mutual respect amongst a diverse student population.

The study site universities all claim that the co-curricular activities are used as diversity management strategies. For example, concerning recreation and sports the AAU aims at developing “wholesome attitudes and good human relations as well as knowledge and skills” (AAU Recreation and Sports 2013: online) among students. The concepts “wholesome attitudes” and “good human relations” seem to underline the fact that the co-curricular activities are organised to enshrine equality, peace, tranquillity and social cohesion among students. It seems that the ‘wholesome’ development is theoretically grounded within the learning paradigm because educational development which results in mutual respect and inter-group understanding is based on constructive inter-group learning processes. In this regard, it is stated in the *AAU Co-curricular Activities Guideline* that “extracurricular activities and sports shall oppose any discrimination [o]n the ground of gender, ethnicity, religious or political outlook, etc ...” (AAU Recreation and Sports 2013: online). The institutions seem to establish the co-curricular activities in order to instil peaceful co-existence and promote collaboration for learning across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries.

2.2.3.3.2 Policy strategies guiding teaching learning processes

With regard to academic activities, universities have reformed and improved their curricula from time to time. As mentioned in section 2.2.3.2, courses such as *Civics and*

Ethical Education and Communicative English Skills have been made part of the curriculum to enhance interpersonal interaction, collaborative learning and social skills (FMOE 2005: 26).

In addition, institutional guidelines and practices dictate that lecturers promote the “multicultural community life” as stipulated in the *Higher Education Proclamation No, 650/2009 (FDRE 2009: 4979-4981)* in the teaching and learning processes. Lecturers are not only professionally accountable for facilitating learning opportunities for all students but also have to uphold and promote a democratic and multicultural community life. They are advised by the legislations of the universities to refrain from any practices of discriminatory acts against students on the basis of diversity variables such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender and disability. In this regard the legislations of the study site universities dictate lecturers to comply with social diversity codes of conduct provided below:

The *Legislation of AAU*, Article 24 states that lecturers should:

- 24.2.4 *refrain from any act of discrimination against any individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex or creed, disabilities or any other unreasonable ground;*
- 24.2.5. *refrain from imposing [their] political views and religious beliefs on [his/her] students within the University premises in any form;*
- 24.2.6. *avoid acts and situations that are intimidating to students*
(AAU 2013: 29).

ASTU Legislation, Article 66 forbids lecturers from:

- 1.7. *Favoritism in grading, sexual harassment, molestations, physical violence, incitements of riots and ethnic clashes,*

theft or breach of trust, abuse of power and accepting bribes
(ASTU 2012: 89).

DBU Legislation Article 61 forbids:

- 1.7. *Discrimination and harassment on unjustifiable grounds such as membership of a social and political group, political opinion, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, HIV/AIDs or conviction of sexual misconduct against the opposite sex*
(DBU 2011: 52).

Some documentary data suggest that some academic staff of higher institutions experience a state of confusion with regard to implementing the multicultural policy and the legislative provisions: “Since very recent years, themes raised in class have led students to hostility” (*Addis Guday* 2012: 10-12). Some lecturers have started to record words they need to avoid when conducting classes (*Addis Neger* 2007: 2), whereas others have become apathetic to all teaching (*Addis Guday* 2013: 15).

Contrary to the frustration and criticism reported above, it was also reported that some lecturers have demonstrated improper ethnocentric conduct and attitudes in their teaching activities. This was confirmed by a management official of AAU in an interview with a local newspaper. He argued that

lecturers should see all students equally and fairly. From the perspective of the University community, if there is someone who discriminates [against] students in terms of ethnicity, religion [and other aspects], he is discriminating [against] himself and then he is putting himself in another world. I cannot teach the student or I cannot continue teaching while humiliating the student for his identity or language. In this regard I feel that there are some problems with us, the lecturers, not only in this University [but also

in other universities]. Some of us have difficulty to accept and respect student identity, religion and others. This is my general observation (Reporter 2013: 14).

The above situation not only suggests the negative impact of the insensitive handling of diversity issues on the teaching and learning processes, but also shows the vitality of issues relating to ethnicity, language and religion.

A similar view was reflected by a student who reported to a news journalist that a lecturer provides special handouts to students from his background on which most of the exam questions were based and that those students obtained the best grades. It was only those students who were provided with the handout that scored best grades” (*Addis Guday* 2012: 10). A comment by a lecturer published in a newspaper concurs with the view of the preceding student:

Lecturers should treat students equally and fairly. In this regard I do feel that there are problems with [some lecturers] ... Some of us might fail to respect and accept the identity, belief and other uniqueness of students.(The Reporter2013: 14).

The contrast between policy provisions and implementation practices of some academic staff is accentuated in the above quotation.

2.2.3.3.3 Climate at universities since 1994

In this section student socialisation provisions and the climate related to student diversity at the Ethiopian higher education institutions since the implementation of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994,) are highlighted to verify the significance of this study. In the Ethiopian higher education context students are provisioned with the right to establish organised groups aimed at socialisation in accordance with regulatory documents under the auspices of the student service units of each university (see AAU

2013: 167; ASTU 2012: 248; DBU 2011: 136). These include student unions, inclusive as well as exclusive clubs, and groups pertaining to occasional events and festivals (Table 6.1). Such co-curricular activities are often institutionalised with the view to promote social cohesion and facilitate students' mutual support in the teaching and learning environment. In the *AAU News and views* (2007: 19), for instance, it was envisaged that through the student union, students would "handle matters among themselves ... to enjoy the campus's academic and social life".

Despite the set policy provisions (see section 2.,2.3.2), institutional implementation strategies (see section 2.2.3.3) and students' privilege for self-organisation, most Ethiopian universities, including the study site universities, have experienced daunting identity based student conflicts and hostilities at different times since the pronouncement of the present policy of 1994.

In order to verify the identity rooted hostilities with evidences, sample student inter-group conflicts episodes along ethno-linguistic and inter-religious lines were selected from four weekly newspapers (*Addis Admas, The Reporter, Siefe Nebelbal, and Tomar*) and two monthly journals (*Addis Guday and Kum Neger*). These documentary sources were selected on the basis of convenience and accessibility. The data might not be representative because they were selected only for elucidating the contextual ground for this study which aims at examining links between management processes and related cross-border learning outcomes amongst socio-culturally diverse students. In terms of this study inter-group conflict refers to any form of hostility that emanates from disagreement and misunderstanding across identity boundaries amongst students from different ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds.

a. Characteristics of ethnic based hostilities

Student inter-group conflicts are characterised by interpersonal misunderstandings between two or more individuals from two or more identity groups. These are manifested

in the form of stereotyping, prejudice and discriminatory acts, as well as preferential treatment (see *Addis Guday 2012: 8-10; Addis Neger 2007: 3*).

Conflict that involves individuals from different social groups sometimes escalated into an institution-wide inter-ethnic conflict at the Ethiopian higher education institutions. Inter-ethnic hostilities often happen between the Amhara, Oromo, and Tigrean student groups (Abera 2010: 74). An ethnic based conflict surfaced at the ASTU when two students, one from Oromo and the other from Tigrean backgrounds, disagreed on the choice of TV channel in December 2011 (*Addis Guday 2012: 10*). It was reported that the disagreement between the two individuals immediately took on the shape of ethnic conflict and resulted in a death, injuries of 11 students and the imprisonment and dismissal of some students. Another unfortunate episode was reported by Asmamaw (2011: 1). It concerned a lecturer at Bahir Dar University (a university in an Amhara regional state) who reported that conflict between a student from Tigray and a campus policeman from an Amhara ethnic background transformed into ethnic conflict between the Amhara and Tigray students. The conflict escalated to the extent of also involving the Oromo students of the University.

Some student inter-group conflicts were attributed to ethnic stereotypical attitude and discriminatory acts (*Addis Guday 2012: 9*). Conflict would take the form of a diminutive and reclusive attitude towards an out-group member/s. Such an attitude could manifest in and outside the classroom when a student, a group of students or lecturers display stereotypical attitudes towards an individual or a group. In 2001, for instance, *Tomar*, a weekly newspaper, reported a conflict between Oromo and Tigray student groups at AAU when a Tigrean student referred to the Oromo community in the Tigray Regional State in derogatory terms which had long been outlawed nationwide (*Tomar 2001: 1*). The incident resulted in campus wide ethnic violence between the Oromo and Tigray students. A similar incident occurred when a Tigrean lecturer at the Mekele University used a pejorative expression reflecting a negative attitude towards the Oromo ethnic group in a classroom which instigated conflict between the Oromo and Tigray students (*Siefe Nebelbal 2003: 6*).

Ethnic based conflict could also manifest when an individual or a group of students sense a pejorative act directed against his/her/their identity by a member/s of another ethnic group. A conflict between the Oromo and the Amhara student groups, reported in 2004, entailed clashes that erupted when an Oromo student group observed that the shirts the Amhara student group were wearing at an occasion displayed a derogatory stereotyped view concerning the Oromo society (*The Reporter* 2004: 1). The result was injury, imprisonment and the dismissal of students.

Ethnic tensions could also escalate when a group of students perceive that an institution provides preferential treatment to students of a certain socio-cultural group. In this regard, Mesfin (2008: 2) reported that some of the Oromo and Amhara student groups at the AAU believed that their university management bodies offered preferential dispensation to Tigrean student groups in conjunction with the EPRDF government. Similar inter-group conflict surfaced at the mentioned university at various times (*Kum Neger* 2013: 31).

b. Linguistic difference as a cause for inter-group hostilities

Ethnic conflicts are sometimes coupled with language based hostilities. A manifestation of conflict occurred when students from the Amhara ethnic group forbade the Oromo student group to use the Afan Oromo (language) in dormitory areas because they were suspicious about their intent. This, in turn, was viewed as a reflection of a stereotypical attitude by the Oromo group and consequently a violent inter-ethnic conflict followed (*Addis Neger* 2007: 22). Another example occurred at the Mekele University where it was reported that the Oromo students felt intimidated by Tigrean counterparts for speaking Afan Oromo on campus (*Seife Nebelbal* 2003: 6). The data suggest that a stereotypical negative attitude towards a language ultimately transform into inter-ethnic hostility. The transformation of linguistic based conflict into ethnic conflict indicates the vitality of the linguistic variable's intertwinement with ethnicity in terms of identity (see sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). In the Ethiopian context, language and ethnicity are linked together. This study

takes the interplay between these two variables into account to examine its cross-border learning implications.

c. Interreligious offences

Some studies conducted in the Ethiopian context show that religious factors hold a determinant position in establishing social relationships. Afework (2009: 61) who studied religious tolerance in Addis Ababa, using quantitative and qualitative methods and examining the historical development of religious tolerance of different religious sects in the country across historical eras, reported that since the coming to power of the current Ethiopian government (EPRDF), religious intolerance has been growing in the city despite the efforts of the government to build a multicultural perspective of “unity within diversity.” The study seems to confirm the vitality of the ethnic and religious variables in determining social groupings in Ethiopia (Krylow 1994: 233).

Although religious based hostilities seem not to occur as frequent as ethnic and linguistic founded hostilities at Ethiopian universities, they have also entailed mistrust and suspicion. Conflicts were manifested in different forms. Some of such incidents surfaced when a certain religious group was of the opinion that another religious group enjoyed special privileges provided by the government or the university administration. In 2012, for example, the Muslim students at the DBU complained that although the university outlawed wearing clothes displaying religious identity on campus, their Orthodox Christian counterparts were allowed to wear the *Netela* (a cotton wrap cloth) on campus while on their way to and from church services (*Addis Guday 2012: 10*). It was reported that this alleged preferential treatment resulted in mistrust, not only between the complaining student group and the University administration but also between the two religious groups.

The above data imply that compromising the principle of equality would create a rift between different religious groups and perpetuate religious based hostilities. In addition, it could be mentioned that interreligious mistrust surfaced when a religious group sensed

that its counterpart was acting in a seemingly inequitable manner. It was reported that at DBU the Muslim students were offended by the Orthodox Christian students who donated their share of food which was served on the Orthodox Christian fasting days towards the construction of a church close to the university (*Addis Guday 2012: 10*). A study on addressing religious diversity at AAU suggests that on-campus student hostilities based on religion have often been attributed to the preferential response of the University management units to the religious diversity needs of students, often in favour of the Orthodox Christianity doctrine (Setargew 2012: 297).

Interreligious conflict seems mild and infrequent compared to ethnic and linguistic based conflict. Misunderstandings happened mainly, it seems, due to institutional compromises concerning the treatment of certain religious groups.

d. Effects of the inter-group conflicts

Identity based student apprehensions stemming from ethnic, linguistic and religious differences are obstructive to the smooth running of the teaching and learning processes. It could be inferred from the discussion in section 2.2.3.3.3 that inter-group hostilities range from showing resentment and disagreement to destructive and harmful violent clashes. As mentioned under (a) above ethnic based student conflict may have very unfortunate consequences (*The Reporter 2006: 1*). Some student inter-group conflicts brought destruction to properties and human resources and the serious derailment of the teaching and learning process. The damage caused by a single violent incident at Addis Ababa University amounted to 1.5 million Birr (roughly around \$100,000) (*The Reporter 2004: 11*).

The destruction of property aggravates the scarcity of educational resources and may accentuate differences even further, especially if it turns into unhealthy competition for educational resources amongst student groups. In an unhealthy competitive atmosphere students might develop antagonistic attitudes instead of supportive relationships. In addition, student inter-group conflicts that result in deaths, injuries and dismissal of members of factions would widen student mistrust. The cumulative effect of student

death, injuries and dismissal and damage to properties could perpetuate the vicious circle of mistrust, fear and suspicion among student groups and would hamper collaborative learning relationship and peaceful co-existence.

When hostilities erupt, teaching learning processes are likely to be interrupted on the campuses. This would affect the smooth running of the teaching and learning processes. In addition, even if the institutions continued the teaching and learning processes, disregarding the conflict situation, victims of conflict are likely to be suspicious and anxious, not only in terms of out-groups, but also in terms of the institution. They would most likely learn less in a hostile environment. Therefore, it could be inferred that the purposeful incorporation of *Civics and Ethical Education* and *Communicative English Skills* courses to promote multiculturalism at the universities has been less successful in bringing about social cohesion of diverse student populations.

2.3 SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter was to contextualise diversity management and the phenomenon of CBLEs within a multicultural environment in terms of socio-cultural diversity issues at Ethiopian higher education institutions. The contextual analysis showed that in the Ethiopian context, student socio-cultural differences were addressed differently by different regimes in the past. During the imperial regime assimilation was practised, whereas integration strategies were employed to bring about social cohesion of higher education students during the Dergue era (see sections 2.2.1; 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.1). Contrary to the past regimes, the present EPRDF government placed multiculturalism into the *Constitution* and positioned socio-cultural diversity issues in education within the multicultural paradigm (see section 2.2.3.1). However, as reflected in the analysis, ethnic, linguistic and religious based hostilities have often occurred at the Ethiopian universities since the implementation of the *Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009* (see section 2.2.3.3.3). This chapter showed that ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables are vital (see sections 1.3 and 2.2.2) and that ethno-linguistic conflicts were more violent and prevalent than the religious based conflicts in the context of this study. Inter-group

hostilities often happen between the Amhara, Oromo, and Tigrean student groups (see section 2.2.3.3.3). The continuation of inter-group hostilities of different forms despite the implementation of the present multicultural policy, against the backdrop of regimes in the past, indicates the significance of the study project.

The analysis of policy implementation strategies (see sections 2.2.3.2 and 2.2.3.3) locates the processes of handling ethnic, linguistic and religious issues at the universities within management strategies and practices rather than in the multicultural education scheme. This contextual position of handling socio-cultural differences shows the significance of the study context for conducting an empirical investigation on the relationship between management strategies and the development of CBLEs of a diverse student population. It is believed that such an analysis would provide an in-depth insight into the relationship between management processes and CBLEs in a culturally diverse environment. It also suggests that employing the ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables as a pointer would inform management procedures that underlie CBLEs.

CHAPTER 3

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND CBLES: A GLOBAL OVERVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the contextual review provided in Chapter 2 it was suggested that in a multicultural environment student diversity issues exert a significant influence on educational processes and need a detailed investigation (see section 2.3). As shown in sections 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.2, the EPRDF government follows a multicultural policy and Ethiopian educational institutions have therefore been attempting to address the socio-cultural differences of students by means of a multicultural approach. However, documentary sources attest that inter-group misunderstanding, suspicion and hostilities attributed to ethnic, linguistic and religious differences have persisted among students (see section 2.2.3.3.3).

As shown in section 1.5 the present study aims at examining how management processes for facilitating campus life and teaching learning opportunities can be employed to treat student socio-cultural differences within institutional contexts. It attempts to explain the significance of CBLEs grounded within management activities to address student diversity needs rather than merely relying on the multicultural approach that is prescribed. The CBLEs are to be drawn from analysing the interplay between diversity variables, policy provisions set to manage student differences and from management practices that are meant to facilitate campus life and teaching learning processes for students (see figure 5.1).

The aim of this chapter is to provide a literature review on the social and educational impact of ethnic, linguistic and religious variables on the holistic development of multicultural students. To this end, pertinent literature that deals with ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables in terms of policy pronouncement and implementation practices is reviewed. In the review, the educational impact of ethnic, linguistic and

religious differences are assessed and may serve as a background to analyse policy related issues and policy implementation management strategies and practices.

3.2 SOCIALISATION ROLES OF ETHNICITY, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

In the context of this study, diversity variables are limited to ethnic, linguistic and religious differences and are referred to as non-disability socio-cultural differences which serve as identity markers (see section 1.2.4.1). The literature review in this section focuses on the impact of these socio-cultural differences on educational processes.

Culture is an intricate phenomenon which refers to collective patterns of behaviour expressed in the norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions of a society or a group (Woolfolk 2010: 158; Dimmock & Walker 2007: 29; Taylor, Peplau and Sears 2006: 10; Figueroa 1999: 284; Kuh & Whitt (1988) (in Museus and Harris 2010: 26)). According to Jarvis (2006: 55) culture comprises “all knowledge, skills attitudes, beliefs, values, and emotions that we, as human beings, have added to our biological base”. This classification of socio-cultural values seems to emphasise that a set of values, beliefs and practices could define and distinguish one social group from another and determine their interactive relationship in educational activities (Dimmock and Walker 2007: 7-8).

Ethnicity, language, and religion are part and parcel of socio-cultural values and often reflect the collective existence of an identity group. Based on these identity indicators, a group could be identified as an ethnic, linguistic, or religious entity (Taylor, Peplau and Sears 2006: 10; Schmid 2001: 37; Claassen 2000: 30). This also implies that homogeneity in terms of one of the variables does not necessarily mean homogeneity *per se* because other differences could be causes of differentiation.

Some scholars believe that diversity variables are equivalent to race in terms of establishing identities at educational institutions (Pattman 2007: 475; Dawson 2007: 258; Van Niekerk 1999: 13). Understanding one’s identity as a self and member of a group is often constructed by existence with others. In this regard Stets and Burke (2000: 224)

emphasise that “through the process of self-categorisation or identification, an identity is formed”. In the process of self-categorisation a person does not only look at him/herself inwards but also at others outwards to cross-culturally recognise his/ her uniqueness. As Bell (2002: 4) contends, “the process of cross-cultural understanding is a reciprocal act whereby I must enter into a real dialogue with the others, and recognise myself as “other to them”. Therefore, understanding the roles of socio-cultural features in an educational context may give insight into the behaviour patterns of both an individual and a group in an inter-group interaction situation, as well as the nature of inter-group interaction that determine social relationships in teaching and learning environments. That could be why Ituarte and Davies (2007: 74) argue that “individuals’ perceptions of themselves and others shape their campus experiences in ways which may influence their educational achievement”.

In a social interaction environment, the behaviour of an individual or a group might be connected to his/her/their ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. These backgrounds provide a frame of reference by which a person or a group could interpret and give meaning to reality. In multicultural educational settings, the process of giving meaning to experience determines not only the type of behaviour a member of a group or a group as a whole encode towards others but also how an individual or a group decodes messages from others. If the environment is welcoming, the diverse cultural perspectives and knowledge which students encounter would constitute an academic input and would make the learning environment enjoyable and academically productive. Thus, students would benefit academically as well as socially from the diversity experience. It is argued that shared cultural values and knowledge learnt from others become our own subjective reality and may determine the way we perceive and experience the world around us (Museus & Harris 2010: 33; Jarvis 2006: 57).

However, in most non-racial within-country multicultural contexts students are often seen as homogeneous and their differences are given less attention. In such contexts the dominant culture ostensibly “becomes the point of reference against which other groups are judged” (Goodman 2011:12). As a result, students hardly benefit from their

differences. It is argued that categorising different ethnic groups as a “homogeneous” group under a crude general name would lead to loss of sight of important uniqueness and differences which is no less than discrimination (Gillborn 1990: 5). Where the identity of an individual or a group is not recognised, students may not feel at ease and they may console themselves within identity boundaries. Thus, they would hustle with both social and academic challenges. This might instigate hostility and disrupt the smooth running of teaching learning efforts (McCown et al. 1999: 102). Biggs and Colesante (2004: 129) contend that particularly in the early years of campus life “students from different groups consistently avoided contact with one another before, during, and after class sessions. They sat and talked in different camps with others like “themselves”. In this regard, Soudien (1998) (in Dawson 2007: 457) criticises the post apartheid South African education policy which used to focus on the traditional difference in race and neglected other inequalities relating to culture, religion and language which play pivotal roles in the identity formation of students. Particularly in non-racial multicultural contexts where cultural differences dictate social relationships, these cultural variables would determine inter-group interaction in teaching and learning environments. Hockings et al. (2010: 101) stress that “students value teachers who recognise them as individuals and address their particular needs and interests”. In the sections that follow the effects of ethnic, linguistic and religious differences on learning and their implications for managing diversity in developing CBLEs are briefly reviewed.

3.2.1 Ethnicity as a diversity variable

Ethnicity which is one of the major identity indicators has remained controversial and elusive in academic circles. It is often used as a synonym for race which is contentious by itself, and is also regularly used to describe natural and biological sameness. In some contexts ethnicity signifies a latent commonality among a group of people sharing the same origin and traits (Spencer 2006: 45; Hussein 2005: 3). Although ethnicity and race are often used to refer to the same concept, a distinction nevertheless can be made. Ethnicity can be viewed as a conceptual self definition of a group in terms of “collective

identity” and “shared values and beliefs” whereas race refers to a genetic background (Spencer 2006: 45).

Ethnicity is also seen as synonymous with concepts such as “nation” and “nationality”. The *Constitution* of PDRE, for example, (1995: 96) defines ethnic groups in Ethiopia as “nations and nationalities”. The conceptualisation of a “nation” and “nationality” as ethnicity has been dubious because they vary in meaning from context to context. Ethnicity is often used as a sociological descriptive term to define a group as a people who have common features such as language, religion, custom and history while “nation” and “nationality” often designate an ideological frame of thought linked to the betterment of a group of people who share ideological views (Human 2005:16; Van Niekerk 1999: 13; Anderson (1983) in (Human 2005: 16). Hence ethnicity is used in this study rather than “nation” and “nationality” to refer to group of people who claim common features.

It has to be borne in mind that ethnicity is viewed differently from different theoretical perspectives. The instrumentalists consider ethnicity as a means to attain certain individual or collective social, economic and political goals which may lose its synergy when the goals are achieved (see Spencer 2006: 78; Human 2005: 16). From a symbolic interaction perspective, ethnicity is viewed as an expression of collective meaning which a social group constructs and transmits about the self, human relations, emotions, and feelings in a culture (Spencer 2006: 175). The primordial theoreticians explain ethnicity in terms of blood and kinship connections, history, and components of culture such as religion, language, region, custom, etc. (Spencer 2006: 77-78; Smith (1991) (in Hussien 2005: 3). Although Spencer (2006: 113) suggests that the post-structuralism and feminine perspectives better explain ethnicity, from an African perspective, the primordial view which emphasises the significance of blood relations and cultural commonalities such as language, religion and shared history, still inform the essence of ethnicity. This view seems to emphasise the concept of sameness and concurs with the description of ethnicity above which is applied in this study.

Literature on ethnicity in the Ethiopian context suggests that the concept “ethnicity” or “ethnic group” is more accommodative and neutral than terms such as “nations”, “nationalities” and “race” (cf. Tsegaye & Wogari 2006: xix; Hussein 2005: 8). Hence, the terms “ethnicity” and “ethnic group” are used in this study to designate a dynamic group that has its own common origin, history and culture (Woolfolk 2010: 157; Hussien 2005: 3). Thus, the term ethnicity is used in this study to refer to a group of people who share these components of identity.

Studies show that ethnicity is powerful in reflecting identity, both at societal and at institutional levels. Ethier and Deaux (1994) in Taylor et al. (2006: 102) assert that “ethnic identity is the part of an individual’s self-knowledge that concerns his or her membership in a particular ethnic group”. Taylor et al. (2006: 102-104) argue that students from a non-dominant ethnic group find it challenging to mix with other ethnic groups when they join colleges and that students, who often participate in activities that relate to their ethnicity, foster a strong sense of ethnic identity. It is, however, argued that institutional environments could provide different identity groups with opportunities for meaningful conversation, and sharing of feelings, experiences and perspectives (Goodman 2011: 113-114).

Another study showed that social and political realities could impact on the identity formation of students. Dawson (2007: 83-92) who studied student identity formation in a racially integrated South African high school found that the identity of students is still very much influenced by a history of inequality in education. He argues that ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender, and class backgrounds of students affect their attitudes and the relationships they establish with their out-group mates and teachers (Dawson 2007: 458). The study confirms the vitality of social diversity issues in forming relationships in educational institutions.

Boughey (2009: 1-21) who made a national and international contextual assessment of the South African pre- and post-apartheid higher education system found that the pre-1994 higher education was fragmented in accordance with diversity factors such as race

and colour. Her assessment also indicated that since the 1994 of the transition to democracy, the government has been trying to provide equitable and quality education that responded to the social and developmental demands of the country. However, the study does not show how much the country has succeeded in addressing non-racial diversity issues in the country.

In the Ethiopian context, Haileyesus (2010: 90) studied ethnic identity and interethnic relations among Addis Ababa University main campus freshman students. The study which was conducted quantitatively and qualitatively focused on students from three ethnic groups, namely Amhara, Oromo, and Tigray students. It was found that students develop critical awareness about their identity and seek a sense of belonging when they join university. It attributes students' search for identity to a lack of trust in and misconception about students from different backgrounds. However, it does not provide information on the identity perception of students before they joined the University and the role of collective campus life in the development of inter-group relations.

The above studies underpin the impact of ethnicity on identity formation and the establishment of inter-group relations in education environments. However, they do not emphasise institutional management efforts addressed at developing social cohesion of ethnically diverse students by means of CBLEs as is the case in this study.

3.2.2 Language as a diversity variable

Language is an important medium through which information is retrieved, processed, interpreted and evaluated. It is a means through which thoughts are shared and through which one demonstrates membership to a linguistic group (Jarvis 2006: 58). Language plays an important role in the process of knowledge construction. That is why it is often given a central position "in the teaching and learning process" (Van Rensburg and Lamberti (2009: 69). The centrality of language in learning contexts implies that the success of a student in learning mainly depends not only on his/her understanding of the subject matter, but also on his/her ability to reflect on the learning experiences by means

of language with fellow students. In this regard, Goldstien (2003: 126) contends that “learning to negotiate across linguistic differences ... is a life skill that all students living in multilingual communities need to develop”. The mutual respect and understanding that would emanate from such action would establish sustainable inter-group cohesion which is one of the ultimate goals of education in a multicultural society. Inter-language interaction that advances social cohesion could also become a cross-border learning strategy. However, inter-language interaction among different language groups would depend on the role of a particular language in the inter-group communication processes which, in turn, would also influence identity formation.

In a multilingual social context, student inter-language communication can be influenced by different factors. Where multilingualism is not seen as an advantage, where each language group tries to stick to its own language domain, each group may remain aloof to the cultures and languages of counterparts. In a context where the medium of instruction is a foreign language in which the majority of students lack adequate proficiency, students may be linguistically challenged during intercommunication situations. Linguistic differences could tighten in-group connection and become a blockade to interaction with out-group students. As Schmid (2007: 166) notes, “language binds groups together and it is a powerful instrument for promoting internal cohesion and providing an ethnic or national identity” which would ultimately augment mistrust and suspicion amongst different linguistic groups.

In multicultural educational contexts where students are expected to interact with students who speak other languages to satisfy their academic and social needs, they may be forced to confine themselves to within group interaction due to a linguistic barrier. In a multilingual social context, sticking to one’s own language might be attributed to discriminatory values attached to other languages. According to Mitchell and Edwards (2010: 47), “language like numerous other aspects of human communities is constantly in flux, malleable, negotiated, and ultimately highly contested in the society”. A dominant group is likely to impose discriminatory linguistic practices on speakers of other languages which could parallel the power relations in the community. When a dominant language is

given a special status, the “languages other than the dominant one are treated as problematic and seen as hindering ... education. Perspectives and contributions of other cultural groups are [then often] not taught” (Mda 2000: 225). In a multilingual higher education context, the language of the dominant group often becomes the lingua franca for the university community and may endow the dominant group with a linguistic advantage in learning and a sense of supremacy. It is argued that “the dominant group becomes the point of reference against which other groups are judged” (Goodman 2011: 12). Thus, the groups whose languages are marginalised are likely to deny and resist the use of the dominant language, and may remain defiant to learn or use the language. As a result, when students from different language groups come together, they may refrain from interaction. This might instil not only a sense of dissociation but also that of suspicion and mistrust among student groups and could promote unhealthy and discriminatory relationships. The latter would force each group to shelter itself within its own linguistic identity. In this regard Onsman (2010: 174) adds that:

All people within a university position themselves somewhere in the “public space” of a university and within that environment linguistic capacity can be the difference between social and cultural inclusion and exclusion, between alienation and integration.

A linguistic based social alignment may impose linguistic based social and academic grouping among students. Since language is a means for establishing common understanding of realities, students who learn in a linguistically discriminating environment might encounter both academic and social challenges. Onsman (2010: 172) and Neuliep (2006: 173) argue that people who speak the same language usually have a similar way of seeing the world which would help them to establish close bonds and develop a stable interactive atmosphere. This would also mean that linguistic homogeneity might presume a lack of varied perspectives which could be acquired by means of other languages. This could be counterproductive for educational development of students. Boroditsky (2003) (in Thagard 2005: 211) emphasises that “people with

different languages vary with respect to their ways of thinking about space, time, objects, colour, shapes, events, and other minds that are based on emotional attitudes”.

Linguistic differences are often coupled with ethnic identity and this would further stiffen within group cohesion. McCown et al. (1999: 102) stress that “language, as an important form of communication, is the primary medium through which ethnicity is shared”. Schmid (2001: 9) quoting Fishman (1989) explains that

language is a powerful instrument for promoting internal cohesion and providing an ethnic or national identity. It contributes to values, identity, and a sense of people-hood. A common vernacular also establishes effective boundaries between “in groups” and “out groups“. Furthermore, language is an important variable in power relations between dominant and subordinate groups.

The intertwinement of ethnic and linguistic identities would further lessen inter-group interaction opportunities between multicultural students and institutional personnel. As a result of the linguistic barrier, the disadvantaged linguistic group may not get adequate institutional support which is defined as “the extent to which a language group has gained formal and informal representation in the institutions of a community” (Burhis, El Geledi, Sachdev 2007: 17). Thus, unless constructive mechanisms through which students could cross identity boundaries are set, the confinement of students into a with-in group environment might augment mistrust and suspicion and could jeopardise educational processes.

Differences in perception and barriers of communication could be minimised if students develop positive and sustainable social interaction despite their linguistic differences. It has been found that linguistically diverse students could develop a positive rapport, close relationships, strong emotional attachments and a sense of belonging through ongoing engagements (Hendrick 2004: 2; Wright & Lander 2003: 237). Hendrick (2004: 3) further emphasises that “... neither close bonds without ongoing interaction nor ongoing

interactions without close bonds should be as satisfying as having both together". The close ties and interaction would help students to develop a better understanding and may pave the way for further engagement and learning the language of each other, thereby advancing reciprocal interactive relations. The leverage of the reciprocal relationship would enhance the social and academic connection of students. Schmid (2007: 99) contends that "knowledge of more than one language provides a resource in terms of expanding intellectual horizons, as well as facilitating communication across cultures".

Different models have been developed to alleviate the linguistic problems of higher education students in a multicultural society. Van Rensburg and Lamberti (2009: 67-89) highlight the theoretical underpinnings of language as medium of instruction at higher education by using experiences from South Africa. They propose a multi-literacy model, which, according to them, takes into account the communication skills and knowledge and experiences students arrive with at an institution. Van Rensburg and Lamberti think that making the effort to interact with the available linguistic proficiency would give students the chance to take responsibility for their learning. The authors emphasise that in the context where students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds and the medium of instruction is different from their mother tongue, students' mother tongues could be used at the initial stage of the course programmes. Van Rensburg and Lamberti's recommendation may require polyglot lecturers who could provide academic support using students' first languages. However, their suggestion does not provide an alternative on how the model could be used in contexts where the use of own language is stereotyped by others and where different language groups might not have positive attitudes towards each other. Moreover, the study does not provide an alternative on how students could avoid linguistic stereotyping and strive to work collaboratively with the linguistic resources they have.

In an educational environment of a multilingual society, knowledge of the medium of instruction could determine the academic success of students. In this regard Van Rensburg and Lamberti (2004: 69) argue that language is a means of interaction through which knowledge is constructed. Sefa Dei and Asgharzadeh (2005: 233) also contend

that language through which learning is processed and knowledge is constructed could play a pivotal role in the “psychological, spiritual, mental, and cognitive” development of students. It is obvious that at educational institutions students are provided with both academic and social services through a language or languages used as a medium/s of communication (see Schmid 2001: 96). In a multilingual society where students come from different linguistic backgrounds, an inability to interact in the language of communication used at an educational institution does not only mean a lack of access to services and learning resources, but also a lack of access to knowledge and skills as part of the education process.

In the Ethiopian higher institutions the medium of communication is assumed to be English which has the status of a foreign language in the country. Other non-academic services are often provided through Amharic, the office language of the Federal Government. It has been observed that most students lack English proficiency at the expected standard. In this regard Hailom 2009: 9) contends that in the Ethiopian educational environments students do not find themselves at a “reasonable level of proficiency” in English in academic as well as other communication areas. Thus, students who lack adequate proficiency in English and Amharic seem to be linguistically challenged in the Ethiopian higher education context.

3.2.3 Religion as a diversity variable

Religion is one of the diversity factors and plays a pivotal role in social development. In educational environments students’ interreligious relationship is often influenced by their spiritual, emotional and social attachments. Nowadays higher educational institutions have started paying attention to the spiritual growth of students. Since religion influences the spiritual growth of individuals in terms of providing meaning to life, a sense of self-control over situations, and building self-esteem, it is likely to influence the teaching learning processes (Craft, Moran, Foubert & Lane 2011: 92-93).

Since a religious belief is based on faith in spiritual matters, there seems to be little chances of negotiation concerning incompatible religious convictions by means of a secular rational frame of references. Van Niekerk (1999: 11) argues that religion can hardly be challenged because it has a powerful influence on the mindset of a follower. Since students often start to develop their religious path from their early childhood, it is likely to have a serious impact on their lives as it constitutes a reason for their social inclusion and exclusion (Sharabi 2011: 220).

Satisfactory student interreligious relationships are determined by the equal treatment of different faiths. In a religious diversity welcoming environment where all faiths are seen as equal, religion could serve as a promoter of a social bond serving positive identity formation and it could even become a basis for mutual trust among different religious groups. However, in a religious stereotypical context, adherence to the same religion creates homogeneity among followers in which the differences of religions foster a sense of otherness. Dawson (2007: 464), for instance, in his study on a South African school, found that “religious differences can also be a centrifugal force, causing deep divisions”. Divisions could lead students to develop a sense of otherness and might encourage them to dissociate themselves from an out-group religious social environment. In environments where students are divided in terms of religious differences, religious diversity might cause interreligious rifts characterised by violence and conflict (cf. Figueroa 1999: 286).

In order to counteract social rifts and mistrust attributed to religious differences, some educational institutions have included religious contents into the formal curriculum, admitted students from diverse religious backgrounds and recruited lecturers from varied religious backgrounds (Hansen 2011: 12). Providing religious content in curriculum programmes presumes exposing students to different religious faiths to enable them to acknowledge the beliefs of other religions. The process may improve students’ interreligious awareness. Admitting students and recruiting lecturers from different religious backgrounds, however, seem to aim at widening opportunities for interreligious interaction, minimising religious stereotypes and promoting interreligious tolerance.

Providing religious content is more related to teaching and learning while admission and recruitment are linked to management processes.

In terms of the above assumptions, Hansen (2011: 113) examined the adequacy of the *Norwegian Religious Education Model* and the *Integrated French Model* in terms of promoting interreligious tolerance among students from different religious groups. In the *Norwegian Religious Education Model* a separate religious education programme was designed to promote religious tolerance, whereas in the *Integrated French Model* religious contents were included across different subjects. He criticises the two models in that both fail to expose students to different religions with sufficient neutrality and impartiality. He proposes “a sufficiently neutral value basis” in which no pride is attached to certain religions. Hansen (2011: 124) argues that if the value basis, which encompasses all school subjects, is generally considered fair and impartial, religious education should also be perceived to be fair and impartial. Although the strategy which Hansen proposes may be applicable to a situation where religion is recognised as part of an educational system, it may be challenged in situations where education is constitutionally provisioned as secular but where religion practically plays an organising role in the establishment of relationships, like the situation in Ethiopia (see section 1.3).

The above review shows that in multicultural educational contexts, ethnicity, language and religion are salient variables in the construction of identity. The review highlighted that these variables play a significant role in the establishment of interpersonal and inter-group relationships of students and impact on educational processes. It also showed that the attempts made to address the variables in terms of student admission and recruitment of staff, as well as curriculum based teaching and learning processes, have been less successful in establishing a maximum social cohesion that would transform students from tolerance to emancipation. The next section relates to the importance of proper management of diversity at higher education institutions and the dissatisfaction of students relating to inequity.

3.3 MANAGING DIVERSITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCES OF INEQUITY

The enrolment of a diverse student population is inescapable in most of the present higher education institutions. Most importantly, the issue of a non-disabling social diversity has become a phenomenon in current higher institutions not only due to societal mobility, massification of education and internationalisation of higher education, but also in terms of dissatisfaction among students.

Admitting a diverse student population has often been considered as a major success in managing and celebrating diversity at higher institutions. Gurin (1999) (in Fries-Britt, Younger & Hall 2010: 183), however, contend that managing diversity should not be measured solely by the enrolment of a diverse student population or even the installation of specific diversity related programmes into a curriculum. Rather it has to be measured by the appropriateness of the approaches applied to address diversity. It is argued that inadequate management processes could decrease students' social cohesion and break their intercommunication. As a result, they may develop mistrust and suspicion that could become a potential for inter-group conflicts (Cox (1994) in Dancy II 2010: 86). In this regard, Gupta (2006), (in Onsman 2010: 109-110) complains that "the biggest problem of the 21st century [education] is rapidly expanding diversity, along with stubbornly persistent inequities in terms of status and power based upon caste, race, ethnicity, class, language, citizenship or region". In situations where inequality is prevalent, it is likely that vulnerable students would strive for equal engagement. Strayhorn (2010: 141-158), for instance, conducted a study on how marginalised and underrepresented African Americans and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans-gender (LGBT) students groups were engaged in identity politics to transform discriminatory cultural perspectives, thereby establishing a positive atmosphere at higher institutions. The findings showed that the groups stood in unison against any form of discrimination on campus in order to advocate their perspectives. Their objective was to transform the status quo into their being accommodated into the main stream, thereby giving form to a genuine "acceptance and inclusion in the campus culture as [being] different rather than in spite of differences" (Strayhorn 2010: 153). This kind of political dialogue may be difficult to take place in

conditions where reflecting identity would bring about discrimination and instigate hostilities, like the climate in Ethiopian higher institutions (see section 2.2.3.3.3).

It is commonly accepted that students demonstrate learning when they and their peers identify issues, gather resources and analyse options to solve problems within and outside their environments. One of the strengths of a university, in this regard, could be its capacity to enable diverse students to work in various environments and help them to build their learning capacity through a wide range of teaching and learning processes. Onsman (2010: 122-23) explains that “one of the foundations of diversity is that if a university accepts a student, then it has an obligation to create an environment in which the student has the capacity to succeed in acquiring the product: [namely] a “university education”. Thus, universities are expected to make campus a comfortable place in which the entire student population learns. In the next section, literature relating to policy formulation and implementation management strategies in terms of addressing student differences in the higher education context is reviewed. This review is based on the assumption that diversity policy provision is drawn from prevailing social problems and is established to guide implementation strategies and practices within management processes at an institutional level.

3.4 POLICY TRENDS OF MANAGING STUDENT DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This discussion highlights how student diversity needs are addressed in terms of policy. It focuses on policy formulation in general terms and the need for a diversity policy framework within the domain of higher education.

3.4.1 An overview of the process of diversity policy formulation

A policy is often viewed as a point of departure in implementing institutional activities. According to Robinson (2009: 238), policy is “a system-wide intervention intended to influence practices and outcomes relevant to a policy problem”. David (2010: 21) also

views policy as an overarching guiding frame of reference for action to overcome prevailing problems within an institution. In both cases a policy is considered to be a guiding framework for actions to be undertaken by institutions to alleviate identified problems. In the light of the explanations given to policy, diversity policy in higher education can be defined as a guiding principle that informs institutional practices of addressing diversity needs of all students so that they can all learn in a comfortable atmosphere that is conducive for their wholesome development (Wrench 2007: 3; Dimmock & Walker 2005: 72).

Policies may vary in implementation as they vary in structure, intensity and magnitude. In this regard Crump (1992: 3) contends that “policies can be structured in different ways to achieve different ends”. In educational institutions, for instance, a policy could be formulated not only to provide curriculum content packages but also to alleviate issues that obstruct teaching learning processes which hinder the attainment of educational goals (Lemmer 2000: 175; Crump 1993: 12; Corson 1990: 259). In a socially, culturally and economically diverse social context, an educational policy should incorporate goals that aim at bringing about social cohesion among diverse students (Vignoles & Crawford 2010: 51; Okumbe 1999: 10).

A policy on an issue within a country could be aligned with international, national, regional or institutional contexts in accordance with specific problems it is meant to address. David (2010: 26), using the UK education policy established for widening the participation of a diverse student population which includes economically, socially, and educationally disadvantaged social groups, contends that even if a higher education policy may be for context specific purposes, it should take into account the dynamics of global and international changes. This argument seems to be relevant in the current global era in which the main aim of most of higher education programmes is to produce skilled manpower for the world of work in accordance with global trends and needs. Aligning policy premises at different levels would provide a pattern of practices at a broader spectrum and may indicate points of comparison when evaluating the implementation and

attainment of goals. A higher education policy is often placed within the broader national educational sector and aligned with contemporary global educational trends.

Compared to other policy issues, diversity issues in educational institutions seem to be context specific because socio-cultural differences are drawn from vital diversity variables in specific social contexts (cf. section 1.3). This, however, does not mean they should be devoid of international views. Since diversity is a human phenomenon, it rather means that diversity policies which often emerge from contextual factors should consider synchronisation with the wider national or international overarching policy frameworks (cf. Jonson & Johnstone 2005: 143-171). This alignment could make diversity policy more cohesive and functional. It would imply that diversity related policies which are set within higher education policy frameworks should, as far as possible, be harmonised and aligned with similar national and international policy frameworks. However, a synchronisation of a policy at different levels may not necessarily make it compatible to the actual reality of a given context and may not always guarantee success in implementation.

A policy may fail to achieve the intended goal due to the nature of a problem it is meant to address and a poor understanding by the implementers of the policy concerning relevant and meaningful practical processes. Robinson (2009: 237) emphasises that a policy could remain ineffective if it is built on faulty assumptions concerning the context of implementation, the identification of who should be the implementers, and the implementation process. Some policy issues might be complex by their very nature, or they may lack clarity and lead to misunderstanding which may cause tension between policy makers (usually a government), implementers (the higher educational institution in the context of this study), and the policy beneficiaries (the higher education institutions and their students). For instance, a higher education policy may fail to make an impact on the teaching and learning process when lecturers find the specific requirements of implementation incomplete or unclear (Robinson 2009: 239). In addition, a policy may fail if it is perceived to be contrary to principles and views held by the implementers. Such a gap shows disparity and would, in all probability, affect beneficiaries. Therefore, policy

makers, implementers, beneficiaries and other stakeholders need to have consensus and a clear understanding of the objectives of the policy.

Diversity issues are often placed in the policy, mission or vision of an institution. This varied placement of the issues could result in uncertainty concerning the relationship between policy, mission and vision. A policy is often seen as a theory concerning a problem, rather than a problem itself, because it explains the nature of a problem (Robinson 2009: 250). In this sense, a policy dictates the nature of the content of a mission and vision of an institution. Viewed from this perspective, the policy indicates the values that should guide practices which shape institutional cultures and individual and group experiences at higher educational institutions (Museus & Harris 2010: 29). For some scholars institutional missions should dictate diversity related policies. According to Dancy II (2010: 1), for instance, a mission should “reflect social trends and social transformations” from which complementary strategies and practices can be developed. Others take the middle ground and contend that it may not have an impact on the content, the influence of the teaching and learning processes and the attainment of educational goals (Forojall 1993: vii). Although the issue of the relationship between policy, mission and vision remains contentious, it seems important to treat the three (policy, mission and vision) as interrelated elements, each with distinct features which make provisions for interchangeable alignment. Such a view would facilitate a clear perspective when dealing with diversity policy formulation, implementation and assessment.

3.4.2 Formulation of diversity policy of higher institutions

In contexts where higher education programmes focus on producing professional and skilled manpower aimed at the future field of work, student diversity issues may receive less attention. However, different education policy researchers and analysts emphasise the need for including diversity issues in a general educational policy and a particular policy for higher education (Onsman 2010: 197; Claassen 2000: 42; Hoppers 2000: 7).

It is contended that an emphasis on economic and professional skills may relegate the humane and socialisation aspects of education that contribute to the holistic development of students. Claassen (2000: 42) contends that a curriculum that aims at a wholesome development of students should incorporate citizenship education and a good knowledge of social skills. He argues that both aspects are complementary and would enable students to be more efficient in terms of professional skills (see also Onsman 2010: 197). Hoppers (2000: 7) in this regard, is of the opinion that education should strive for the development of the “whole human being” as well as the improvement of the living standard of the individual and the society at large. This would mean that educational policies, missions and visions that govern practices of higher education institutions need to mirror and address not only the demand for manpower in the labour market, but also the production of a socially capable manpower which would effectively work in dynamic socio-cultural environments (Okumbe 1999: 10).

The present international socio-cultural environment dictates higher institutions to incorporate diversity issues such as ethnic, linguistic, and religious matters that are significant at national and regional levels into education policy statements (Robinson 2009: 238). A study in Canada, for instance, showed how educational institutions were forced to adopt an educational policy that explicitly addresses student diversity (McCown et al. 1999: 98). This finding confirms the need for incorporating diversity policy frameworks that uphold both academic and social learning skills and that inform activities aimed at the holistic development of students.

It is imperative that a diversity policy should be translated into practice by implementers at grassroots level. Dancy II (2010: 1) comments that diversity issues stated in policy terms should find expression in the institutional community to attain the set goal. In this regard, Gropas and Triandafyllidou (2011: 114), who reviewed policy dimensions employed to address diversity issues in the European, Australian and American education systems, emphasise that

inter-cultural education policies may be plural in the letter of the law but rather assimilatory in their daily practice thus reflecting more strongly the dominant understandings of national identity of a given country than the more general principles of respect for, and recognition of, cultural diversity. ... A successful intervention in education policy with a view to pluralising the classroom and valuing cultural diversity needs to be supported by more general policies of inter-cultural dialogue and respect for diversity as well as targeted measures of lifelong training of teachers and educators.

The argument implies that explicitly stated diversity policy statements need to reflect the social dynamism in the society. Through this dynamic process, a policy would corroborate the progressive changes in the society (Dancy II 2010: 2). For instance, David et al. (2010), in their analysis of the educational policy of the British government for widening the higher education participation of students from diverse families and disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, found that learning opportunities have massively increased for an increasing array of students from different and disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. They, however, contend that the policy did not bring about fair access to equal types of saleable education in the labour market for the disadvantaged groups. The study emphasises that despite policy attempts to respond to diversity dynamism in society, the inequity in access to certain fields of study sustained the inequity of the education system for disadvantaged groups.

In the African context, diversity policies in higher education seem to be viewed in the light of general education policy frameworks. Hoppers (2000: 1-11), for instance, who evaluates African educational policies, found that the existing educational policies hardly value and encompass the diversity prevailing in education contexts. This view is shared by Van Niekerk (1999: 1-25) who assessed the diversity responsiveness of the 'outcomes-based education' policy of South Africa from ideological and international comparative education perspectives. He holds the view that the use of imported policy frameworks of developed societies in a socially and economically disadvantaged South

African context negatively affected learning outcomes. He bases his argument on different studies conducted on South African education policy within the NQF (National-Quality-Framework) and proposes that education in South Africa should focus on how different ethnic groups with diverse values, customs and traditions could live and work together for 'common purposes'. Van Niekerk (2000: 21) recommends that

[the] transformation of education in South Africa implies a radical break with the past and a reconstruction of the system of education within its users The role of attitudes, value systems and ideologies in identity formation should not be overlooked.

Based on the above argument, it could be inferred that higher education policies and other policies that aim to address diversity issues, have to be contextualised and be placed within the social diversity dynamism which the policies are meant to serve. The argument underpins the need for taking into account underlying contextual factors when determining policy formulation and policy implementation in the student service and teaching and learning management processes and practices at universities.

3.5 DIVERSITY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

A diversity policy, formulated in the light of the discussion in sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2, is meant to be materialised at an institutional level. In section 1.2.2, it was indicated that the global trends of treating student socio-cultural differences have been informed by the multicultural perspective which mainly focuses on recognition of differences which it treats in terms of affirmative action and multicultural education. In that section it was contended that since the multicultural approach emphasises the recognition and promotion of identity, it tended to perpetuate differences and was found to be ineffective to resolve the multifaceted diversity issues of ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse higher education students in a multicultural country. The review in this section mainly attempts to show another perspective of addressing student socio-cultural differences in terms of

management processes within institutional management practices and teaching and learning activities.

3.5.1 Conceptualisation of diversity management in higher education

Terms such as 'management', 'leadership' and 'administration' are often used interchangeably to refer to the process of running educational institutions (Okumbe 1999: 1). However, each designates different concepts. Administration is often considered as a process of acquiring and allocating resources required for the attainment of set educational goals, whereas educational management is seen as the "process of designing, developing and effecting educational objectives and resources so as to achieve predetermined goals" (Okumbe 1999: 2). Although consensus has not yet been reached on the conceptualisation of leadership, many seem to take it as the inspirational influence a leader exerts on followers based on mutual consent geared towards an institutional success (Wilson 2010: 145; Bass & Riggio 2006: 4; Dimmock & Walker 2005: 11-12). Management is concerned with the skilful action of executing plans to attain set objectives whereas leadership focuses on setting short and long term goals and exerting constructive influence and inspiration on followers to bring about changed and transformed performance (Dimmock & Walker 2005: 11). Hence, it could be argued that management and leadership are not mutually exclusive in explaining governance of educational institutions; rather they are interconnected phenomena. That could be why Dancy II (2010: 3) stresses that "good leaders may also be good managers". From this viewpoint, it could be mentioned that the implementation of centrally, nationally or institutionally framed policies, regulations and guidelines is more associated with management and leadership activities than with administration.

A similar parallel could be drawn between management and leadership in terms of transformation. Transformational management and transformational leadership could be used to refer to the kind of institutional change that an educational institution applies to attain its educational goals. Both concepts are concerned with changes in relationships between the leader and those that are led due to an exerted positive influence of the

leader to build mutual trust with his/her colleagues for the attainment of collective goals (Wilson 2010: 150; Jarvis 2006: 87). Therefore, the concepts transformational management and transformational leadership can unequivocally explain issues related to the implementation of diversity policies, regulations and guidelines.

The functions of management may include activities which Okumbe (1999: 15) lists as “formulation of educational goals, procurement of necessary resources, organisation and coordination of activities, influencing and stimulating human resources, [and] integrating and evaluation of school activities”. The functions of transformational management may extend from these underlying and inter-connected institutional activities of education management to include the role of influencing and inspiring the human capital with regard to a new but superb pathway to provide quality education in accordance with policy, mission, objectives, rules and regulations put in place in an institution (Museus & Harris 2010: 28-29). Since treating diversity issues involves planning, implementation and monitoring strategies that transform the institutional setup and practices by means of staff who have been motivated by leaders, addressing these issues comprise elements of management and leadership activities. Therefore, transformational diversity management is used in this study to designate educational management tools set not only to address diversity matters in order to facilitate the wellbeing of students and teaching and learning processes, but also to transform students to embrace difference as a normal behaviour in social life.

In higher institutions diversity related management activities are usually undertaken by the student service officers and the academic staff who Whitchurch (2008: 70) classifies as “generalists” and “academic managers” respectively. The “generalists” are also often referred to as support staff who facilitate welfare services for students and support the attainment of educational goals (cf. FMOE 2009: 4977). The “academic managers”, which include deans and department heads, are designated, in Whitchurch’s terms, as “pro-vice-chancellors”. The teaching staff could be considered under this category because they are accountable to manage both teaching and learning activities and diversity issues that manifest in the teaching and learning processes.

Educational institutions not only provide educational services that enhance academic skills but also welfare services that support and strengthen students' learning engagements. The welfare service provisions often hold the assumption that students who engage with and benefit from institutional welfare services would acquire knowledge and skills that would directly or indirectly contribute to their holistic development. It is argued that "educators and administrators must be strategic and intentional about fostering conditions that compel students to make the most of college, both inside and outside the classroom" (Harper & Quayle 2009: 1). For instance, the Southern Poverty Law Centre in 2006 in USA set such services with:

hopes of encouraging students to break down the social boundaries that keep individuals isolated from one another [and] to have students from various ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds interact at lunch and commence a dialogue that promotes understanding and acceptance among diverse persons (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 75).

This assumption is based on the view that mundane social processes and activities that occur in everyday life could provide opportunities for students to learn and practice social and cognitive skills (Gauvain 2005: 11). It is argued that "self is formed through existing and interacting with people" (Jarvis 2006: 6). Harper and Quayle (2009: 5-6) emphasise that in the higher education context, activities like inter-cultural communication, learning other languages, participation in student organisations, campus events, community service or volunteer work, internships, faculty-supervised independent study experiences, and learning communities could enrich educational experiences of students. With regard to these co-curricular activities, Thagard (2005: 207) emphasises that "anyone who has been involved in extracurricular activities such as a newspaper or club knows how important it is to be able to work toward common goals with other people". In other words, students who engage in these activities would come to know not only their rights and responsibilities as individuals and groups but also reciprocally recognise the rights of others and could be encouraged to comply with the rules in order to establish

in-group as well as out-group relationships (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 76). In this regard Bell (2002: 1) contends: “If I come to a significant, that is, considered view of the world I inhabit, then I have a starting point for venturing to understand another’s world. In this way there is the possibility of moving toward mutual understanding”.

Thus, a comfortable learning environment that would enhance the learning experiences of a diverse student population would result from the joint efforts of the student service staff, academic managers and the student community. A transformative diversity management would also benefit from inspirational leadership and concerted efforts displayed in the components that make up an institution.

3.5.2 Transformational diversity management

Transformation is often associated with learning. In a teaching and learning environment both transformation and learning are concerned with the process of

altering first the sensations of the external world into an experience and then changing the experience into an element of our biography, which could be knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, emotions or the sense – or any combination of them (Jarvis 2006: 87).

As shown in the preceding section, diversity management activities which provide academic and welfare services to a diverse student population is viewed as the process of implementing policies, provisions and directives which promote constructive social relations to attain institutional objectives. This would mean that the effectiveness of a management process determines the extent to which an educational environment becomes enjoyable, open and caring for the student population (Bowring-Carr 2005: 122). This management perspective is theoretically grounded within the transformational diversity management perspective which emphasises not only the celebration of uniqueness and peaceful co-existence of people with differences, but also the willingness

to shift one's mind setup, through learning, towards working collaboratively with others to attain mutual learning (Grace & Gravestock 2009: 1; Wrench 2007: 3; Hurtado 2006: 265; Pless & Maak 2004: 133).

In order to bring about a positive and caring environment that promotes students' mutual engagement in learning, installing a transformative diversity management system becomes mandatory. In this regard, Dancy II (2010: 87) advises, "it is important that institutional structures and practices that present barriers to diversity are identified, examined, challenged and removed". Such institutional renovation could be achieved through an application of a transformative diversity management paradigm which implies that students willingly cross their own cultural territories and mutually benefit from the development of multiple perspectives. Onsman (2010: 128) adds that "universities need to show that they promote equity, fairness and justice, while at the same time maintaining efficiency, quality, and public accountability". As indicated in section 3.5.1, such a context needs transformational leadership which continually questions and challenges the practices, beliefs, assumptions, patterns, habits and paradigms to facilitate conditions aimed at the unprecedented change and emancipation of students (Bass & Riggio 2006: 150-151)

Transformative diversity management requires a leadership that would influence and move the institutional community to work towards an in-depth level of learning by setting in place a range of learning circumstances in which students not only acquire the skills to solve problems but also recognise potential problems (Bowring-Carr 2005: 117). A transformational organisational culture implies that leaders and those they lead share purposes, interests, vision and norms (Bass & Riggio 2006:103-104). Onsman (2010: 129) outlines the basic tenets of transformational perspectives that guide addressing student diversity through service and teaching and learning management strategies in a higher education as follows:

- Accepting and facilitating genuine equality of access and representation;
- Integrating diversity into teaching and learning, the curriculum and research;

- Purposefully enhancing [an] understanding of difference;
- Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment [for the non-dominant group]; and
- Removing institutional barriers to student achievement of learning objectives.

These guiding principles require the complementary and effective implementation of management strategies which should be incorporated into management procedures, the curriculum and the teaching and learning management processes.

In general, a diversity management process could become transformational when both the generalists and academic managers collaboratively create an educational environment in which student diversity is fully embraced as an asset and not as a threat and when institutional practices fully contribute towards the successful learning of all students (Museus & Harris 2010: 29-32). According to Watson (2010: 161), “respect opens the door for trust, and trust is the cornerstone for managing diversity”. Thus, transformative diversity management implies an all-inclusive governance system for both the disadvantaged and advantaged groups. From this perspective, transformational diversity management is viewed as a basis underlying a paradigm shift aimed at a deeply changed orientation of an individual, a group, an organisation and a society to view differences in a new way. This new outlook should aim at bringing about all-inclusive, open and supportive learning environments in terms of management of policies, programmes and practices to ensure peaceful co-existence and collaborative learning partnerships among an ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse student population. In this regard, Gauvain (2005: 11) adds that “critical social capabilities include the ability to engage in reciprocal exchanges, social behaviours that facilitate access to the thinking of other people...”

Management strategies which inform diversity policy implementation in teaching and learning processes are discussed in the next section.

3.6 MANAGING DIVERSITY IN TERMS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES

In educational contexts teaching and learning are interrelated and are influenced by relevant processes that are implemented at educational institutions. In this study teaching is viewed as a purposeful action taken to facilitate learning whereas learning is seen as a change of thought or behaviour which produces modified capabilities as a result of a facilitative social environment and learning experiences (Biggs & Tang 2003: 20-21; McCown et al. 1999: 3; Laurillard 1993: 5). The interplay between teaching and learning processes within an institution would imply the effectiveness of social learning experiences which positively influence the attainment of educational goals.

Developing a diversity sensitive curriculum and teaching and learning procedures which take into account students' socio-cultural differences is viewed as a process of managing diversity through teaching and learning approaches. Dancy II (2010: 88-91) is of the opinion that the handling of diversity issues requires thorough planning and implementation strategies, not only in terms of staffing and student enrolment schemes, but also in terms of supporting students with open discussion forums for diversity matters, and providing diversity oriented learning activities in as well as outside the class. This would mean that, apart from classroom learning activities, students should be provided with group projects which have to be conducted outside the classroom and which aim at facilitating group interaction.

Well designed all-inclusive learning management strategies that aim at creating a caring learning environment would engage students in constructing knowledge together. Bowring-Carr (2005: 120) calls this an "interpersonal intelligence". Students who work collaboratively in a team collectively benefit from the teamwork outcome, and take further personal initiatives for mutual learning success and being active in community life. These learning outcomes mainly result from social learning practised in terms of inter-group interaction attributed to group teaching and learning activities.

3.6.1 The social basis of the construction of knowledge

Since the major aim of this study is to describe learning within an inter-group social context, the literature review in this section emphasises the social dimensions of learning. In other words, the social aspect of learning is emphasised without disregarding the individual who acts in accordance with his/her cognitive processes. Williams (2009: 81) stresses that “understanding the learner and the learning process requires an understanding of pedagogy in its social, cultural, historical and political context”. He criticises the behavioural, cognitive, and social learning theories which he feels “do not adequately place the individual learner and the culture of society in a practical, *dialectical* relationship” (emphasis original). He views learning as a social and cultural process which students develop through engagement in social learning activities. This social engagement in learning develops when students are provided with opportunities to work with “knowledgeable others” (Bitzer 2009: 47; cf. McCown et al. 1999: 3).

In the teaching learning environment, social learning manifests through group interactions and processes which require group formation and collective practices. Groups may be established in different forms, based on the nature of the learning processes and the social alignments of individuals in the classroom. The latter could reflect the customary social grouping which prevails in the society. Grouping should be based on the underlying tenet that group learning leads higher education students to broader social and academic achievements and cognitive development (McWhaw, Schnackenberg, Sclater, & Abrami 2003: 69). Grouping in accordance with the social alignment of a society may manifest in the educational context in terms of diversity factors such as ethnicity, language, race, religion, gender, social class, etc. (Woolfolk (2010: 158). It is important to note that these variables would sometimes seem irrelevant in a homogeneous classroom where students are likely to share similar perspectives. They, however, could be instrumental in group forming in heterogeneous classrooms.

The attainment of educational goals and the success of students learning effectively require a teaching and learning environment in which they are emotionally, cognitively

and psychologically involved (Biggs & Tang 2003:19; Van Niekerk 1999:17). It is argued that complementing the in-classroom teaching learning process with outside-class group learning experiences develops students' teamwork spirit, decision-making, planning, leadership and personal skills that are necessary for the world of work (Nichols & Quaye 2009: 42). The development of these skills is largely dependent on the collaborative engagement of students in learning activities (Maynard 2005: 3). In formal education, an engaging environment would result from the social interconnection of students established in terms of individuals and groups in the teaching and learning processes. The success of individuals in the social environment largely depends upon their free and purposeful participation as a result of their social interconnection. Constructive student interconnection across identity boundaries underlies the tenet of CBLEs. Through constructive and supportive engagement and interconnection students would improve communication, self-management and problem solving skills (Bitzer 2009: 46; Taylor et al. 2006: 11). These skills are basic components of both academic and social development that are grounded within CBLEs. It is contended that when lecturers attempt to integrate issues that "challenge social boundaries within the course content, students become better prepared for changing the social, political and economic world" (Ituarte & Davies 2007: 89).

It was shown in sections 3.2.1; 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 that diversity variables could determine student inter-group relationships in learning. Woolfolk (2010: 158) in his study of African Americans, Asians, and Latinos students in America, reports that

students from each of the three groups seem to stick together, rarely making friends with students from "outside." When you ask people to select partners for projects, the divisions are usually along ethnic lines. At times, there are insults exchanged between the groups and the atmosphere of the class [becomes] tense.

The above identity based division of students in terms of teaching and learning processes suggests important points relating to diversity variables. Woolfolk (2010: 57) indicated

that the student groups were ethnically heterogeneous non-dominant groups, although they attained American citizenship. It could be argued that because they shared the commonality of being non-dominant, they would feel comfortable to work with anybody from the cohort. However, despite this similarity, they tended to organise themselves on an ethnic basis. This shows that the students were not cohesive and that they would not benefit by learning in a socially diverse learning environment. This example suggests that similarity in terms of a particular diversity variable does not necessarily imply social cohesion in a diverse student population of a country. It also indicates the power of the ethnic bond in the establishment of social relationships. Even in an individualist society, such as that of America, ethnicity seems to be very significant in group forming.

3.6.2 Inter-group learning environments

Higher education institutions are more complex than ever before, not only in terms of students' academic capabilities, but also in terms of demography, socio-cultural diversity, economic status and political outlooks. It is argued that these diversity factors have not yet been accompanied by the required institutional reforms that would relate to a dynamic student composition (Gravett & Geysler 2004: 23). New students, therefore, are likely to have to learn according to the traditional teaching learning approaches meant for less diverse and exclusive student groups. This would imply that student diversity has not yet been sufficiently exploited for educational purposes.

Studies show that students learn comfortably when they experience positive social interdependence. It is argued that students who engage socially and academically with students from other backgrounds develop an argumentative approach to learn while students who isolate themselves from students from other cultures have a very unquestioning approach to learning. Student relationships can therefore facilitate or obstruct learning (Hockings et al. 2010: 96; Bowring-Carr 2005: 111; Johnson, Johnson & Smith 1991: 30). Bowring-Carr (2005:112) states that compared to shallow learning which is mostly limited to the memorisation of facts, in-depth learning alters the way students perceive the world and helps them to become inquisitive reflectors of their

learning, showing a high level of imagination. This would imply that when a diverse social environment is experienced as less inviting, students may be subject to superficial learning that merely requires the application of low level cognitive practices (Biggs & Tang 2003: 22) and may shelter themselves in a group mirroring their cultural identity. As shown in the preceding section, identity based grouping could be based on diversity dimensions such as ethnicity, language and religion which confine students to establish relations with peers of similar backgrounds (Baber 2010: 222). Although students may enjoy social and cultural support obtained from fellow students, this practice would not help them develop the academic and social learning skills they need to succeed in a competitive multicultural world (Gravett & Geysler 2004: 26).

Scholars suggest that higher education students need to experience how to develop positive relationship with out-group students at educational institutions in order to benefit from a diverse social environment academically as well as socially. In this regard Gravett & Geysler (2004: 2) contends that the underlying goal of higher education is to prepare students for managing their future using their experiential knowledge. In line with this, Douglas (2009: 266-67) explains that students' learning depends not only on learning experiences based on presentations by lecturers, but also on the extent to which students from diverse backgrounds work together on shared tasks.

Since students constitute the centre of the learning social environment, an institution which admits diverse students' needs to assume that it should establish an open institutional environment which engages students in activities and programmes that encourage interaction across individual and group differences (Dancy II 2010: 91; Fries-Britt et al. 2010: 183). In facilitating such learning environments, the management and its structures play a decisive role. Specifically lecturers play a significant role in organising inter-group engaging teaching and learning activities that reflect a transformative diversity management system (Pretorius 2000: 156). The next section deals with the basic role of lecturers in managing diversity in terms of the teaching and learning processes at higher education institutions.

3.6.3 Roles of lecturers in managing diversity

In accordance with its policy, an educational institution frames and manages learning systems and programmes which the teaching academics are expected to translate into actions. Diversity objectives as they appear in institutional policy cannot be achieved without the involvement of the teaching staff. Particularly in the higher education context, the teaching academics are expected to recognise the composition of student population and work closely with institutional management to bring the diversity policy objectives to fruition through teaching and learning processes. Doyle (2008: 51) contends that “if we are to optimise our students’ learning, we need to have a reasonable understanding of how our students learn and the factors that affect their learning”.

In a multicultural social context, since institutions admit a diverse student population, lecturers need to be diversity sensitive to complement and align the teaching and learning process with the diversity of the students. Hockings et al. (2010: 107) argue that although some educators may have a basic understanding of student diversity, they may not be able to take that into account in their teaching practices. In this regard Johnson et al. (1991: 70) contend that “to implement cooperative learning successfully the lecturer needs to teach students the interpersonal and small group skills required to collaborate, to structure and orchestrate intellectual inquiry within learning groups, and to form collaborative relations with others”. Gerschel (2003: 54) adds that through group work, students not only develop self-confidence, teamwork culture, and interpersonal interaction skills, but also improve their learning styles which would lead them to a deeper understanding of subject matter. Thus, it could be argued that lecturers should make efforts to establish inter-group objectives, and establish complementary actions, such as gaining an understanding of the composition of groups and establishing how the contribution of all members could be recognised (Iborra et al. 2010: 51). Through these grouping activities lecturers could support the institutional diversity management processes as well as enhance CBLEs of diverse students.

A study indicated that student groups who sensed discrimination by their lecturers developed negative attitudes to learning. Fries-Britt et al. (2010: 181-198) analysed the literature of compositional and interactional diversity in relation to academic, social and racial experiences of underrepresented American Physics students. These students were from African-American, Caribbean, and African backgrounds. The study unveiled that “African American students tended to have more negative experiences and perceived more racial discrimination than blacks from other countries” (Fries-Britt et al. 2010:192). The study also indicated that underrepresented students who felt they were discriminated against and marginalised in class by their lecturers, started to actively represent and promote their ethnicity by emphasising its attributes.

Educational scholars underline that the prime goal of lecturers is to augment the holistic development of students through interactive and engaging teaching learning activities. In this regard, Claassen (2000: 43) argues that in the global competitive world, educators should not only prepare students for the job market, but should also enable them to “live together harmoniously with others”. Onsman (2010: 181) also emphasises that lecturers are the prime responsible personnel to bring about inter-cultural understanding among diverse students. Claxon (2009: 181; see also Claxon 2002) underscores that

teachers can help students make the best use of [their learning] material and human resources that surround them, [so that they can] learn how to move skilfully around the social space of learning [and] contribute to groups in ways that maximise the collective learning power of all.

One of the major steps for an institution to succeed in engaging all students is to make teaching staff understand diversity in its contextual sense at an institutional level, and work towards creating an engaging teaching learning environment for all students. It is contended that a lecturer should attempt to address diversity equity by using flexible student-centred accommodative grouping strategies and learning activities that would motivate and engage students at individual level (Hockings et al. 2010: 103). However,

all lecturers may not be equally interested in the social diversity of students. Some may not sense differences whilst others may deliberately disregard differences. Other lecturers may be wary of student diversity, but working under stress may keep them from attending to diversity issues. Particularly in multicultural contexts, lecturers' insensitivity towards prevailing student diversity, or their intentional neglect of diversity issues, would mean that students' education could fail the wholesome holistic development of students for a multicultural work environment. Thus, lecturers in a multicultural higher education need to recognise the teaching benefits of diversity and adopt transformative teaching learning strategies by means of which student diversity could be used as an educational resource which would lessen prejudice and increase inter-group friendliness.

3.6.4 CBLE and collaborative learning

There has been a debate whether "cooperative" or "collaborative" learning strategies could promote learning in higher education. Some argue that the two concepts refer to different learning assumptions. They hold the view that co-operative learning is structural and more appropriate for learning fundamental knowledge and facts at elementary school levels, whereas collaborative learning is more non-structural and deals with higher level knowledge and views which require social skills which are more appropriate for college and university education (McWhaw et al. 2003: 73). However, others argue that the two are conceptually synonymous and that they can be interchangeably used to refer to group learning at different levels (see, for instance, Thagard 2005: 207; Gravett 2004: 23; Johnson et al. 1991: 6). To those who consider the concept to be different, collaborative learning refers to the process during which students support each other's learning by sharing responsibilities which maximise their learning (Laurillard 1993: 267), while cooperative learning is a learning strategy according to which students are organised into small groups to maximise their understanding of facts (Bitzer 2004: 41). To some of those who consider the concepts to be synonymous, the elements of learning in co-operative learning at elementary level include positive interdependence, individual accountability and progressive interaction, social skills and group processing, which could also be used at college level (McWhaw et al. 2003: 72). The aim of this section is not to

dwell on the controversy of the two approaches; rather it is to show how relevant learning assumptions of cooperative and/or collaborative learning could be materialised to develop the academic and social learning skills of students at multicultural higher educational institutions. The present study which deals with inter-group learning at higher education level, takes both co-operation and collaboration as complementary approaches and synonymous concepts for organising group learning activities that would promote inter-group cohesion and success in learning.

Cooperative or collaborative learning theoretically underlies people working together effectively and efficiently towards a set common goal. This implies that collaborative participants do not limit themselves to maximising their personal success but also strive for the success of their team (Bitzer 2009: 43; Wright & Lander 2003: 238). In addition, when students of different backgrounds are brought together to engage in group learning tasks in a supportive learning environment, they may re-conceptualise their opinions of people belonging to groups of other backgrounds and rid themselves of previous misconceptions and stereotypes. Through this kind of interaction they might wipe away their wariness of others and may start working wholeheartedly for mutual learning success. In this regard, Thagard (2005: 207) contends that sustainable “communication and cooperation is necessary [for] accomplishing a task that requires more than one person”. Mutual support and collaborative effort as the basic tenets of cooperative learning result in successful cooperative learning which is characterised by “positive interdependence, face-to-face supportive interaction, individual accountability, social skills, and group processing” (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec (1990) in Johnson et al. (1991: 6). The argument seems to emphasise the view that social identities which influence interpersonal relationships could be both obvious and subtle, and require university faculties to critically understand the nature of student differences in order to apply appropriate management strategies (Garcia & Hoelscher 2008: 2).

To facilitate the exchange and sharing of experiences in teaching and learning contexts, students are expected to work together in such a way that they enhance not only their own learning but also that of their partners. Group success in learning depends on

exchanging and sharing cognitive ideas, principles and social values (Thagard 2005: 207). Johnson et al. (1991: 3) support this view when they state that “cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximise their own and each other’s learning”. This understanding seems to suggest that the cooperative learning improves students’ success in learning and contributes towards better psychological adjustment of students than the competitive and individualistic learning approach (Johnson et al. 1991: 1). As Laurillard (1993: 210) asserts, “students are not simply learners of an academic subject: they are social beings” and need to acquire social skills for their lifelong community life.

There are a number of studies which underline the significance of cooperative learning in higher education. Gravett (2004: 22-31), after having thoroughly assessed student learning at higher institutions, criticised the institutions which confine their teaching to superficial learning approaches that focuses on delivering facts instead of developing in-depth learning which focuses on discerning meaning obtained from learning experiences. Based on this unfortunate state of affairs, he proposes an approach of establishing a student community of inquiry, as well as an interpretive approach to learning which is theoretically linked to collaborative learning. For Gravett (2004: 30), proper learning demands “shared goals that direct decisions and actions, shared concepts and discourse, and collaborative activity (including creative conflict) through which participants [lecturers and students] share and negotiate understandings”. The mentioned study, however, does not specifically show how student differences may influence the formation of a community of inquiry and what interpretation of relationships governs members of the community.

It could be inferred, from the study mentioned above, that the degree of engagement of students in a community of inquiry would determine their approach to learning. It would seem that students who are engaged in a cooperative social learning environment are likely to adopt an in-depth learning approach and tend to understand the underlying meaning of what they learn, whereas those who are less engaged with fellow students are likely to adopt a superficial approach that focuses on memorisation of facts of what is taught (Gravett 2004: 24). Thus, it could be argued that students who employ a superficial

approach may not be as successful in applying what they learn to new situations as their counterparts who use an in-depth learning approach. Similarly, Johnson et al. (1991: 103), who reviewed informal and formal grouping processes, propose the base group strategy for cooperative teaching and learning which entails heterogeneous group membership “in terms of gender, ability, and ethnic cultural backgrounds”. Although the authors recommend the base group strategy for a semester, this recommendation should be considered cautiously because group members might fail to establish sustainable positive relationships with other team members.

Collaborative learning not only develops learning outcomes such as satisfactory academic achievement, a positive attitude towards the subject matter and cooperative teams and critical thinking, but also enhances students’ social skills to apply knowledge gained from cooperative experiences. These learning outcomes suggest that a cooperative learning process would provide students with opportunities to practice skills of meaningful negotiation and teach them how to live with differences comfortably. Similarly, it would develop in members the sense of “your success benefits me and my success benefits you” (Bitzer 2009: 43). This, in turn, would help students to recognise the mutual benefit they obtain from each other’s contribution in accomplishing learning tasks. Students working cooperatively are likely to benefit from their social engagement and develop mutual trust with each other. In this way diversity sensitive collaboration becomes a major resource for successful learning and helps students develop multiple perspectives and non-threatening identities that underlie CBLEs.

Cooperative engagement presumes positive connection and communication among collaborative learners. Positive interdependence assumes the existence of individuals who care for one another and who believe that one cannot succeed without the success of other members of the group. In line with this view, students would develop accountability, social skills and group processes that would guide them in assessing individual performance, making decisions, building mutual trust, communicating, managing internal conflicts, and maintaining effective social and working relationships among the members to attain group tasks (Johnson et al. 1991: 7-8). Where an

institutionally set diversity management system encourages student collaboration and where students feel satisfied with their learning achievement resulting from the learning process, learning becomes a transformational and a self-emancipating experience.

Scholars accentuate the significance of cooperative and collaborative learning approaches as a means for addressing students' diversity needs in higher education contexts. For instance, Bitzer (2009: 41-66) considers the cooperative learning approach as an alternative for addressing diversity issues in the South African higher educational context. He elaborates on the underlying premises of cooperative learning in a socially and culturally diverse educational environment by using two imaginative scenarios pertaining to higher education in South Africa. He shows that higher education teaching and learning should use cooperative learning in a way that enables diverse students to develop interpersonal communication skills which they need to accomplish team work in the work place. However, the study does not mention how the results of cooperation among a culturally diverse student population can be measured.

It should be noted, collaborative learning in higher education does not mean that all other learning approaches are ineffective. Neither does it mean that cooperative learning is the panacea for all learning related problems of multicultural students. Rather, it implies that cooperative learning requires a critical attitude and diligence in preparing and overseeing a learning environment which is more engaging, involving, and accommodative and aims at producing emancipated graduates. This assumption concurs with the view of Wright and Lander (2003: 238) who argue that a collaborative learning approach "may provide an effective means of bringing together students of different ethnic backgrounds" and that of Johnson et al. (1991: 79) who assert that cooperation results in more positive interpersonal relationships, and greater psychological health and self-esteem as opposed to the outcomes of individualistic efforts.

3.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter an attempt was made to indicate the interrelatedness of diversity variables which influence educational processes, policy trends and transformational management strategies aimed at CBLEs at higher education institutions in the context of a multicultural country. The discussion supports the assumption that transformational diversity management strategies relate to the administrative section and collaborative teaching and learning processes informed by a vibrant policy framework which finds expression in a collaborative learning environment in terms of engaging CBLEs which transform ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse students and advance the outcome of holistically developed people who can adequately function in a multicultural work environment.

Information presented in this chapter discusses cross-border learning opportunities of culturally diverse students in the higher education context in terms of within-country diversity. Perspectives from other countries on CBLEs concur with some views held at the national Ethiopian level presented in Chapter 2 and therefore confirm their universality. Implications for developing relevant theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the research in terms of designing the research, which are presented in Chapters 4 and 5, were drawn from information presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Theoretically this chapter is grounded in and draws from the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3. The present chapter is presented separately with the aim of constructing conceptual and theoretical grounds that relate to the link between management processes and the processes of developing social cohesion and mutual respect through CBLEs which are meant to bring about collaborative engagement of socio-culturally diverse higher education students of a multicultural country. In this chapter, an attempt is made to provide a theoretical lens in the light of the Ethiopian context and the literature from other countries reviewed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 that would inform this study's empirical research. This chapter starts with a description of the relationship between a conceptual framework and a theoretical framework in qualitative research as a forerunner for the selection of the research design presented in Chapter 5. This is followed by an attempt to establish a conceptual connection between diversity, diversity management and CBLEs using selected theoretical information concerning diversity, diversity management, Sociology of Education and relevant learning theories.

4.2 EXPLAINING CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The notions 'conceptual framework' and 'theoretical framework' have been common and often been used interchangeably in qualitative research. However, there has been a debate on whether they designate a similar abstraction or not. These days there seems to be a consensus that a conceptual framework and a theoretical framework refer to different assumptions. A conceptual framework is viewed as a scaffold of interconnected ideas used to build up a high level idea which is much greater than the sum total of the components and which could be used as a theoretical ground of a study (Mouton 1996: 195; Dey 1993: 46). A theoretical framework is seen as a relevant generalised assumption which underlies research and which can also be verified and tested by means of research

findings (Bryman 1988: 97). However, in research the complementary relationship between the two is more significant and instrumental than their differences.

The other controversy is related to the use of theory in qualitative study. Literature on qualitative research indicates that consensus has not yet been reached by many scholars on the use of theoretical frameworks in qualitative studies (cf. Corbin & Straus 2008: 39; Dornyei 2007: 236). Tuettemann (2003: 11) contends that since theories could emerge through continuous investigation and repeated conceptual outcomes, qualitative researchers should not attempt to prove or disprove theoretical assumptions; rather they should ground their views within rigorous data collected through systematic procedures. On the other hand, Corbin and Straus (2008: 39-40) are of the opinion that theoretical frameworks could be used in qualitative studies when an alignment is observed between a topic under study and theoretical assumptions drawn from previous studies. They argue that a theory is not an irreversible rule but a tool to engage with contemporary problems based on logical explanations. The latter argument hints that the literature in a study area could provide an alternative explanation for a study in progress and that the framework drawn from the literature could become a theoretical assumption to determine the methodological approach for an intended study. This framework could be considered as an underlying theoretical ground of the study. It is with this understanding that an attempt has been made to draw implications from theoretical stance of fields such as Diversity Management, Sociology of Education and learning theories for the present study. The theoretical framework has been used in line with the view that “a theoretical perspective provides a guide, a particular conception of how the social world works” (Ballantine 1993: 5). The theoretical framework relates to the literature study provided in Chapters 2 and 3 and, as mentioned, includes relevant information pertaining to Diversity Management, Sociology of Education and theories of learning. Since the theoretical framework, as depicted in Figure 4.1, is comprehensive in terms of the topic of research, it could, for purposes of this study, also be considered as a conceptual framework.

4.3 THEORETICAL GROUNDS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND CBLES

The multiplicity of factors involved and the dynamism in the conceptualisation of diversity, diversity management and learning theories underpin the need for a multidisciplinary approach in conducting research on the relationship between diversity management and CBLEs across ethnic, linguistic and religious variables at educational institutions (Leonardo 2004: 11). The complexity of diversity issues requires the interplay of varied perspectives and paradigms (Ropers-Huilman & Enke 2010: 11). Therefore, the socio-cultural theoretical grounds of Diversity Management, Sociology of Education, and theories of learning are used to constitute a theoretical lens to consider the relationship between diversity management practices and CBLEs of higher education students in a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multilingual environment.

There is an argument that some western individualist theories may not be comprehensive enough to unveil complex and collective social phenomena, such as diversity in the African context (Goodman 2011: 13; Taylor et al. 2006: 12; Abdi & Cleghorn 2005: 14; Thagard 2005: 210; Hendrick 2004: 199; Gough & McFadden 2001: 81). However, Abdi and Cleghorn (2005: 14) suggest that the western theories could be used as a springboard to develop a context specific theoretical framework for studying social issues in the African situation. Since perspectives of Diversity Management, Sociology of Education, critical theory and relevant theories of learning in general are concerned with matters related to social realities such as education and socialisation processes which manifest within a diverse society, the multi-perspective theoretical lens which is drawn from these theoretical perspectives is relevant for this study and is highlighted in the next section. The model of the theoretical lens of the study is provided in Figure 4.1 (see section 4.4) while the theoretical perspectives receive attention in the next section.

4.3.1 Theoretical links between diversity management and learning

Diversity management is a recent development in the process of managing human capital to improve the productivity of an institution. It has very often been termed “managing

diversity”, “diversity policy” and “diversity management” (Kirton & Greene 2005: 2). Its theoretical underpinnings have remained dynamic from time to time. Diversity management was initially rooted in the “difference theory” which focused on positive discrimination for access of opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Later, this was explained by means of the “equality diversity theory” which emphasised the selection and promotion of an individual based on his/her merits regardless of his/her social background which includes ethnicity, race, religion and gender (Kirton & Greene 2005: 114).

Theoretically, diversity management can be described in terms of views concerned with explaining the theoretical basis of institutions located in different environments for adopting a policy which finds expression in complementary implementation adapted to ever changing environments, and the manner in which the underlying institutional culture could be sustained (Burch 2007: 84). In institutional terms diversity management has often been connected to improving the utilisation of diverse human resources in order to enhance the competitiveness of an organisation (Wrench 2007: 3). The current trend shows that in some industries managing diversity implies the full involvement of employees with their utmost potential to promote the productivity of the organisation. The present diversity management approach is theoretically different from the earlier anti-discrimination approaches in that it upholds the mutual relationship and equal value of those who are thought to discriminate, as well as those who are considered to be stereotyped and suffer prejudice by others in an organisation (see section 3.5.2).

The current trend in diversity management seems to be theoretically transformative since it equally values both differences and commonalities (see section 3.5.2). From a transformative diversity management perspective, structural diversity presumes not only the presence of diverse students and staff in an institution, but also discernible opportunities and real commitment of the institutional leadership to change the institution into a welcoming environment where all students feel that they all are equally important (Barber 2010: 237; Watson 2010: 259). Dancy II (2010: 85) emphasises that through transformative diversity management, organisational goals such as “moral, ethical, and

social responsibility, [as well as] legal obligations of organisations, and economic performance” can be attained.

The collaborative partnership of diverse students in learning is theoretically linked to the effectiveness of social learning processes expressed in group behaviour because learning and knowledge construction are assumed to result from social interaction processes (see section 3.6.1). In this context, learning is understood as a process of conceptual change in academic and social knowledge and skills in a collaborative and supportive educational environment (Iborra et al. 2010: 49; Biggs & Tang 2007: 21). The in-depth learning associated with and derived from conceptual changes could be a ground for critical thinking that would underlie “emancipatory higher education” (Hockings et al. 2010: 96). Accordingly, CBLEs which imply social constructive engagements are theoretically grounded within social learning skills and the academic cognitive processes of positive competition and non-individualistic learning partnership of students from different socio-cultural backgrounds. Such processes underlie the view that diversity management processes that welcome differences enable students of different ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds to carry out learning activities co-operatively and share their knowledge, experiences and viewpoints that would broaden their perspectives (Booyesen 2007: 64; Pless & Maack 2004: 134;). Hockings et al. (2010: 96-97) contend that students’ learning engagements are rooted in “learning environments that are personally meaningful and intellectually stimulating for students from different backgrounds”. This would imply that collaborative and cooperative learning partnerships are built among multicultural students through diversity management processes. The concomitant social and academic knowledge and skill of such students explain the theoretical interconnection between diversity management approach and students’ CBLEs in an educational institution.

4.3.2 Sociological grounds of diversity management

In educational institutions, management activities and academic activities are not separate processes; rather they are complementary to one another. Educational

management could support academic activities by designing and developing educational objectives and resources (Okumbe 1999: 4) while academic activities ascertain the attainment of set educational goals by means of learning management strategies by providing students with engaging learning experiences. From this interconnection, it may be inferred that diversity management strategies employed at educational institutions play a part in educational processes and that management activities and academic activities are interconnected.

It could be inferred from the above discussion that theories which underlie diversity management at educational organisations can be drawn from the theoretical underpinnings of Educational Management that deal with human relations in an institution. Since Educational Management is an applied science and derives its theoretical grounds from fields such as Sociology of Education, Social Psychology, and learning theories (Okumbe 1999: 2), the interface of these theoretical underpinnings could also be used as a framework for studying the relationship between diversity management activities and learning activities. The interconnection between diversity management and learning is based on the view that knowledge is constructed in a context of social interaction where students critique, evaluate, interpret and reflect upon their social learning experiences (Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall 2009: 10-11; Biggs & Tang 2007: 29; Thagard 2005: 114).

4.3.3 Sociology of Education underlying CBLEs

Some theories of Sociology of Education, which explain human relations in social environments such as schools, colleges and universities, could be theoretical bases to describe the relationship between diversity management and student relationships and interaction for learning in diverse educational environments. From these theories the interaction and critical social theories are found to be relevant for describing the social learning process in a diverse learning environment. Their implications for the study are briefly described in the next sub-sections.

4.3.3.1 *The interaction theory*

The interaction theory, often referred to as symbolic interaction (Spencer 2006: 96), deals with the ways in which meanings are constructed about the self, between groups and peers during interaction processes. Historically incepted in the *Chicago School of Sociology* and situated in the interpretive paradigm, the theory has often been used as a particular theoretical lens to explain the construction of meaning in social contexts (McCown et al. 1999: 26; Ballantine 1993: 12).

In a teaching and learning environment, students are involved in interaction that comprises others, and the interaction could influence their social and academic learning skills. McCown et al. (1999: 28) argue that “students’ personal and social developments are as important as their cognitive development”. Interaction presupposes processes of interpreting symbols from which meanings are drawn and thus interaction and interpretation are intertwined social processes that facilitate the construction of knowledge from the social interface in everyday life. It is argued that “when two people have mutual influence on each other’s thoughts, feelings, or behaviours, they are interdependent” (Taylor et al. 2006: 9). The theoretical link between symbolic interaction and interpretivism would be relevant to investigate social collaboration and concomitant knowledge construction interfaces which take place between students and lecturers, and school administration, etc. in an educational environment (Ballantine 1993: 12). Therefore, since learning occurs in social contexts, these theoretical perspectives are used as an aspect of multi-dimensional theoretical lens for the present study to explain the connection between diversity management systems and CBLEs in the development of knowledge and social skills of higher education students in a multicultural social environment.

4.3.3.2 *Critical social theory*

Critical Social Theory, which was historically developed by scholars at the *Institute of Social Research* of the *University of Frankfurt*, views knowledge as a critical

understanding of power relations in socio-historical contexts, aimed at human emancipation and transformation (Kincheloe & McLaren 2000: 279). Kincheloe and McLaren (2000: 281) stress that “critical theory analyses [deal with] competing power interests between groups and individuals within a society ... identifying who gains and who loses in specific situations”.

The Critical Social Theory, in general, is based on postmodernist critical standpoints and explains relationship between knowledge, power and experience within social contexts (Taylor et al. 2006: 4; Thagard 2005: 205; Leonardo 2004: 11). According to Abdi and Cleghorn (2005: 19), Critical Social Theory takes the view that human knowledge is the result of shared meanings of a subjective nature and of social reality. Fay (1987) (in Creswell 2009: 62) states that from the critical theoretical point of view human beings are endowed with the power that can transcend constraints that emanate from diversity and differences. The transformation is often explained in terms of social discourse, power relations, and differences in meaning that emerge from social environments (Gough & McFadden 2001: 16). Hence, in this study the critical social theory are used to verify how students strive to overcome problems attributed to socio-historical and socio-cultural differences constructively.

Theoretically the Critical Social Theory combines perspectives from different disciplines including Sociology, Cultural Studies, and History to study how institutional systems and people influence one another. Since it is mainly concerned with groups, it is also instrumental to describe student emancipation from racism, gender, sexuality and many other aspects that create social inequalities (Taylor et al. 2006: 10; Leonardo 2004: 11; Gough & McFadden 2000: 2). When applied to this study, Critical Social Theory refers to how relationships are established among diverse students and the meaning they construct (the transformative knowledge they develop) from their CBLEs across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries. In this sense, Critical Social Theory is also useful to explain the interrelationship between campus diversity management policy implementation and the related learning outcomes (Strayhorn 2010: 156). In this study, as mentioned, Critical Social Theory would also relate to the knowledge construction

processes of ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse students within a higher education context (Barton & Armstrong 2007: 16; Tilstone & Rose 2003: 2; Gough & McFadden 2001: 104-105).

4.3.4 Learning theories

Learning theories confirm that learning is an essential aspect of human development. In this regard Jarvis (2006: 5) emphasises that “learning is a driving force of human change through which the human essence emerges and is nurtured”. This implies that learning is not limited to classroom teaching and learning processes. It has often been argued that formal learning, and to some extent informal and non-formal learning, is the cumulative result of social and academic interactive experiences and that they involve cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and conative development of students (Goodman 2011: 4; James 2009: 173). In terms of this study, ‘conation’ refers to the will of students to engage in learning and is influenced by the affective behaviour expressed in a teaching and learning environment. James (2009: 173) stresses that recognising interconnections between cognition, affective experiences and conation would help understand how learning takes place. It is argued that one’s acts are based on one’s feelings (James 2009: 166) and that “without feelings, intellectual cleverness becomes abstract and disembodied” (Claxon 2009: 181). The interaction between the three components of learning is shaped and developed through social interaction processes (Claxon 2009: 181; Jarvis 2006: 13) and results in “mastering abstract principles, understanding proofs, remembering factual information, acquiring methods, techniques and approaches, recognition, reasoning, debating ideas, [and] developing behaviour appropriate to specific situations” (Fry et al. 2009: 8). These learning processes underpin the view that learning is a complex mental process which could be influenced by a number of social factors including students, lecturers, contents of learning, the learning environment, and approaches used in teaching and learning. In the next section an attempt is made to establish a socio-psychological theoretical link between neurological mental processes and social environments in the construction of knowledge which finds expression in CBLEs in educational contexts.

4.3.4.1 The neurological theoretical perspective of learning

Learning has often been explained and contextualised in relation to neurological processes within a social learning framework. Gravett (2004: 32-40) in analysing how learning is constructed in the brain, suggests that “learning occurs when synapses and neuronal networks in the brain are formed and established”. He argues that this process develops students’ inquisitional, analytical, interpretive and reflective skills during learning activities. Gravett believes that the effectiveness of these skills is dependent on students’ prior knowledge which could develop by means of in-class as well as out-of-class learning environments. He emphasises that skills could develop when students are engaged as members of teams that enable them, for example, to summarise salient learning points of a course, which, in turn, fosters the construction of “social” knowledge (Gravett 2004: 36). Hawkins and Heather (2001: 180) add that active engagement in out-of-class campus activities is also essential for students’ social and academic success. Onsman (2010: 187) recognises that learning is a neurological mental process which develops through social activities which involve supposition, proposition and cognition. Thagard (2005: 112) advises that since it is difficult to determine a human behaviour solely on a neurological basis, “a more promising strategy is to take seriously all of the various levels of explanation (neurons, persons, and societies) and to investigate how these levels are related to each other”. The arguments of these scholars underpin the intertwinement of neurological and social processes in the construction of knowledge. Therefore, the interplay of psycho-social processes of constructing knowledge is used to explain the interdependence between individuals in inter-group learning situation.

4.3.4.2 The psycho-social theoretical perspective of learning

The psycho-social assumption locates learning within social interaction processes. Jarvis (2006: 6) argues that “self is formed through existing and interacting with people”. This argument is elucidated by Given (2002: 6-10) who is of the opinion that learning takes place within interaction of a system. She categorises components of the system into emotional, social, cognitive, physical and reflective sub-systems. She views the emotional

component as an intrapersonal attachment which determines the level of social interaction in the teaching and learning environment. According to Given, the cognitive, physical and reflective sub-systems help students to acquire concepts and skills through the mediation of learning experiences which enhance students' active involvement in undertaking learning tasks and analysing and synthesising one's own learning. She argues that human learning behaviour is the ultimate effect of the interface of the sub-systems and contends that as a positive attachment may motivate students, conversely, a negative attachment would de-motivate them and would negatively influence their learning. Given proposes that a negative influence could be minimised through a social learning system which fosters interpersonal social relationships and interaction.

The above argument suggests that students need to have interpersonal interactive relationship with others in the teaching and learning environment in order to succeed socially as well as academically. Given seems to be of the opinion that all the components of a system are intertwined so that one cannot function without the proper function of the others. This ultimately suggests that effective learning could be the cumulative result of neurological processes within a social environment. In this regard, Brothers (1997 and 2001) in Franks (2010: 39) contends that

while our individual brains are singular and self-contained, the processes on which they depend for functioning are social ones. We have seen that there is no fully working human brain without the presences of other brains. The functioning brain is social in the sense that any given brain is completely dependent on other brains for its development. Without question, the synaptic brain is contained in our individual skulls but the intangible thought processes which these synapses make possible depend on a social environment with other actors who are engaged in everyday public discourse and interaction.

From the argument of Brothers it could be inferred that the cognitive development of students depends on an interactive social environment and that the holistic development of students is likely to be realised through engaging social learning experiences.

The social neurological function theory discussed above could be a conceptual ground for understanding the cognitive development of students in a socially diverse educational environment. It has been argued in section 1.2.4.2 that when students are able to cross their own as well as that of their counterparts' identity boundaries in constructing knowledge, they would develop more multiple perspectives than when they are confined within their own identity zones. In short, in Franks' (2010: 39) words "we become socialised in the social psychological sense when the other person's anticipated response is incorporated into our own developing lines of action".

Learning theories emphasise that a student brings about conceptual changes through in-depth learning activities and experiences that promote abstractions from multiple interactive social contexts (Biggs & Tang 2007: 21; Jarvis 2006: 51; Laurillard 1993:19). Fry et al. (2009: 8-26) identify learning theories associated with higher education in terms of the contrast between objective and constructive theoretical perspectives, and the surface and in-depth approaches within the dimension of the social learning environment. The objectivist theory of learning views knowledge as measurable phenomena acquired from reality whereas the constructive theory considers knowledge as the process of building a new understanding through connecting the new knowledge with existing knowledge. The objective view of learning is associated with the superficial approach to learning which focuses on the accomplishment of the tasks of memorisation of information without critical thinking, whereas the constructive view of learning is related to the in-depth approach to learning which aims at engaging students in meaningful activities which would help them to connect the new with existing knowledge (Fry et al. 2009: 10-11; Biggs & Tang 2007: 22-24). So called individualised learning basically refers to learning that takes place within the learner at personal level, whereas social learning relates to interactive process which a student carries out within the social environment. With regard to social interaction in learning processes, Leonardo (2004: 12) argues that

“educational discourse not only frames the way students experience learning, it may also empower them”.

In the context of this study, learning comprises social cognitive learning processes of constructing knowledge in a milieu of social interaction. It is argued that social learning could be instrumental for the “development of skills and understanding about the self, and others and the environment as a result of interactions” (Given 2002: 42). Harris (1998), (in Given 2002: 43), confirms that an educational environment plays a pivotal role in influencing students’ interpretation of and interaction with different circumstances. Thus, institutional cultures and classroom teaching learning approaches play determinant roles in helping students to develop socially acceptable behaviour (Given 2002: 43). The psycho-social approach to learning is considered particularly relevant for socially and culturally diverse student populations at higher education institutions because collaborative interaction would invite students to bring their experiences, knowledge, and practices to promote mutual learning (Fry et al. (2009: 14; Taylor et al. 2006: 9). Therefore, the psycho-social learning approach could be used as a component of a multidimensional theoretical lens to examine students’ learning approaches in relation to ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables which were selected for the study.

4.4 A CONCEPTUAL LINK BETWEEN STUDENT DIVERSITY AND CBLEs

As shown in section 1.2.4.2, there was a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of differences among people in educational studies. Compared to the 1960s when diversity was mainly used to designate differences related to race, ethnicity and gender (see Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 219), it now refers to the broader areas of social, physical, educational and geographical differences. These include differences related to ethnicity, race, class, gender, language, religion, age, sexuality, disability, ability, and place of birth (Dancy II 2010: 157; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh 2005: 6; UNDESA- IIAS 2001: 1; Mda 2000: 219). The meaning of diversity has often been expanded to embrace the concept of co-existence amidst differences aimed at mutual benefits. This underpins the current trends in diversity management which focuses on creating an organisational environment in

which heterogeneity and commonalities are equally celebrated and valued and in which individuals can use their potential to obtain mutual benefits (Wrench 2007: 4-5). The above conceptualisation of diversity has become a common phenomenon in education areas because the current globalisation in education has introduced a highly heterogeneous student population, not only in terms of academic backgrounds, but also in terms of socio-cultural life. This heterogeneity of students at international and national levels has led to the application of different diversity management strategies (see section 3.3).

In the international arena, globalisation has facilitated international scholarships for students. Students from different countries across the globe cross national borders to further their education in other countries. This phenomenon which implies the physical movement of students across geographical boundaries has been referred to in terms such as “internationalisation”, “across-borders”, and “overseas education” (Field 2009: 3; Varghese 2009: 38). International students may encounter psychological, academic, socio-cultural and life style differences while being expected to continually adjust themselves to the cultural, academic, social, and linguistic features of the host country (Anderson, Carmichael, Harper, & Huang 2009: 18). Addressing diversity needs of foreign students is assumed to serve the academic success of foreign students.

Diversity issues at national level are significantly different from those in the international arena. Particularly in developing countries, diversity is often linked to power relationships which determine social interaction in inter-group scenarios within and outside educational contexts. As mentioned, due to the massification of education, countries have facilitated access to education for “non-traditional students” who now stream to higher education institutions which were originally established for “traditional students” (Anderson et al. 2009: 18). This situation presumes the co-existence of heterogeneous citizens from varied ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds. In multicultural societies where social and political inequalities prevail among different social groups, some students may experience discrimination based on their identity and students from dominant cultural groups may find it difficult to accommodate students with different cultural ties in the teaching and

learning environments. Goodman (2011: 15) contends that “privileged groups uphold their own attributes as preferable while distorting and disparaging the qualities of others”. This circumstance might instil mistrust, suspicion and hostility among different groups (cf. section 2.2.3.3.3). The dynamism of student populations necessitates a context specific theoretical perspective of border crossing which implies the mental and socio-psychological transformation of students across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries. In this study, as mentioned, the process of crossing one’s own as well as others’ identity boundaries for learning purposes is termed cross-border learning and the strategies employed to attain the transformation is referred to as CBLEs.

The assumption behind cross-border learning is that students’ interaction in multicultural teaching and learning environments is influenced by socio-cultural diversity factors (Strayhorn 2010: 141; Bray, Peter, & Stephens 1986: 131). Strayhorn explains such interaction as “the extent to which individuals from diverse backgrounds actually come into contact with others and interact in educationally purposeful ways”. This purposeful and meaningful contact would influence students’ CBLEs at personal and emotional, as well as interpersonal and social levels (Baber 2010: 221; Hurtado 2006: 250; Gallo et al. 1997: 212).

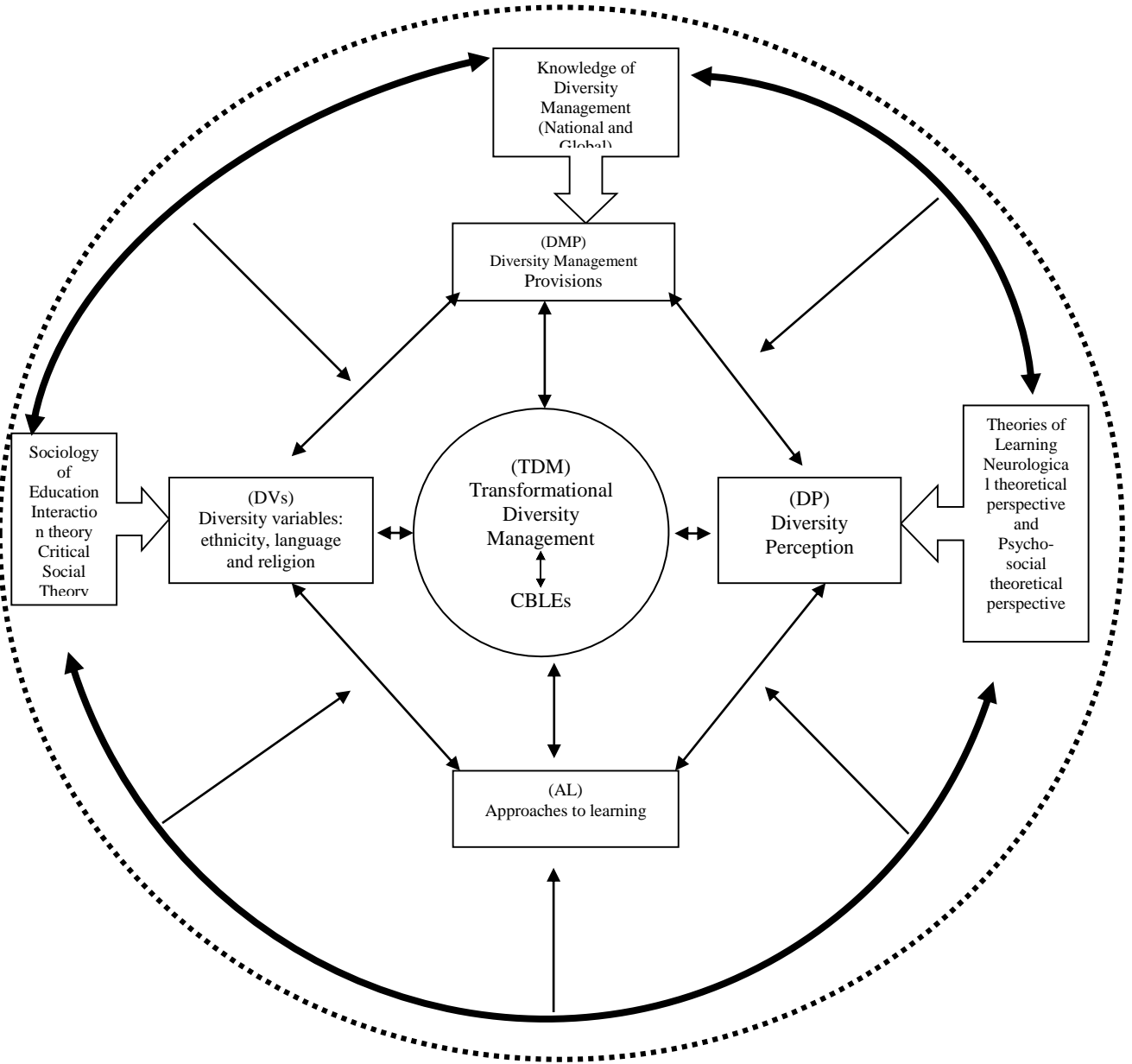
In a multicultural context, group learning activities imply heterogeneity of members and necessitate interpersonal interaction among group members. The behaviour a student develops as a result of interaction with students from other backgrounds and the effect of the interaction is known as educational outcomes of diversity (Gurin et al. 2002: 2). In constructive educational environments, these outcomes comprise both academic and social learning products. Academic learning outcomes refer to students’ active thinking and academic skills they acquire after an educational process whereas the socialisation outcomes imply multiple perspectives developed through interaction across racial, ethnic and cultural identity borders. Jarvis (2006: 57) emphasises that when cultures are shared and “we have learned the relevant knowledge, values, beliefs, etc. the culture becomes our own subjective reality and as such helps us determine the way that we perceive and experience the world, and consequently we learn with it and from it”. The learning

outcomes of the process includes knowledge concerning commonality and differences (Dancy II 2010: 82-83; Gurin et al. 2002: 4; McCown et al. 1999: 26).

As shown in the preceding sections, a study on diversity management and cross-border learning experiences at Ethiopian universities requires a viable knowledge and relevant information pertaining to Sociology of Education and learning theories to generate a synthesised context specific conceptual and theoretical framework, depicted below in *Figure 4.1*. The outer circle of the *Figure* with broken line encompasses vital diversity circumstances in the society. The three rectangles with pointer arrows to the interior parts indicate theoretical grounds that explain diversity studies in contexts. The three curved and bi-dimensional thick arrows show the interplay of theoretical perspectives that relate to the phenomenon that is studied: the relationship between diversity management processes and CBLEs. The four arrows from the thick arrows pointing to the interior of the diagram show the influence of the theoretical perspectives on the management processes and the development of CBLEs.

The eight arrows in the centre of the framework are used to indicate relationships among theoretical components relating to diversity management and cross-border learning in Ethiopia. In this regard, the bi-dimensional arrows are used to indicate that the two theoretical components have equivalent influence on one another whereas the unidirectional arrow is used to show that the component may have an impact on the other component but not vice versa. The arrows also reflect the network of interaction of diversity and learning related variables in the development of CBLE strategies in multicultural and multilingual contexts. In the study the directions of the arrows would also imply the analytical relationship between the study variables and the theoretical assumptions that relate to the empirical evidence.

Figure 4.1: A conceptual model for relating diversity management and cross-border learning



Diversity Variables (DVs) are variables such as ethnic, linguistic and religious differentiation that students bring to a learning environment and which could influence students' relationships and interaction in cross-border learning contexts. The diversity variables presume the construction of knowledge through cross-border interaction in social contexts. Diversity Management Provision (DMP) refers to underlying strategies set in place in an institution to address identified diversity issues which relate to DVs. The provisions are viewed from the transformational theory of diversity management (TDM) perspectives which presume the instalment of compelling learning environments in which students embrace both uniqueness and commonalities with enthusiasm and strive for mutual respect and learning benefits (see sections 3.5.2; 3.6.1 and 4.3.4.2). It is assumed that the extent to which the provisions are transformative may influence the degree to which CBLEs promote intended academic and social learning outcomes.

Approaches to Learning (AL) refer to the processes and activities students undertake to learn from the learning environment, including diversity experiences (Fry et al. 2009: 11; Hurtado 2006: 252). The processes may include what students bring to in-classroom and outside-classroom learning circumstances, the manner in which they handle their learning experiences and their personal learning intentions (Laurillard 1993: 286). These also assume the development of Diversity Perception (DP) which is seen as cognitive development that emerges from the involvement of students of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds in the construction of knowledge (Shizha 2005: 77). The Approaches to Learning and Diversity Perception variables are viewed from the social learning perspectives because student perceptions of their learning social environment may influence their approaches to learning which would influence their social interaction. Finally, the Transformational Diversity Management and CBLEs relationship (TDM-CBLEs) refers to the connection between diversity management strategies and students' learning experiences to bring about academic and social learning outcomes that would enhance a holistic development of students and which implies the realisation of in-depth learning strategies

4.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, relevant theoretical perspectives of Education Management, Sociology of Education and learning were linked to socio-cultural theories of learning to establish a multi-perspective view on the relationship between diversity management approach at higher educational institutions and concomitant cross-border learning outcomes. This chapter will serve as conceptual and theoretical framework in terms of addressing cultural values, namely ethnic, linguistic and religious variables and resultant social learning behaviour of groups at higher education institutions.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapters 2 and 3 dealt with the review of addressing student differences in Ethiopia and other countries to verify the relationship between diversity management and the phenomenon of cross-border learning. Chapter 4 focused on developing conceptual and theoretical frameworks that would guide the study. The present chapter focuses on the research design of the study which is geared towards finding answers to the research questions posed in section 1.4. These are mainly directed at how management strategies of higher education institutions in Ethiopia could reflect CBLEs in an ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse student population. In the sections below the research design of the study is outlined within the case study approach and qualitative research methods with regard to the collection of data, the selection of study sites and participants, the study procedure, the pilot study, corroboration of aspects to boost trustworthiness, method of data analysis, and procedures employed to address ethical issues.

5.2 THE DESIGN AND RESEARCH STRATEGY

In research, design refers to the process of setting a plan of action to collect, analyse and interpret data in order to provide evidence based explanations of a study phenomenon. The design of an investigation could be described in terms of approaches followed to arrive at the final results of a study. An approach generally refers to a systematic procedure followed by a researcher to either test theories in quantitative research or to describe and explain a phenomenon which is studied in context in order to generate knowledge in qualitative research. In either case the design of research relates to a study approach which is suitable for a topic of a study and the theoretical framework adapted by the researcher to understand and describe it (Lincoln & Guba 2000: 164). It is suggested that a study which attempts to explain complex and dynamic human relations that unfold during social interactions in specific natural contexts would be better

elucidated by empirical data collected by means of the application of qualitative methods within a case study research strategy (Creswell 2012: 465; Cohen et al. 2000: 181). The case study research strategy is indeed often identified with qualitative research methods although it permits the application of quantitative methods (Doranyi 2007: 138; Gall et al. 2003: 436). In this study, the case study strategy and qualitative methods were complementarily applied to meaningfully collect data relating to the topic of research.

There has been a controversy concerning the role of designing a study procedure for qualitative research. Doranyi (2007: 113) contends that “the design of most qualitative data collection is fluid and open-ended, and researchers are not required to plan all elements of the project at the outset”. He suggests that since qualitative data collection and analysis are often circular and overlapping, the initial designs might be modified and changed in the course of time. Gay et al. (2006: 84) and Yin (2003: 1), however, hold the opinion that a research project needs a designed base although it could be applied flexibly during the process of investigation. Flexibility of design, according to them, means that the study procedure needs modification during the course of the research process to accommodate emerging plans and data that would further enrich the study. The researcher of this study project agrees with the latter position and prepared a research design assuming that the design would help to visualise and foresee the sequence of steps required to arrive at data which would inform meaningful interpretation and conclusions. The researcher therefore applied the research design presented in this chapter in terms of establishing relationships with the study participants and collecting and analysing data.

This study specifically attempts to explain the interconnection between institutional management strategies and cross-border learning-outcomes which develops student cohesion at three Ethiopian universities, using a theoretical framework that draws from the theoretical perspectives of Sociology of Education, Education Management and relevant learning theories (see sections 4.3.1; 4.3.2; 4.3.2 and 4.4). The Ethiopian higher institution context was found relevant for the research strategy because it constitutes an environment of socio-cultural diversity among students from ethnic, linguistic and religious

societies reflecting the within-country socio-cultural diversity research paradigm (see section 1.3).

5.2.1 The case study strategy

The case study strategy is a research approach that deals with an in-depth investigation of a particular case or cases. The case study strategy can be used to investigate an individual, as well as groups of people, communities, institutions and programmes (Creswell 2012: 465; Yin 2003: 12; Dornyi 2007: 138; Gall et al. 2003: 436). The present study focuses on institutionalised diversity management related activities and experiences of groups of people within higher education institutions. Thus a multiple institutional case study approach is followed. Most of the universities are situated in ethnically and culturally different socio-cultural environments and admit students from ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse social groups across the country (Hailemariam 2007: 48). The case study strategy and qualitative methods are often combined to investigate complex socio-cultural issues pertaining to ethnicity, language and religion. They are also instrumental in finding answers to research questions that ask “why” and “how”, which could be answered by using non-numerical data through inferences, insights and understandings (Creswell 2012: 212; Corbin & Straus 2008: 13; Lodico et al. 2006: 142; Corbetta 2003: 220; Gall et al. 2003: 435; Yin 2003: 1). Thus, the case study approach and qualitative research methods were used to find answers to the major and sub-research questions of the present study (see section 1.4) pertaining to the overall question:

How can and should CBLEs be managed and advanced within the ambit of service and teaching and learning management strategies?

The question can be answered by means of a thorough analysis of qualitative data obtained from documents, expressed attitudes, interests, beliefs, opinions and preferences using qualitative data collection instruments (Gay et al. 2006: 159; Gorard & Taylor 2004: 41).

Aspects related to cross-border learning experiences and relevant education management practices pertaining to this study unfolded naturally without the intervention of the researcher and the study therefore necessitated that the case study approach be linked within qualitative methods. Moreover, this study which focuses on the relation between institutional management practices and students' CBLEs was considered from an interpretive perspective which is often linked with qualitative research, and placed within the case study strategy which necessitates a detailed understanding of the phenomenon relating to this study using qualitative non-numeric textual and visual empirical data collected from specific instances in the natural environment (Corbin & Strauss 2008:8; Gay et al. 2006: 399; Gall et al. 2003: 438).

As mentioned, a case study research strategy could be designed to investigate a single case or multiple cases which constitute a multiple case study. A single case study approach is often used when an episode of an individual entity is more helpful than momentary knowledge of a large number of participants whereas multiple cases are used when more than a single case is found appropriate to provide an in-depth understanding of the topic of research (Creswell 2012: 465; Dorynei 2007: 138; Gerring 2007: 12; Yin 2003: 19; Gall et al. 2003: 435). Yin (2003: 19) argues that using multiple cases, as opposed to a single case, adds to the objectivity of a study. Hence, the three universities, namely AAU, ASTU and DBU, were used to derive an insightful and enlightening explanation of the relation between the management process and students' CBLEs at institutional level. Thus, in this study the data which were collected from each case in its specific natural context were synthesised to explain the within-country diversity management in terms of cross-border learning (see section 1.3). The next section describes the design of the study within a qualitative research framework and emphasises data collection strategies, analytical approaches and ethical considerations which are applied in conducting this study.

5.2.2 The qualitative methods

Empirical data required for a case study could be gathered through conventional research approaches such as quantitative, qualitative or mixed research methods. Although quantitative methods are considered relatively suitable to collect unbiased data, they may not be convenient to gather data when it is difficult to determine the exact number of the population of a study and when the research necessitates information obtained from information-rich participants who provide non-numeric information to answer the research questions (Creswell 2012: 205; Corbin & Straus 2008: 13; Lodico et al. 2006: 142; Corbetta 2003: 220; Gall et al. 2003: 24-25). In terms of this study context, empirical data, collected through qualitative research instruments, were found more effective to draw inferences, insights and understandings that would provide answers to the questions since study participants could explain relevant issues from a variety of angles.

Specifically since the research questions of this study include enquiring how socio-cultural differences are viewed by students and how mutual inter-group cohesion is established in an ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse student population (see sections 3.5.1 and 4.3.1), qualitative methods of investigation were selected. The methods further helped to find evidence based explanations on how students' diversity is managed and the nature of interaction across identity boundaries in both informal social and academic environments. A thorough analysis of data in documents and expressed attitudes, interests, beliefs, opinions and preferences collected by means of qualitative methods were essential to answer the research questions. As mentioned, obtaining information within a particular context without rigid boundaries that dictate the answering of very specific questions, underpins the appropriateness of qualitative methods.

It is argued that the qualitative methods help researchers to gain an empathetic understanding of subjective human social phenomena within a social environment (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996: 280). In this regard, Kincheloe and McLaren (2000: 287) advise that "critical qualitative researchers" should make an immediate connection with the social, cultural and historical contexts to systematise procedures that

guide their understanding and interpretation. Moreover, as mentioned in section 5.2, qualitative methods could be adjusted to permit the collection of unforeseen relevant data during the research process. In this section, the researcher attempts to describe the rationale for employing flexible methods.

5.2.2.1 Research instruments and data collection strategies

There are a number of data collection instruments and strategies appropriate for qualitative research including “[the scrutiny of] documentation [and] archive records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts” (Yin 2008: 85). For this study, document analysis, individual and focus group interviews and observation (Creswell 2012: 212) were selected to collect data.

5.2.2.1.1 Research instruments

The document analysis, individual interviews focus group interviews and observation were selected as research tools on the basis of their instrumentality to gather pertinent qualitative data that would answer the research questions outlined in section 5.2.1. These instruments were used to collect complementary data that answered the research questions from different angles. The data were synthesised systematically in such a way that an in-depth interpretation could be achieved. Choosing these instruments also contributed in constituting a triangulation which verifies the validity of the research. A description of each instrument in terms of this study is provided below.

a. Document analysis

Written documents or visual materials which include memoranda, reports, correspondence letters, official publications and photographs can be collected for research purposes. Document analysis, in terms of this study, is the process of examining texts to effect meanings and an understanding of the institutional activities of

organisations (Patton 2002: 5). Gay et al. (2006: 422) point out that written documents can provide insights into how things have become the way they are in institutions.

Relevant documents such as policies, legislations, diversity related reports, news papers, and records, were collected and analysed in terms of themes which were presented in Chapter 2 which aimed at contextualising this study. As a result of the contextual literature review, aspects pertaining to observation and questions posed to the individual and focus group interviews were refined. The document review was also used to triangulate the findings of the empirical data analysed in Chapter 6. The literature study provided substantive evidence which validated the findings drawn from the empirical data collected from study participants. Thus, the substantive background drawn from the literature review was used to corroborate the findings of the empirical research of the study to arrive at a coherent understanding of the interconnection between diversity management and CBLEs at the study site universities.

b. Interviews

In qualitative research the interview is a major data collection instrument. It is a process during which a researcher interacts with participant/s and collects non-numeric data that would mainly provide answers to the “why” and “how” research questions of a study. This interaction process is often based on the view that knowledge can be constructed when respondents relate their stories while reflecting on the microcosm of their consciousnesses (Seidman 2006: 7- 8; Cohen et al. 2000: 273). It is accepted that interviews help researchers to understand the meaning respondents attach to their experiences. Thus, interviews are considered vital research instruments to gather qualitative data that might not be obtained through other means (Gay et al. 2006: 418). The participants of interviews can be selected as individuals or as groups depending on the amount of data required from their immediate experience concerning issues related to the research topic (Gall et al. 2003: 222; Dawson 2002: 48-49).

Interviews can be conducted using different modes of asking oral questions. These are often categorised in terms of structured, semi-structured and non-structured interviews, depending on the intensity of the data required (Creswell 2012: 218; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996: 232-235). Structured interviews imply the posing of questions formulated to collect specific information and do not make provision for emerging information, whereas semi-structured interviews, although designed to collect focused information, also accommodate the collection of unexpected and emerging information (Seidman 2006: 15). Non-structured interviews, however, imply guidelines rather than predetermined questions. Relevant questions therefore emerge from the interaction with participants. Questions that result from interaction with participants help the researcher to arrive at underlying views of participants which relate to the study (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996: 235). Semi-structured interviews were prepared and used to collect data from key informants at the study sites in face-to face interactions (see Appendix II-C).

In this study, interviews were conducted in two forms: individual interviews and focus group interviews.

1. Individual interviews

Individual interview is a data collection process in which a researcher asks questions and collects answers from an individual participant at the study site (Creswell 2012: 218). Individual interview participants are often selected using non-probability selection for their probable knowledge pertaining to their immediate experiences which relate to the topic under investigation (Gay et al. 2006: 113). In line with this assumption the individual interview method was selected to collect data from purposefully selected participants.

Since interview participants provide information in their own terms (Gall et al. 2003: 22), the data they provide may vary in terms of purposes and intensity. Thus, in most cases, interview data collected from individuals hardly allows for the development of generalisation in terms of the entire population (Cohen et al. 2000: 102; Dawson 2002:

47). Although interview data may less likely permit the development of generalisations, they can be used with other qualitative data collected by using research instruments such as document analysis, observation and focus group interviews to adequately explain a study phenomenon.

2. Focus group interviews

The focus group interview is also often referred to as focus group discussion (FGDs). Although the focus group interview and the focus group discussion are very often used interchangeably, as Krueger & Casey 2000 (in Gall et al. 2003: 238) explain, focus group interviews are often associated with collecting information from a maximum of seven to ten individuals under the guidance of an interviewer, while the focus group discussion is seen as a technique for gathering collective experience from a group of six to twelve people (Dornyei 2007: 131; Berg 2001: 111; Cohen et al. 2000: 288). Unlike focus group discussions in which the discussion forum is composed of strangers with a similar background, a focus group interview is conducted with individuals who are of common background in terms of the topic of research and often know each other (Creswell 2012: 218; Cohen et al. 2000: 288-289). The focus group interview is sometimes considered to be more successful than focus group discussions since it may elicit a great variety of views. A focus group discussion implies that data mainly emerges from the interaction amongst the participants whilst in the focus group interview the discussion often moves forwards and backwards between the interviewer and the participants. Unlike focus group discussion participants who may withhold information due to the presence of strangers in the discussion, the focus group interview participants may provide data that corroborate and/or reform the opinions of counterparts which could serve as a validating measure of data.

Focus group interviews are generally considered to be useful in obtaining information about psychological and socio-cultural aspects because participants are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and explicate their opinions and attitudes. When focus group interviews are conducted adequately, valuable data could emerge from verbally and non-

verbally expressed views of individuals, as well as the dynamism amongst participants during the interaction process (Berg 2001: 111; Cohen et al. 2000: 288).

In the context of this study, participants of each focus group interview had some similar experiences. Students shared same ethnic backgrounds, *Student Service* clerks dealt with students in terms of administrative matters at work at the same institution, and lecturers taught in similar environments. These groups were interviewed separately. Since the members of each group not only shared common grounds but were familiar with each other, participants were organised on a basis of homogeneity with the assumption that they would provide data that could corroborate and validate the views of their fellow participants concerning certain issues. To alleviate hesitation and withholding of sensitive information in the presence of other participants from the same background (Axinn & Pearce 2006: 29-30), consensus was reached with each group in terms of interview protocol concerning the utilisation of data. This was done prior to the commencement of the interviews.

For this study, three different semi-structured focus group interview schedules were prepared to collect data from participants selected from *Student Service* management units (officers, clerks, student union representatives and *Campus Police*), lecturers and students at each of the three universities (see Appendix II-B). In this study context, the focus group interview participants selected from the *Student Service* management units are referred to as *Student Service* focus group interviewees. The focus group interviews were based on questions relating to participants' observations, experiences and opinions of students' relationship across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences and the implementation of the multicultural provision stipulated in the *Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009* and other related provisions of service management units at their respective institutions. The questions for the lecturer participants, on the other hand, focused on their day-to-day observation of students' diversity practices across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences and its implications for teaching and learning processes. The topics for discussion for student participants related to students' backgrounds, their perception of diversity, their opinions on diversity management

implementation and their view of inter-group experiences across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences.

c. Observation

Observation is one of the widely used data collection strategies in qualitative research and is often utilised to complement interviews. It is a technique of recording real world experiences and impressions in the natural environment as a source of information for verifying certain aspects of research (Creswell 2012: 213; Marczyk et al. 2005: 119). It provides firsthand information about a physical environment, human organisations, social interactions and processes of programmes (Cohen et al. 2000: 305). In short, it helps a researcher to gain a deep insight into what actually happens in certain situations since it provides insightful explanations.

Observations could be conducted by means of the participant or non-participant observation technique, using video camera or field notes. Since becoming part of participants could detract from the validity of the data and because it would be difficult for the researcher to collect data while taking part as a participant, the researcher decided on non-participant observation. This also prevented the researcher from becoming emotionally involved and losing objectivity during observation (Gay et al. 2006: 414). Since non-participant observation does not require the researcher to take part in the lives of those in the particular setting of the study, it minimises drawbacks attributed to participant observation (cf. Creswell 2012: 214-215; Gay et al. 2006: 414). In this study the non-participant observation strategy was selected to gather data from participants using broad and semi-structured guidelines for observation without manipulating the natural environment of the study sites (Gay et al. 2006: 413). During the pilot study, it was found that the use of a video camera was stressful to the researcher and a source of anxiety for the participants. Camera recording was therefore excluded because it would affect the reliability of the observation data. The non-participant field-note observation method was employed instead (see Appendix II-D).

In line with the suggestion by Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996: 184), observations of students' social behaviour was made during periods of recreation at cafeterias, dining halls and venues for TV watching, and during group study or group assignment activities using time, place and convenience sampling techniques. The time and place sampling technique was used to record observable behaviour at selected places in terms of definite times and occasions. The convenience sampling method was used to observe participating students who happened to be at a particular site. This gave the researcher the chance to observe relevant people during times which were not specified as such for data collection (Gay et al. 2006: 112). In this study observations mainly focused on student participants since it was believed that their diversity practices would verify the data collected by means of individual and focus group interviews. Staff observation was limited to the researcher's informal observation notes on his experiences of teaching and learning activities and the practices he noted in *Student Service* units during his visits at study site universities.

5.2.2.1.2 Study sites and participants sampling strategies

Qualitative methods imply non-quantifiable data and rigorous collection processes which are time consuming. In order to make the investigation manageable, a non-representative sample of universities were selected through non-probability sampling. They represented themselves rather than the whole population (Creswell 2012: 205; Cohen et al. 2000: 102).

a. The study sites selection and sampling strategy

In the Ethiopian context, higher education institutions or universities are defined as "institutions that offer the three, four or more years of undergraduate programmes, as well as those offering postgraduate programmes (Master's and PhD)" (FMOE 2011: 59). Addis Ababa (AAU), Adama Science and Technology (ASTU) and Debreberhan (DBU) universities were purposefully selected as case study sites for the study from thirty-one public universities which were functional in the country at the time when the research

proposal was written. They are public universities which the *Ministry of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia* (FMOE) authorised to register regular undergraduate students from different regional states (FDRE 2003: 2243). The vast majority of these students reside in groups of six to eight in a dorm on campuses. It was believed that the data collected from management and teaching and learning processes established to serve these groups would elucidate the topic of the study.

Since the universities have come into existence during different historical and social contexts, it is believed that the contexts might have implications in terms of policy implementation and management practices. Thus, in the selection of the study sites, institutional backgrounds were taken into account with the assumption that differences in years of services might impact on the approaches of addressing student differences. Public universities in Ethiopia are generally classified into three generations, and this aspect was considered when selecting the study site universities. *Addis Ababa University* and *Haramaya University* are referred to as the first generation universities because they have served for 40-60 years. The *Mekele University*, *Jimma University*, *Bahir Dar University*, *Hawasa University*, *Dilla University*, *Gonder University* *Arbaminch University* and *Adama Science and Technology University* are considered as second generation universities, since they have served for not less than 15 years at the time of the commencement of this study (FMOE 2005: 12; FMOE 2002: 102). The third generation universities are *Wollo University*, *Debrebirhan University*, *Debremarkos University*, *Wallaga University*, *Mada Walabu University*, *Sodo University*, *Mizan-Tepi University*, *Jijiga University*, *Semera University*, *Dire Dawa University* and *Axum University* which were established during the third *Education Sector Development Programme* (ESDP III) in 2010/11 (FDRE 2005: 54).

The first and second generation universities are also often referred to as old universities, whereas the new universities are designated as new regional universities (FMOE 2010: 80). The old universities are thought to be relatively well-off in terms of resources and social facilities for treating student differences because most of them had evolved through time from colleges, whereas the new universities are assumed to be in their infancy in

terms of manpower and diversity. For instance, the old generation universities have a higher student intake capacity than the newly established universities.

For this study, one university from each generation, namely the AAU, ASTU and DBU, was selected by means of purposive sampling strategy for their historical- social differences and physical proximity to the researcher (Creswell 2012: 206; Gay et al. 2006: 113). The study was limited to three universities in order to make the investigation more focused and manageable. The three study sites are conveniently positioned to collect credible in-depth qualitative data pertaining to the research issues (Corbin & Straus 2008: 12). AAU, where the researcher is serving as a lecturer, is situated in the capital, Addis Ababa, where diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious communities are inhabited. This university is included in the study to examine institutional student diversity relations within a heterogeneous social context and to obtain a comparative perspective if compared with ASTU and DBU, which are situated in regional states which are delineated on the basis of ethno-linguistic homogeneity (see section 1.3).

ASTU and DBU were selected for their significance to assess the impact of a relatively homogeneous social environment on institutional diversity management practices and the concomitant CBLEs of students. ASTU is found in Oromia regional state in the city of Adama which is believed to be predominantly inhabited by the Oromo ethnic group which include diverse religious backgrounds and speak Afan Oromo which is the office language of the regional state. The DBU, on the other hand, is situated in the Amhara regional state in Debreberhan town where Amharic is predominantly spoken and used as the office language. The town is mainly inhabited by the Amhara ethnic group which is predominantly Orthodox Christian (FDRE-CSA 2010: 110-111). The universities were selected with the assumption that their external social environment might influence the insight into internal practices relating to management processes since the policy implementers, at a lower level, are mostly members of the local communities (see section b below). The contextual differences of the three universities were also used to assess whether there was a significant difference in addressing student differences between the old and the new universities which was confirmed during the study as discussed in section

(b 1) below. ASTU and DBU are approximately at similar distance (100-120 km) from the capital and were found to be more accessible for the researcher, who had to travel to these two study sites several times to obtain an in-depth understanding of the socio-cultural environments of the areas in which they are situated.

The study site universities differ in size which might also have implications for data collection processes. AAU comprises 13 campuses. Two of these campuses are located outside Addis Ababa. The university runs different undergraduate, graduate and PhD programmes. During data collection it was found that about 23,000 students were registered for undergraduate programme. The university provides boarding services for undergraduate students, mainly for those from outside the city. From the total of the undergraduate student population, about 4800 students resided in the dormitories of the main campus of the university during the time when the data were collected (personal communication with Assistant to the Dean for *Student Service*). ASTU has three campuses of which two are outside the city of Adama, in the towns of Assella and Bishoftu. The university runs different undergraduate, graduate and PhD programmes and has an undergraduate student population of approximately 12,000. At ASTU, all undergraduate students reside on the campuses (personal communication with a senior management official at the university). Unlike the two other universities, DBU is a single campus university. It has about 5000 students in its undergraduate programmes during the time of data collection. Similar to ASTU, it provides lodging services to all undergraduate students (personal communication with the Director of *Student Service* office). Student participants for the study were selected from the main campuses of the universities.

The data were collated to draw explanations for the complex and dynamic human relations in specific contexts of higher education (Cohen et al. 2000: 181). In the context of this study, the human relations and interactions refer to social interactions of diverse students in a multicultural higher education environment

b. Study participant selection and sampling strategies

The reader would have noticed that in this study the term 'participant' is preferred instead of 'informant' or 'subject' or 'interviewee'. This preference is founded on the fact that the concept "participant" implies involvement in the research process, through which he/she exposes their subjective opinions and objectively founded views during the qualitative research process.

Sampling strategy refers to the process of identifying study participants from the total population. Sampling techniques in qualitative research are used to select participants who are considered appropriate to inform the researcher to understand the topic of the study in depth (Gay et al. 2006: 113). The most common non-probability sampling techniques in qualitative research include convenience, quota, and purposive sampling strategies (Gay et al. 2006: 112-113; Cohen et al. 2000: 102). The convenience sampling technique is used to select a study unit from a conveniently situated study population at a given time and place, whereas quota sampling is employed to select a study sample that has characteristics similar to the study population (Berg 2001: 32; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996: 184-185). Purposive sampling was used to select a study sample from a given population based on the knowledge and/or experience of the researcher concerning the study group, while convenience sampling was employed to select lecturers who were available.

Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were selected for the selection of appropriate participants who are key informants with much experience that relate to the topic of investigation (Gay et al. 2006:112; Lodico et al. 2006: 266; Berg 2002: 32). In this regard Dornyei (2007: 113) holds the following view:

Qualitative inquiry is not concerned with how representative the respondent sample is or how the experience is distributed in the population. Instead, the main goal of sampling is to find individuals

who can provide rich and varied insights into the phenomena under investigation so as to maximize what we can learn.

Although Dornyei (2007: 13) is not much concerned about the representation of a population by a sample, it is nevertheless advised that researchers should exploit their experiences and knowledge to include participants who represent the characteristics of a study population (Berg 2002: 32). Since the researcher is a staff member of AAU, one of the study sites, he used his day-to-day campus diversity experiences and knowledge of the management structures and teaching and learning processes at the university to select relevant institutional units from which he selected study participants for individual and focus group interviews.

It is emphasised that diversity related management activities are usually undertaken by the *Student Service* officers and the academic staff (see section 3.5.1). In the study context, these units comprised offices of the *Dean of Students/Student Service* namely, the *Student Service* and its sub-sections/units, *Campus Police* and its sub-sections/units, *Student Union* offices, academic departments and students (beneficiaries). He also used his knowledge to identify individuals for informal discussion during the data collection processes to obtain supplementary data related to diversity issues at each study site university. The data of the study were collected from February 2012- June 2013 and were transcribed and translated into English if the participants provided information in local languages. It will be noted that participants who speak English and more than one local language are called polyglots.

Both purposive and convenience sampling strategies were used to select participants found relevant for individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations. Purposive sampling method was used to select individual and focus group interviewees from different units of the *Student Service* offices, *Campus Police* and *Student Union* offices. Convenience sampling was used in selecting lecturers who were available at scheduled times and venues. Both purposive and convenience sampling strategies were employed to select student participants from the level of second year and upwards who

volunteered to be grouped in a homogeneous ethnic focus group. Convenient sampling was also employed in the process since students who were available during the data collection periods were considered. For more detail concerning participants see Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Total study participants by university and in groups

University	Individual interview participants	Focus group interview participants		
		<i>Student Service</i> officers and clerks	lecturers	Students
AAU	2	11	6	31
ASTU	2	7	6	28
DBU	1	8	8	30
Total	5	26	20	89

1. Selection and sampling strategy of individual interview participants and individual interview procedure

The application of sampling strategies is discussed in detail in sections that follow. The discussion attempts to indicate the appropriateness of the selection of the participants in relation to the basic tenets of purposive and convenience sampling strategies in qualitative research.

For this study, three individual interviews were planned to be conducted with three key participants namely, the Deans of the study site universities. They were planned to be included in the study, since policy issues are usually adopted at a senior leadership level (Wrench 2007: 55). During data collection, it was found that the structure and names of the *Student Service* offices of the study site universities varied from university to university. At one of the study site universities services related to lodging, catering, recreation and sports were run by *Student Service Directorate* which is headed by a Director. At the second university all these services are supervised by an office called *Dean of Student Service* which is headed by a Dean. At the third university services

related to recreation and sports are managed by people under the supervision of the office of the *Dean of Students* which is headed by a Dean, while services related to lodging and catering are run by the *Student Service* office which is headed by a Director. Therefore, the selection of interview participants was readjusted to accommodate these differences and for ease of reference in this study, these offices are collectively referred to as the *Student Service* office and the participants who were selected from the offices are called *Student Service* individual interview participants.

In this study, five individual interviews were conducted with five key participants at the three universities (see Table 5.2 for demographic information of the individual interview participants). These were one Director of a *Student Service* office, one *Dean of Students*, one Assistant Dean to the *Student Service* office, and one officer of the *Public Relations* office of a university, and an officer of a *Student Affairs* office appointed by a Dean of *Student Service* who did not participate in the interview.

Table 5.2 Demographic data of individual interview participants

University	Number of participant	Job title of participants	Identity of participants			Qualification	Job experience on position
			Ethnicity	Language	Religion		
AAU	2	1 Dean of students 1 Assistant to <i>Student Service</i> office	not disclosed	1 polyglot 1 not disclosed	not disclosed	1 PhD 1 MA	Both 3-5 years
ASTU	2	1 PR officer, 1 <i>Student Affairs</i> officer	not disclosed	1 polyglot 1 not disclosed	not disclosed	1 MA 1 BA	Both more than 5 years
DBU	1	Director to <i>Student Service</i>	not disclosed	Polyglot	not disclosed	MA	3 years

In the context of this study, the Director and the Dean provided their expertise knowledge based on their authority on managing the implementation of multicultural higher education policy provisions at the universities. The *Public Relations* and the *Student Affairs* officers of one of the universities were identified based on their many year experiences in managing and handling on-campus inter-group hostilities, by the Dean of *Student Service* of the university who had to deal with pertinent institutional affairs during the data collection time. Specifically the *Student Affairs* officer was recommended for his long year service as an officer in the area (for detailed information about the individual interview participants see Table 5.2). The information collected from the *Student Affairs* officer and the *Public Relations* officer was complementary in that information obtained from the *Student Affairs* officer was related to strategies for delivering lodging, catering and welfare services while that of the *Public Relations* officer was related to managing on-campus inter-group relationships. At one university an Assistant Dean to *Student Service* was asked to participate in the interview by the Director of that Department who was a new appointee at the time of the data collection. The Assistant Dean was delegated for his expertise knowledge and his long serving years at the institution that concern matters pertaining to student diversity issues. In that particular case the Dean of Students provided information related to recreational and co-curricular services while the Assistant Dean to *Student Service office* provided information pertaining to the provision of lodging and catering services.

As indicated in Table 5.2, most of the individual interview participants served from three to more than five years in the positions which mean that they had rich experiences which would inform the study. Since they held at least one degree it was believed that they would be analytical and provide well informed views. Three of the interview participants reported that they were administrative staff, whereas the other two classified themselves as academic staff at their respective institutions (personal communication with each). Thus, it could be assumed that those who were involved in both academic and management functions would provide information that show synergy between service management and teaching and learning management procedures. Such linkage would relate management and teaching and learning processes which underlie CBLEs of

students in a multicultural environment. The individual interviews were arranged with each individual participant and were conducted at their respective offices.

The questions for the five individual interviewees included an inquiry into participants' bio-data and twelve open ended questions. These questions focused on issues pertaining to the implementation of the *Multicultural Higher Education Policy* and student inter-group management practices and allowed participants to relate their experiences of addressing socio-cultural differences among students (see Appendix II-C). Each interview was conducted in two phases. The first phase focused on information concerning the significance and manifestations of diversity related issues and the second phase dealt with the implementation of the *Multicultural Higher Education Policy* and related regulations, as well as the educational interpretations that the participants attach to their practices and experiences in this regard. The interviews were tape recorded with prior consent of the respective participants. In addition to recording data on tape, notes concerning important issues emerging from the interviews that had implications for this study were taken during interviews. The data were coded thematically and were analysed together with the data collected during focus group interviews with *Student Service* officers and clerks and observation results. In the analysis, interview data were synthesised with the literature review (Chapter 2 and 3) and observation to effect triangulation.

2. Selection and sampling strategy of focus group interview participants and focus group interview procedures

Study participants are selected on the basis of the appropriateness and relevance of their knowledge, experiences and practices to obtain answers to research questions. Ituarte and Davies (2007: 80) advise that data on diversity issues at higher education could be collected from “cafeteria, classroom, sports teams, class projects, dormitory, recreational activity, spectator event, study area, or other” areas on the university campus. The focus group interview participants who manage activities similar to these services at the study site universities were purposefully selected from offices of the *Dean of Students* and sub-

sections/units (officers and clerks), the *Student Union offices* (representatives), and the *Campus Police* (police representatives), academic departments (lecturers) and students. The staff participants were selected purposefully for their relevance in terms of knowledge and accountability for managing diversity issues (see sections 3.5.1 and 3.6.3). The student participants were selected because they are affected by diversity environments. Since the participants included the implementers of the policy at grassroots level and students (the policy beneficiaries), they were taken as key informants to corroborate the information obtained from individual interview participants.

Three different types of focus group interview participants were identified at each university. The first included focus group interviews with selected *Student Service* officers and clerks, *Student Union* representatives and *Campus Police* members (see Table 5.3). The second was focus group interviews with lecturer participants (one focus group interview at each university) (see Table 5.4), and the third was twelve focus group interviews with student participants (four focus group interviews at each university) (see Table 5.5). The detailed procedure for grouping each team is presented in the next sections.

- Focus group interview participants from *Student Services*, *Student Union* and *Campus Police* and focus group interview procedure

A focus group interview is a process of collecting information from a maximum of seven to ten individuals (see section 5.2.2.1.1). Accordingly, it was planned to include a minimum of seven and a maximum of ten participants in each focus group interview. The selection strategy was planned to include participants from sub-sections of *Student Service* (two proctors from *Housing Service*, two dining hall coordinators from *Catering Service* and two officers from the office of *Student Affairs*), two representatives of the *Student Union*, and two *Campus Police* members at each university. However, the number of participants varied from university to university (see Table 5.3). Some officers were either small in number and did not have sufficient staff to provide the required number of participants. Because most of the members had to be on duty, representatives

were delegated to participate in the focus group interviews. However, at each focus group interview at least one participant from each office (*Housing Service* section, *Catering Service* section, *Recreation and Sports* section and *Student Affairs* section, *Student Union* and *Campus Police*) participated.

Table 5.3 Demographic data of Student Service focus group interview participants

Name of University	Job title of participants	Identity of participants			Qualification	Job experience on position
		Ethnicity	Language	Religion		
AAU	1 catering co-ordinator 2 catering clerks 2 proctors 2 campus policemen 2 student union representatives, and 1 service coordinator.	Not disclosed	1 Polyglot 9 not disclosed	Not disclosed	4 held first degree 6 not disclosed	4 participants 3-5 years 2 participants 6-10 years 4 participants more than 10 years
ASTU	1 catering service coordinator 1 dining hall clerk 1 housing head 1 proctor 2 campus policemen 1 student union representative	Not disclosed	1 polyglot 6 not disclosed.	not disclosed	1 MA 1 BA 5 not disclosed	2 participants not disclosed 3 participants 3-5 years 1 participant 5-10 years 1 participant more than 10 years
DBU	2 catering clerks 2 proctors 2 campus policemen 2 student union representatives	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	Orthodox Christians	1 MA 7 not disclosed	All participants 3-5 years

The participants from the university *Student Unions* were students and could have been included in student groups, but they were assigned to the student service officer and clerk group participants because their activities were linked with the services provided by the *Student Service* offices at each university. Although the activities of the unions were undertaken by voluntarily elected student representatives, in accordance with the *Higher Education Proclamation (650/2009)*, Article 37 sub-article 1 (L), the unions are entitled to participate in the governance of the institution (FDRE 2009: 5002). The managerial roles of the unions are twofold. Firstly, all student clubs which are classified as co-curricular activities by the universities are governed and supervised by the student unions of the universities (AAU 2007: 19). Secondly, as per the legislations of each university, the *Student Union* representatives are mandated to take part in most of the academic and service management activities that relate to the student population at different levels of the management structures of the universities (see AAU 2013: 191; ASTU 2012: 262; DBU 2011: 140). Therefore, the unions were considered part and parcel of service management which could provide data regarding the linkage between service management practices and teaching learning processes that inform the relationship between management processes and CBLEs. Since they play service management and student roles, their views were used to corroborate the views of other *Student Service* focus group participants.

Although most of the participants grouped under the *Student Service* focus group interviews did not disclose their ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds formally, these were inferred from indicators such as names, religious oriented clothing and religious necklaces worn during data collection and from the use of the word “they” when referring to members of other languages and faiths. Most of them were affiliated with the Christian faith. In terms of language, very few of them were polyglots, while the majority of them were monolingual speakers of Amharic. However, a very few also spoke English. In terms of ethnic backgrounds, although most of them did not disclose their ethnic identity, since most of them are monolingual speakers of Amharic, it would seem that they are from the Amhara cultural background.

Three focus group interviews, one at each study site, were conducted and fourteen *Student Service* officers and clerks, six campus police members and six student unions representatives participated. In the discussion the participants related their experiences of managing student diversity in terms of service provision practices in their respective sections.

- Lecturer focus group interview participants and focus group interview procedure

This study context seems to be somewhat unique in terms of diversity that relates to teaching. In other countries large numbers of international students are taught either by native professors, or large numbers of foreign academics (see section 2.1). In the context of this study, native lecturers teach diverse native students. Although the figures vary from year to year, an average 95% (for the year 2012) of the academic staff of Addis Ababa, Adama Science and Technology and Debreberhan universities were natives recruited from diverse ethnic, and religious groups of the country (see ASTU 2013: n. p; AAU 2012: 10; DBU 2013: online). Since most academics are recruited from native societies in the country, they not only share citizenship with the student population but also its social diversities which are reflected in a multicultural teaching learning environment. Since the recruitment of academic staff is mainly competitive and merit-based, the representative mix of faculty across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries were not taken into account in the study. Although there were expatriate lecturers at the universities during the data collection, only native lecturers were included in the study based on the assumption that they are more familiar with diversity in Ethiopia and would relate first-hand information on diversity issues which they encounter in terms of teaching and learning processes.

In the proposal of the study, it was envisaged to conduct one focus group interview with purposefully selected lecturers at each university taking into account the departments from which student participants had been selected in order to compare the data of the two groups. However, during the pilot study this was found to be challenging since most of the lecturers were preoccupied with teaching, advising and other academic and non-

academic duties. It was therefore difficult to select them for a focus group interview according to departments. As a result, the lecturers who volunteered to take part in the study were selected and the interviews were scheduled at a selected time which was convenient for them. The lecturer focus group interviews for the pilot study were scheduled and conducted between 3:00 PM and 5:30 PM which is between the end of the regular day classes and the commencement of the evening classes. The same convenience sampling strategy and time were applied for conducting the focus group interviews at the selected universities.

The lecturer participants varied both in terms of education level and field of study. They taught in the fields of Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Civics, Curriculum, English, Geography, History, Journalism, Law, and Philosophy. The lecturers who specialised in Geography, Philosophy, Curriculum, History, and Civics reported that they also taught the course *Civics and Ethical Education* which is offered as a compulsory course at the universities, and those who taught English stated that they also taught the *Communicative English Skills* and *Basic Writing Skills* courses which are given across the universities. However, it was found that except for lecturers who specialise in Biology, Chemistry and Law, other lecturers were engaged in either teaching the *Communicative English Skills* or *Civics and Ethical Education* courses which the *Federal Ministry of Education* introduced into the higher education curricula as cross-cutting edge courses to promote the *Multicultural higher Education Policy* (FMOE 2005: 25). Except for three lecturers who reported that they were Muslims, lecturer participants did not disclose their religious affiliations. As mentioned, names, religious oriented clothing and necklaces, and reference to other religions revealed their religious affiliations.

The focus group interviews were conducted at each university. Questions were posed in such a way that lecturer participants could relate their lived teaching experiences in relation to the management of group learning activities and students' approaches to group learning across ethnic, linguistic and religious variables during classroom and outside-classroom learning activities.

Table 5.4: Demographic data of lecturer focus group interview participants

University	No, participants	Title of participants	Identity of participants			Qualification	Job experience in teaching at HE
			Ethnicity	Language	Religion		
AAU	6	1 assistant professor 5 lecturers	Not disclosed	All polyglot	Not disclosed	1 PhD 5 MA	5 participants more than 10 years 1 participant 5-10 years
ASTU	6	All lecturers	Not disclosed	4 polyglot 2 not disclosed	Not disclosed	5 MA	3 more than 10 years 1 participant 5-10 years 2 participants 1-5 years
DBU	8	All lecturers	Not disclosed	3 Polyglot 5 not disclosed	Not disclosed	8 MA	1 more than 10 years 2 participants 5-10 years 5 participants 1-5 years

- Student focus group interview participants and focus group interview procedure

Student volunteers were closely involved with the campus diversity environment by sharing lodging with students from other cultural background and had been subject to the implementation of the multicultural provision of the Ethiopian *Higher Education Proclamation* 650/2009. It was believed that firsthand knowledge concerning matters relating to diversity would provide valuable information concerning a diverse campus life and CBLEs.

Only students from the second year upwards were considered, since they would have had more experiences relating to this study. Female students were excluded from the student study sample to avoid extraneous gender related variables (Wright & Lander 2003: 241) which are not within the scope of this study.

As indicated in section 5.2.2.1, male students were selected through convenience as well as purposeful sampling strategies and were grouped on the basis of ethno-linguistic homogeneity. The convenience sampling strategy was employed because the pilot study showed that it was very difficult to obtain an appropriate number of students for each homogeneous focus group interview from a specific department. Thus, each group was organised on the basis of availability. The method of selecting students is related to the demographic and socio-historical background of the students (see section 1.3). As mentioned, the Oromo, Amhara and Tigray ethnic groups represent the most populous ethnic groups in Ethiopia in that order (FDRE-CSA 2010: 73; Abera 2009:53; Afework 2009: 47; Haileyesus 2009: 61; Trnovoll 2000: 6). At societal level, historical sources confirm that these groups have been involved in implicit and explicit hostilities based on ethnic and linguistic grounds at different times (Krylow 1994: 231). Moreover, each group inhabits a geographically separate regional state and has been provisioned with nominal self-administration since 1993 (see section 1.3). It was assumed that the students from these diverse socio-historical backgrounds who live collectively would provide data that would elucidate the phenomenon of CBLEs. It was believed that the data from the groups would explain how diversity was managed and relationships established in terms of

intercultural development of students in a multicultural higher education environment. This assumption underpins the relationship between diversity management and students' CBLEs.

Apart from the Oromo, Amhara and Tigray ethnic groups, the other ethnic groups are considered to be non-dominant and are referred to as non-dominant groups in this study. The concept 'non-dominant' is borrowed from Human (2005: 3) who uses it to refer to ethnic groups other than dominant groups. In this study context, the concept is used to designate students from ethnic groups other than the Oromo, Amhara and Tigrean societies. Students from non-dominant groups were included in the study to gain an understanding of their on-campus diversity coping mechanisms, their perspectives on diversity and cross-border learning approaches within an environment in which multiple ethnic majorities prevails.

The study participants were selected from students who declared themselves as Amhara, Oromo, and Tigrean, as well as students from non-dominant ethnic groups. Ethnic identity was used to group students since it was considered the strongest variable in establishing homogenous student focus groups for the purpose of this study. Since this study focuses on inter-group relationships across identity boundaries, the self-declaration criterion was used to exclude students from mixed ethnic backgrounds to avoid the impact of bi-cultural perspectives which could have been developed in the home environment. The screening in this regard entailed obtaining explicit first-hand information from the participants before establishing focus groups. In addition to self-disclosed identity, students who spoke the language of the ethnic group they claimed they belonged to as mother tongue were included in the focus groups. This linguistic criterion was also used with the purpose to obtain information about the role of language difference in the establishment of social relations in cross-border learning contexts. As mentioned, the participants were selected from campus residing students, since these students would have adequate experiences of inter-group interaction and practices concerning crossing over one's own identity as well as those of others resulting from a collective campus life.

Each group was constructed in such a way that it included students from different religious backgrounds. At least two religious affiliations were included in each group. This criterion was added because religion was one of the study variables, as well as a factor that determines social relationships (see section 1.3). The religious variable was included to identify factors that might influence interreligious relationships among different religious affiliates on campus. An understanding of the interface of the three variables (ethnicity, language and religion) would provide an explanation of multifaceted diversity issues in the context of this study (see section 2.2.3.3.3).

Table 5.5: Relevant demographic data of student participants

University	Ethnic background				Religious background					Academic level (year)			
	Amhara	Oromo	Tigrean	Non-dominant groups	Orthodox Christian	Muslim	Protestant	Waqeffata	atheist	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
AAU	7	8	8	8	14	3	12	1	2		16	12	2
ASTU	6	8	7	7	19	2	5	1		2	17	7	2
DBU	7	8	7	8	18	4	8			11	14	6	
Total	20	24	22	23	51	9	25	2	2	13	47	25	4

NB: The number of students under each ethnic group also indicates the number of participants in terms of linguistic background.

Eighty nine students participated in the study and twelve focus group interviews were conducted (see Table 5.5). Nine students from focus group interviews participants also participated in three small group interviews (one at each university) organised for data verification and for further clarification of issues which were found to lack clarity during the data processing. The Amhara, Oromo, and Tigrean students were grouped according to ethnicity. The pilot study confirmed that they did not feel comfortable to express their views openly in the presence of student counterparts. It was considered that establishing focus group discussion participants according to the criterion of ethnic homogeneity would be more feasible in terms of obtaining reliable data than establishing mixed ethnic groups where participants might refrain from participation or withdraw should they feel suspicious of participants belonging to other ethnic groups (Dornyei, 2007: 131). The fourth student groups were students who came from non-dominant ethnic groups. They were either small in number at the university or dispersed among different campuses and were deficient to group into separate focus groups. The non-dominant focus group interviews involved students from Gamo, Gurage, Hadiya, Kambata, Sidama, Somali and Wolayta ethnic groups. Their place of origin determined their ethnicity. The student participants from non-dominant ethnic groups were accessed through the SNNP Cultural Clubs and the research assistant at each university.

Four student focus group interviews were conducted at each university, one for each for the *Oromo, Amhara and Tigray* ethnic groups, and one for the non-dominant ethnic groups. A number of 20, 24, 22, and 23 self-declared students from Amhara, Oromo, Tigrean and non-dominant students respectively participated in the focus group interviews (see Table 5.5). The number of student groups differed at times from those envisaged in proposal, since some students either declined to participate or found the times scheduled by the majority of the group members inconvenient.

The research assistants had anticipated that most of the non-native speakers of the Amharic language would experience difficulties in expressing themselves in the Amharic language and that they would need language assistants. Before the

interviews, students were given the liberty to choose the language to be used during the interviews. Except for the Oromo students who chose to speak Afan Oromo and English, and the Somali students who chose English, the other participants chose Amharic. Since the researcher speaks the mentioned languages, he could see to it that the guiding questions were available in the mentioned languages before the focus group interviews were conducted.

In terms of religious backgrounds, as shown in Table 5.5, most of the students were from different Christian affiliations (51 Orthodox Christians, and 25 Protestants including Adventists); about nine students were from Islamic background; two students followed the Oromo religion called *Waqeffata*; and two other students reported that they were atheists.

Except for students from non-dominant groups, and some students from an Oromo background who reported that they come from relatively heterogeneous ethnic communities, the remaining students stated that they were from relatively homogeneous societies. All the student participants lived at the respective universities for two to four years. In terms of students' fields of study, students studying Accounting, Agriculture, Anthropology, Civics and Ethical Studies, Economics, Engineering, English, Folklore, French, Geography, History, Information Systems, International Trading, Journalism and Communications, Law, Philosophy, Public Administration, Political Science and International Relations, and Theatrical Arts were included.

c. Observation participants

Observations were mainly conducted with student participants because it was assumed that their diversity practices would verify the data collected by means of individual and focus group interviews. The staff observation was limited to researcher's informal observation notes which he experienced during his teaching and learning activities and the practices he noted at *Student Service* units during his

visits to the study site universities. The opinions of the staff participants were mainly checked against institutional rules, guidelines presented in Chapter 2 and global practices described in Chapter 3. For the student observation, qualitative protocols which comprised three major themes (campus diversity atmosphere, identity manifestations and student outside class group learning practices) with sub-components under each were prepared to guide field-notes taking (see Appendix II-D). The observation guide questions were framed both from the researcher's personal experience related to classroom and outside-classroom teaching and learning practices at higher education environment and the review of the context of this research presented in Chapter 2.

Since it was confirmed during the pilot study that observation of all students would be impossible, the observation technique was modified to focus on students from the focus group participants who happened to be present for observation which was to be conducted informally with regard to student behaviour in terms of campus diversity atmosphere, identity assertion strategies and outside class group learning practices. The process was to some extent overt to the study participants as they were aware that the researcher was conducting the study, whereas it was covert for those who happened to be with the study participants at the observation environments since they were not informed. At the end of each observation the students observed were briefed by means of summarised notes to confirm accuracy.

Observations at each university were conducted during times after the focus group interviews in order to get additional verification from actual life practices of the students from which data were collected through the focus group interviews. Each observation was done informally and data were noted while the observations were done. The notes taken at each university were supplemented by information gathered through informal discussions with individuals who happened to discuss diversity issues outside the observation times. The notes were organised into themes of campus diversity atmosphere, identity assertion, and collaborative outside class

learning practices. The observation results were corroborated with the document reviews and interview results to effect triangulation.

5.2.2.2 Study procedure

Conceptually, a study procedure refers to the steps a researcher plans to follow from the design stage for gathering empirical evidence up to and including the stages of interpreting and generating knowledge. The general procedure of this study is outlined as follows: After identifying the research problem in Chapter 1, the researcher reviewed contextual and global literature (see Chapters 2 and 3) to gain an in-depth understanding of the topic of the study and to obtain insight into the research design of the study. Based on the literature review which focused on an assessment of addressing student differences in Ethiopia and other countries to verify the relationship between diversity management and the phenomenon of cross-border learning, he developed a conceptual and theoretical framework (see Chapter 4) which guided the study project. The literature review and the theoretical lens complementarily contributed to the study in terms of identifying data collection strategies such as the selection of study sites and participants (see sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.2.1.2), developing research instruments, data analysis and interpretation (see section 4.4).

The data collection strategies (selection of study sites and participants, as well as soliciting and organising participants for individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations) and research instruments (individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations) were first piloted at ASTU, one of the study sites. ASTU was selected for the pilot study for two reasons. Its features constituted a middle ground between the other two study site universities. It is neither multi-campus as AAU, nor is it a one campus university as DBU. In addition, it had evolved from a college level and has served as a university for not less than 15 years and was neither as old as AAU which has served for more than 60 years, nor as new as DBU, which had served only for about five years when the study project was designed.

Nonetheless, similar to the two universities, it admits diverse students from across the regional states of the country assigned by FMOE (Saint 2004: 92).

The application of the study procedure and data collection instruments was refined during the piloting process. It entailed the employment of study assistants at each university and the replacement of second level focus group interviews with small group interviews for data verification. Since the study sites are situated at different places, data were collected from AAU, ASTU and DBU based on the situational convenience for the researcher (Gall et al. 2003: 446).

During the focus group interviews the researcher and his assistants took notes on important issues which were summarised and compiled by the researcher to extend audio-taped data. Data collected through interviews and focus group interviews were transcribed and the transcriptions were edited by research assistants who listened to and cross-checked the originality of the documents against the tapes. Verbal information collected through the local languages was translated into English and the English version was used for analysis for the convenience of international readers. The transcription, translation and editing activities were supervised by the researcher. The data were coded under each study site and several thematic areas emerged during the coding process. The data with similar codes were collated and reorganised into major themes (Gall et al. 2003: 467) which became main headings (with some modifications) for the respective sections of Chapter 6. The major themes included:

- CBLEs embedded within service management strategies
- elements of CBLEs practised in student generated diversity coping strategies;
- elements of CBLEs embedded within teaching and learning management processes; and
- implementation challenges for the development of CBLEs;

Each major theme was sub-divided into sub-headings on the basis of the sub-themes incorporated in it and in terms of its relevance to answer the major guiding research questions relating to the overall question and the sub research questions (see section 1.4).

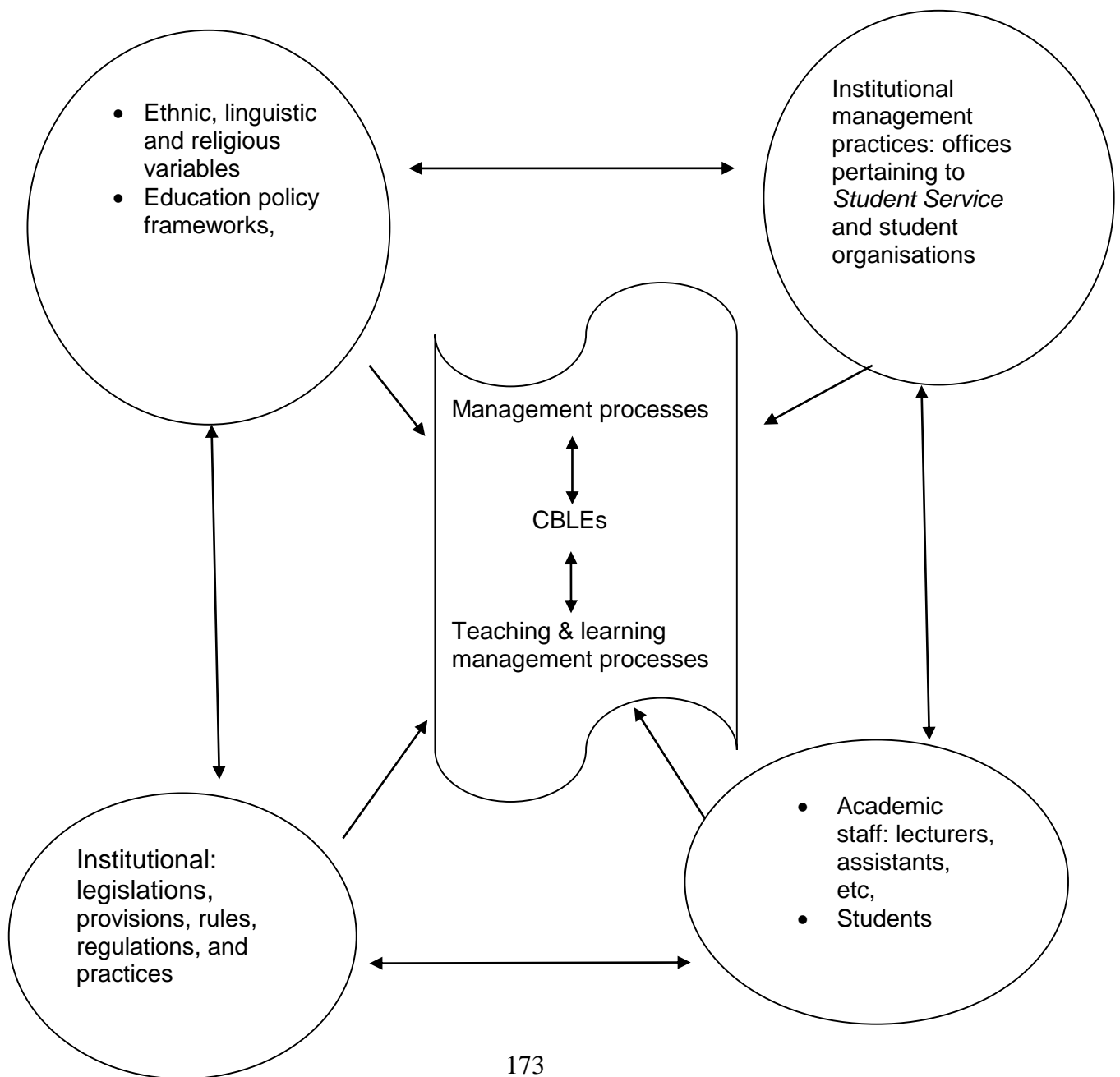
5.2.2.3 Method of data analysis

Data analysis is a systematic presentation of collected information in an accurate and meaningful manner for evaluation and interpretation purposes. It is a process characterised by classifying, examining, and giving meaning to data (Corbin & Straus 2008: 64; Gall et al. 2003: 465; Yin 2003: 109). Corbin and Straus (2008: 64) emphasise that the data analysis process ranges from a descriptive presentation to a theoretical interpretation. Particularly in qualitative studies, in which data often reflect subjective opinions that result in varied interpretations, evidence has to be organised in a clear, logical and meaningful way.

As mentioned earlier, the data collected through individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations were collated for analysis and interpretation. Other relevant data found from other sources were incorporated into the main data base. For each university, all the data pertaining to each instrument were categorised, coded and thematically arranged for a clear understanding of the phenomenon. Coding in this study is used to refer to the process of identifying conceptual constructs or thematic labels according to which data can be arranged (Gall et al. 2003: 454-455). Corbin and Straus (2008: 52) advise that taking “time to consider all possible meanings helps researchers to become more aware of their own assumptions and the interpretations they are placing on data”. This includes the process of generating theoretical concepts relevant to the research topic. Accordingly, after having coded the data, the results from the three study sites were synthesised to elucidate the connections between diversity management and CBLEs of students. In this context synthesis refers to the process of integrating the data obtained from the three institutions by means of analysis and interpretation in order to arrive at common

patterns, structures, as well as differences between the three universities. The analytical model below (*Figure 5.1*), which guided data collection processes and the analysis of salient data to draw conclusions, was informed by the conceptual and theoretical bases discussed in section 4.3.1 and the conceptual model that was developed (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 5.1 An analytical model for analysing the relationship between diversity management and students' CBLEs.



The model above was used in the analysis process to establish analytical links between the key components of the study. The arrows indicate the direction of influence that the variables have on one another. The bi-dimensional arrows show that the variables might have a reciprocal impact on each other, whereas the single arrows indicate that the influence is unidirectional.

The policies, provisions, rules and regulations, strategies and techniques which were established at national and institutional levels to address ethnic, linguistic and religious matters (see sections 2.2.3.2 and 2.2.3.3) were related to institutional rules and regulations relating to ethnic, linguistic and religious variables. Data related to policy implementation and management practices that embed CBLEs were collected through individual interviews, focus group interviews that concern *Student Service* personnel (the Dean of students, Director to *Student Service* office, *Student Service* officers and clerks), lecturers and students and were analysed in terms of identified themes (see section 6.2). The analysis and interpretation of the data were synthesised to explain the relationship between management processes and students' CBLEs (see section 4.4). A design model for incorporating transformative diversity management and cross-border learning values into the educational system was developed (see Figure 7.2).

5.2.3 Trustworthiness

Different terminologies such as “comparability and transferability”, “dependability and credibility”, “credibility and truthfulness” and “trustworthiness” have been used in the field of qualitative research with the intention to replace the traditional concepts “validity” and “reliability” which are often associated with the quantitative research (Ary et al. 2006: 498-504; Vidovich 2003: 70-96). Comparability and transferability are often used to measure the degree to which the findings of a qualitative study can be applied or generalised to other contexts or to other groups, whereas credibility and dependability are concerned with the sincerity of the findings of the investigation and

refer to the consistency to which variation can be tracked or explained (Ary et al. 2006: 502).

In qualitative research “credibility” and “truthfulness” have often been used instead of “validity” and “reliability” respectively. Credibility refers to scientific inquiry which is based on the consistency of the study processes (James et al. 2008: 93) and the extent to which “data is plausible, credible and trustworthy” [which implies that the research can be defended when challenged] (Basher, Afzal & Azeem 2008: 35), whereas reliability is often attested by means of measuring logical correctness of data collection, data analysis and conclusions (Merriam 2002: 27). According to Loh (2013: online) the term “trustworthiness” serves as an overall term which includes “validity” and “reliability”. In accordance with this view, trustworthiness in terms of the present study meant that strategies were employed to justify the truthfulness or the acceptability of the study’s scientific basis.

As mentioned, attempts were made to advance the trustworthiness of the study by piloting the study (see section 5.2.5), following applicable methodological procedures (see section 5.2.2.2) and addressing ethical issues (see section 5.2.4). In addition, data were obtained from different participants at the three study sites by means of document analysis, individual interviews, focus group interviews and observation to make provision for triangulation. Data obtained from the three study sites was also compared to guard against bias (Gay et al. 2006: 423-424). The empirical findings were juxtaposed with the literature study and conceptual and theoretical frameworks (see Chapters 3 and 4) in order to advance the scientific basis of the research.

5.2.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues involving researchers and participants have become a major concern. In order to obtain access to study sites and participants, a researcher should receive the consent of both the study participants and the authorities in the relevant area. Moreover, the researcher should set in place a mutual code of conduct in the design

of the study (Creswell 2012: 474). These would help the researcher to secure mutual trust between him/her and the study participants. Gay et al. (2006: 73) underline that “research studies are built on trust between the researcher and the participants, and [that] researchers have a responsibility to behave in a trustworthy manner ...”

Due attention was given to secure trust with participants through various means. The researcher presented an application letter (to which a copy of the *Ethics Clearance Certificate* obtained from UNISA was attached) to the *Department of Foreign Languages and Literature* (DFLL) of AAU where he is employed, to obtain a letter of consent to conduct the envisaged research at the study site institutions. In addition, the researcher presented an application, to which copies of the letter of consent from the DFLL, the *Ethics Clearance Certificate* from UNISA, interview schedules, observation protocol and the statement of the code of conduct with regard to confidentiality were attached, to the Deans of *Students and Directors of Student Service* at the study sites. The Deans of *Students and Directors of Student Service* of the study site universities were also informed about the aim of the study and the contribution the research would make to their institutions in terms of understanding and developing co-existence strategies for a socio-culturally diverse student population.

After the researcher secured a letter of consent to conduct the study at each site, the researcher consulted with individual participants in person who were selected for the study in order to obtain their consent by the help of research assistants at each study site university. As the study dealt with sensitive ethnic, language, and religious issues, participants were assured of their indefinite privacy and anonymity. They were also informed that their names would not be used in the study to guarantee their anonymity. Furthermore, they were informed before the commencement of the individual and focus group interviews that they were to be recorded and that interviews would be transcribed to prevent the loss of valuable information. It was confirmed that the information they provided would be used only for research

purposes. They were informed of the protocol that guaranteed full freedom to refrain from participation at any stage of the data collection processes.

To gain access to documentary sources and permission for the observation data collection processes, the researcher used the letters of consent from the *Dean Student/Student Service* offices of the universities to establish contact with the data keepers and relevant officials at each institution. Documents pertaining to consent for this study are presented in Appendix I.

5.2.5 The pilot study of the project

In accordance with the methodological decisions, the research procedure and the data collection instruments were piloted at ASTU to examine their applicability. Individual interviews and focus group interviews were conducted. The researcher used his spare time during the period to arrange interviews. In order to minimise the observer effect on the observed, observations were concealed from the participants and were only carried out after the focus group interviews had been conducted and the researcher had become acquainted and familiarised himself with the participants (Gall et al. 2003: 264). Participants agreed to this arrangement. Summaries of the observations were shown to the participants to confirm their accuracy. The confidentiality of the data was guaranteed.

In the research proposal, it was planned to communicate to the participants with the help of the *Office of the Dean of Students* and *Student Union* of the selected universities. During the pilot study the individual interview participants were identified and accessed with the help of the *Office of the Dean of Students* of ASTU. Accordingly, the interviews were conducted with the *Public Relations* officer and the *Student Affairs* officer. However, it was challenging to organise *Student Service* participants and the students and lecturers for the focus group interviews. Thus, the researcher was assisted by one of the *Student Service* office focus group participants to access and organise *Student Service* and student focus groups, and a lecturer

acquaintance to access and organise the lecturer focus group. The researcher decided to employ assistants for administrative arrangements of the empirical research.

Another challenge during the pilot study was related to the second level student focus group interviews. While the first level focus group interviews were arranged with participants from the same ethnic background for the Amhara, Oromo, Tigray student groups and a heterogeneous non-dominant group, the second level focus group interviews were arranged by selecting individuals from all first level student focus group interview participants to form a new heterogeneous group. Whilst the first level interviews were conducted successfully, the latter was not very successful. For instance, when an issue pertaining to differing opinions arising from the first level interviews was tabled for discussion, such as the reasons for students from different ethnic groups being suspicious of an out-group or the equal and unequal treatment of students by lecturers in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious differences, most of the participants kept silent. At times they nodded indifferently.

The researcher consulted with the *Public Relations* officer to obtain information on the reasons for student participants being indifferent during heterogeneous focus group interviews. The officer pointed out that grouping students from different ethnic backgrounds together for discussions on sensitive issues such as ethnic and religious issues would be counterproductive and might instigate hostility. He advised discussions based on homogeneous ethnicity. Some students who were selected for the interview informally told the researcher that they did not feel at ease to openly express their opinions in the presence of participants from another ethnic background. Hence, the second level focus group interviews were dropped from the study procedure because organising participants according to homogenous ethnicity would be more feasible to obtain reliable data than grouping participants into heterogeneous groups since they would refrain or withdraw from participating when they become suspicious of participants from other ethnic backgrounds (cf. Dornyei 2007: 131). Hence, instead of the second level focus group interviews, informal focus group

interviews were conducted with three participants at each study site during the actual research which followed the pilot study to verify data and to clarify pertinent differing opinions.

A third challenge was related to the use of a camera. Firstly, using a video camera was challenging for the researcher. Secondly, the use of a video camera would keep participants from airing their opinions on sensitive issues relating to ethnic and religious matters. Thus, the use of a camera was dropped. In addition, the envisaged procedure to consult with and organise participant groups through the office of the *Dean of Students* was challenging because the staff were preoccupied with office duties. This procedure was thus dropped. Instead participants were consulted and organised with the help of the *Student Union* office of each university in collaboration with research assistants recruited from offices at the study sites. Yet another challenge was that it was difficult to conduct the observation per the initial plan because inter-group scenarios varied in nature and were found to be difficult to manage, and the process was reformed to use three scenarios in which any of the student participants were found to be engaged. Thus, observations were conducted according to separate schedules after the researcher had established good rapport and friendship with conveniently selected voluntary student participants (see Appendix II-D).

5.3 SUMMARY

The major objective of this chapter was to outline the design of the research based on methodological insights obtained from the contextual review, as well as the global literature review and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Chapter 5 discussed the rationale for the selection of a case study approach and qualitative methods. It highlighted the instrumentality of the selected data collection strategies in terms of selecting study sites, participants and data collection instruments. It described the analytical strategies used to collate, code and interpret the collected data.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 5 the research design of the study was framed based on the insights obtained from the contextual review, the global literature review and the conceptual and theoretical framework discussed in chapters 2, 3 and 4 respectively. As shown in Chapter 5, the design of the study was framed within a case study approach in terms of qualitative methods. Document analysis, individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations were conducted for collecting data for the study. The document analysis which was presented in Chapter 2 was geared towards demonstrating the significance of the multicultural context of this research. In this chapter a cross-references to previous chapters will be made to avoid unnecessary repetition and to bring about triangulation in order to ensure trustworthiness of the empirical data obtained through individual and focus group interviews, as well as observation.

Thus, this chapter presents an analysis of the empirical data collected from participants in accordance with the particular study procedure described in section 5.2.2.2. The analysis was organised to find answers to the overarching research problem and its sub-questions posed in section 1.4. The analysis attempts to answer the research questions by means of three major themes drawn from the data as shown in section 6.2.

6.2 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The empirical data from the three study sites were first coded separately for each institution. Then, the data with parallel themes were collated and integrated to expound the focal phenomenon of this study, namely the relationships between

diversity management and CBLEs of multicultural students in order to arrive at answers of the research questions outlined above. The data from the three sites allowed for integration seeing that they were similar tertiary education institutions in terms of policy implementation guidelines that inform their management practices and teaching and learning processes (see sections 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.2). However, the data that were found specific to each study site were organised separately and used to explain differences at institutional practices.

The integrated data made the identification of the following three major themes:

- CBLEs in terms of student service management strategies and practices;
- CBLEs embedded in student diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices
- CBLEs with regard to teaching and learning management processes.

These major themes ultimately became the major headings for the respective sections which related to information provided in the literature reviews and the conceptual and theoretical framework (Chapters 2, 3 and 4). These themes were used to establish an institutional model demonstrating the relationships between management processes and CBLEs aimed at developing a cohesive multicultural learning community within the sites (see section 7.5.6). Each major theme was divided into sub-themes to elucidate information pertaining to the sub-questions or major questions as follows:

- I. CBLEs and practices embedded in the service management areas
 - Diversity sensitive lodging service
 - Religious based catering service
 - Religious equity catering service management strategy
 - Inconsistencies in the religious diversity management practices
 - Multilingual service
 - Elements of CBLEs in co-curricular activities:

- Inclusive clubs and activities
 - Exclusive clubs and activities
- II. CBLEs embedded in student generated diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices
- Personal strategies for coping diversity challenges
 - Collective socio-cultural practices
- III. CBLEs embedded in teaching and learning management processes:
- Lecturers' perspectives:
 - Diversity sensitivity of lecturers
 - Types of group learning activities and related student grouping strategies for
 - ❖ In-classroom group learning activities;
 - ❖ Outside classroom learning activities; and
 - ❖ Major group formation strategies.
 - Students' perspectives:
 - Student perceptions of diversity sensitivity of lecturers
 - Types of group learning activities and student group formation preference for
 - ❖ In-classroom group learning activities
 - ❖ Outside classroom learning activities and
 - ❖ Major group formation preferences.

6.2.1 CBLEs embedded in the service management processes

The major diversity responsive student service management strategies were analysed under the sub-themes of lodging, catering and multilingual services and co-curricular activities. The discussions under each sub-section provide explanations that answer the first research question and its sub-questions and thus explicate the

attainment of the first major objective (sees section 1.4 and 1.5) of answering the following questions:

- I How do student service management units at the universities implement the multicultural provision of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) and *Higher Education Proclamation* (650/2009)?
 - How do the Multicultural Higher Education Policy and implementation strategies of the universities relate to management processes aimed addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences amongst students?
 - Which of the management strategies of the universities relate to components of cross-border learning experiences?

6.2.1.1 CBLEs in relation to lodging management processes

In section 2.2.3.3.1 it was shown that although the multicultural higher education policy provision was meant to be implemented primarily by the incorporation of *Civics and Ethical Education* and *Communicative English Skills* courses into the higher education curriculum, the *Student Service* individual interviewees as well as the *Student Service* focus group interview participants reported that their offices have supplemented the implementation of the policy since 2010 by setting in place diversity sensitive lodging provision that aims at addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity hostility which manifested in different forms discussed in section 2.2.3.3.3.

The *Student Service* participants emphasised that services in the form of lodging, catering, and co-curricular activities comprised strategies that address student diversity issues. They pointed out that the lodging service which has been practised since 2010 was a key diversity sensitive provision than the other welfare services in decreasing inter-group hostilities.

6.2.1.1.1 The views of individual interview participants on lodging services

Individual interview participants (Director of *Student Service*, the *Dean of Students*, the Assistant to the Dean of *Student Service*, the officer of *Public Relations* office and the officer of *Student Affairs*) outlined the diversity management assumptions and major functions underlying the lodging provision as follows:

- Diversity sensitivity is a management process by which the diversity needs of students such as ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender differences, and physical disability are addressed purposefully.
- One of the major functions of the lodging offices was to provide students with a housing service by assigning students to a dorm by name list or ID (identity card) number sequence to randomly group diverse students into a dorm.
- The provision dictated students of different social identities to live together in a dorm in order to foster the social skill of peaceful co-existence with differences. The participants conceptualised social identity as the knowledge of a person that he or she is a member of a group. The argument of the participants provided a verified answer to the first major question and the first sub-question stated above which inquired how the multicultural provisions were located within the management processes.

6.2.1.1.2 The views of *Student Service* clerks and officers

The *Student Service* focus group interview participants emphasised that student identity based conflict increased at the campuses since the implementation of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994). It confirmed information provided in section 2.2.3.3.3. They reported that assigning students to a dorm at random was started in the 2010 and 2011 academic years as a measure to curb the conflicts. One of the focus group interview participants from AAU verified how the scheme was introduced at his institution as follows:

In the past, dorm assignment was based on students' preferences. For example, those students who came from Amhara region wanted to have same dorm. From South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples [SNNP] it was the same; and from Oromia, it was the same. They love to be together according to their ethnic backgrounds. ... Since last year [2010] what we did was assigning them according to their name list or in alphabetic order to help them adapt to [the cultures of] different ethnic groups

The *Lodging Service* clerks, who took part in the focus group interviews, reported that the scheme was set in place in order to enable students to get opportunities to understand each other better across identity boundaries. They emphasised that since students were assigned to universities from different regional states at random by the *Federal Ministry of Education*, using the name list sequence for assigning students to dorms, makes the process diversity sensitive. They referred to the randomisation attributed to the name list as a diversity sensitive service management strategy. They argued that students who come together at random and start to live together in a dorm would get opportunities to come to know each other as well as to learn from each other. This would mean that the implementers used the diversity sensitive lodging service provision to facilitate inter-cultural understanding and to widen the perspectives of students (see section 1.2.2). Since ethnicity and language are often intertwined in expressing identity (see sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2), the issues related to either of the two were used to explain students' inter-group relationships in terms of both of these diversity variables in this section.

One of the *Student Service* clerks from ASTU elaborated as follows on the social learning opportunities available for students in terms of the diversity sensitive lodging service management strategy:

With regard to ethnicity, I think, [students] rather live happily when they are from different ethnic backgrounds, because when they get to dorm at night, students from Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, the South [SNNP], etc. ... all ... live together; they ask each other [about their] lives in different areas. They share experiences. Even though they may not do this deliberately, they learn what Ethiopia looks like.

The above opinion seems to endorse the importance of the educational assumption of establishing healthy relationships amongst dorm mates from different cultural orientations. This educational assumption underpins the view that constructive interaction among different students would strengthen relationships and would enable students to avoid stereotyping and being prejudiced, characteristics which they might have had before they came involved in interaction (see sections 3.6.2 and 4.3.3.1). The participant quoted above seems to endorse that student inter-group hostilities have decreased as a result of the operation of the diversity sensitive lodging strategy.

The participants claimed that, as a result of communal life which is supported by living together, students obtain more opportunities for subconsciously gaining a better understanding of each other. They added that students were assigned to dorms not only by following the alphabetic order on name lists but also by students' field of study. The participants argued that this would enable them to help each other with academic activities, not only by sharing learning resources, handouts, but also by sharing cultural views which relate to assignments which, in turn, would give expression to CBLEs. They emphasised that students who learn the same discipline and lodge together would partake in discourses and develop positive social relationships. These collective experiences, according to them, are signifying CBLEs as discussed in section 4.3.4.1.

6.2.1.1.3 Views and practices of student participants

The student participants were asked whether they shared the academic and social learning assumptions behind the lodging services arrangements envisaged by individual interview participants (see section 6.2.1.1.1) and the *Student Service* focus group interview participants (see section 6.2.1.1.2). The students explained the advantages in terms of learning about others and oneself, learning the languages of others, widening cultural perspectives and interreligious understanding (cf. section 4.3.4.2). The data analysis in this section relates to answering the second major question and its sub-questions:

- II How do students practise their multicultural life at the universities in terms of the higher education policy provisions set for addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences?
 - How do students cope with diversity challenges at the study site universities?
 - What socio-cultural practices do students use to establish social relationships?
 - What components of cross-border learning experiences can be drawn from the socio-cultural practices of the students?
- a. Understanding others and the self

Student participants explained how the diversity sensitive lodging service helped them to understand others and themselves better.

1. Understanding others

The majority of the student participants reported that they came from relatively homogeneous communities and that they had been antagonistic towards campus

diversity which they eventually overcame as a result of collective campus life. A Muslim student described how he felt about the diversity sensitive lodging service as follows:

When I came here first I thought it was difficult to live with people with different religions. There was a conservative Orthodox [Christian] in my dorm. He put a picture of Jesus Christ on the wall and prayed ... whenever he liked. We also pray at the solat [the name of a prayer in Islam] time. I felt afraid of him [at first] but through time we understood each other. He adapted to our prayer times. He awoke us up. He said, "What happened to you? Why don't you pray?" He respected our religion; we also respected his. Now there are [other] Christian students in my dorm too. Even if they want to take something from the locker, once we started prayer, they waited for us until we finish our prayer.

A Christian student participant also put forward a similar idea of reciprocal recognition that resulted from the collective lodging service:

There were no Muslim people in our area, and we had never come across Muslims. As we came to live with them, we were afraid of them very much. When we started to live with them peacefully I was very much happy. I came to learn that they follow their own religion normally just like other people; I felt comfortable.

The narrative of the two students quoted above strengthens the significance of the diversity sensitive lodging service (see sections 6.2.1.1.1 and 6.2.1.1.2). It seems that students were suspicious and stereotypical as regards students from dissimilar background at first. This explains their initial wariness of students who believed in

faiths other than their own. Although the Christian student did not explicitly state that he was anxious, it could be assumed since he was unfamiliar with Islamic customs. As a result of the application of the diversity sensitive lodging service students came to know how to live in peace and establish supportive relationships with people from different religious backgrounds. This confirms the view that CBLEs can result from social interaction across identity boundaries (see section 4.3.1). Nevertheless, a minority of participants contended that they were anxious about some dorm mates who they considered to be hardliners. They said there were students who look down on others religions and who display stereotypical behaviour by not affiliating with students of other religions. The observation at the study sites showed that students sharing the same religious conviction often grouped together in terms of recreation and teaching and learning matters. The difference in opinion with regard to CBLEs relating to lodging services might be attributed to differences in management approaches employed (see sections 2.2.3.3.1 and cf. 4.3.1).

2. Understanding the self

Most of the student participants claimed that the heterogeneity of life at the campuses, particularly in terms of lodging, helped them to understand themselves better than they had in their communities. A student from SNNP at ASTU explained this state of affair as follows.

When I was in my community, I knew only that I was a Guragae, but I did not know about it in detail. However, since I came to this campus, I came to know about my identity. You know, you become curious about your background. After that integrating and living with this diverse population by itself becomes one big benefit. You learn a lot from different cultures, for example, from Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, Wolayta, Sidama, Burji, Kafacho, etc.

The above data suggests that one's self identity becomes vivid and meaningful when it is juxtaposed against those of others. It emphasises the significance of otherness for self-understanding (see section 3.2.1). Thus, the process of the student coming to know himself in a multicultural social context signifies the importance of CBLEs in terms of inter-group understanding (see section 4.3.1). The narrative of the student underlies the socio-cultural view: "I am, because we are". However, a minority of student participants argued that self-understanding need not entail reciprocal inter-group understanding. They pointed out that there were students who understood themselves as being dominant and stereotyped others. The data verify the view that in a multicultural higher educational setting, self-understanding determines not only the type of behaviour a member of a group or a group as a whole exhibits about the self but also how an individual or a group perceives others (see sections 3.2 and 4.3.3.2).

b. The role of diversity sensitive lodging in relation to inter-language learning

Most of the students from non-Amharic speaking backgrounds emphasised that diversity sensitive lodging service afforded them the opportunity to learn other languages spoken by their dorm mates. For instance, a student whose home language is Sidama, pointed out that his proficiency in Amharic and Afan Oromo had improved and that he had also started interacting with his dorm mates by means of the Somali language as a result of collective dormitory life.

The student participants from the *Somali Regional State* stated that diversity sensitive lodging helped them to improve their proficiency in Amharic and some other languages. However, none of the Amhara students during the three focus group interviews reported any serious attempt at learning other languages. When the issue of learning the languages of others was discussed, most of them ascribed this occurrence to the fact that other language speakers used Amharic when interacting with them, resulting in them hardly ever trying to learn other languages. Consequently this indicates that the Amharic native speakers possibly did not obtain adequate input

and contributions relating to other cultures which would widen their perspectives (see section 3.2.2). Non-reciprocal efforts of students may in some instances perhaps be considered as a symptom of stereotyping by other language speakers and may result in little interaction with others.

- c. Diversity sensitive lodging in terms of widening cultural and other perspectives

The majority of student participants related diversity sensitive lodging arrangements with improved social life skills and widening of their cultural perspectives. A focus group participant at AAU accentuated the fact that since he lived with five students from other cultures in a dorm, he obtained from his dorm mates five different viewpoints that would illuminate social and academic issues:

Here we are six in a dorm. I could not manage that. six of us have different backgrounds and attitudes. When I raise an issue, all of them explain it in different ways. I used to understand things from my own perspective; I [used to] see it from my own angle. Now I see things from different angles; the collective life helps me to broaden my perspective. ... Sharing resources was another advantage. ... Now let alone six persons, I can live with 60 people. It has helped me to handle different people with different views, etc. When I leave the university, in the world of work, I can manage different people of varied perspectives and attitudes.

The narrative of the student exhibited some important learning outcomes with regard to learning opportunities attributed to the diversity sensitive lodging service management strategy which concur with the points of views of most of student participants:

- Students from diverse backgrounds obtain educational support from dorm mates by means of the sharing of learning resources.
- They acquire empathy through generosity and support they provide to and receive from others in a competitive academic environment.
- They establish supportive relationships and understand each other as a result of reduced stereotypical attitudes.
- They develop multiple perspectives and broadened thinking horizons.

Most participants emphasised the fact that these outcomes are based on reciprocal supportive relationships between out-groups. The above data supports the view that mutual inter-group interdependence develops when groups reciprocally value and respect the contribution of each other (see sections 3.6.1 and 4.3.3.1).

d. Diversity sensitive lodging service in relation to interreligious understanding

Students explained the educational value of diversity sensitive lodging in terms of coping with religious diversity. The majority of the student focus group participants reported that they came from homogeneous religious communities and that they were initially anxious about being confounded with other religious groups (see section 6.2.1.1.3). However, through collective dormitory life, they came to know that religious differences constitute normal social life in a multicultural country. In this regard, a fourth year student participant explained his experience as follows:

This year, for example, I am the only Muslim in our dorm. The rest seven are Orthodox Christians. There are lots of pressures. I may be unhappy with them; they may be dissatisfied with me but we tolerate each other. ... You learn how to be patient and tolerant to differences. Therefore, we are living together with tolerance solving our problems peacefully.

Some student participants pointed out that due to the collective campus life they came to know the underlying doctrines of others' religions and learnt to avoid stereotyping in terms of religion. Although the individual interview participants felt that a discussion related to religious matters could develop into interreligious hostility, as shown in section 6.2.1.2.2 below, student participants commented that reasonable debate is possible in contexts where contingent religious groups acknowledge religious differences to be of at equal standing. A Protestant student explains this point as follows:

The dorm life has helped me to tolerate the religions of others. I am Protestant. I can pray [in the dorm] the way I like. If the other is a Muslim, he can pray the way he likes. ... I learnt, let alone in one country, let alone in one region; it taught me that it is possible to have different religions and live together within a family. ... I would like to learn lots of things from [followers of other religions]. ... I have a friend called Sied [a Muslim student; a pseudonym is used here]. I learnt lots of things from him. If your mind is open to understand different things you can learn lots of things from others. We learn from each other. ... When I come across with a conservative [religious follower], we make debate. ... People join us. I talk about the Bible; he may talk about the Quran. We learn from each other about our religions.

Most of the student participants emphasised that valuing one religion and demeaning another would instigate religious hostility. In this regard some students mentioned that they had set their own dorm by-law which governs discussions on religious issues and religious practices and duties in their dorms. This argument supports the view that when students are able to cross their own as well as that of their counterparts' identity boundaries, they would develop more multiple perspectives than when they are confined within their own identity zones (cf. section 4.3.4.2).

6.2.1.2 *CBLEs in relation to religion based service management practices*

The *Student Service* offices participants reported that they provide students with different religious oriented services with the purpose of responding to religious diversity needs of students. The data collected in this regard were classified into the category of religion based catering service management strategy, practices pertaining to aspects not related to the catering service, and the perception of students concerning religion based provisions.

6.2.1.2.1 Religion based catering service management strategy

The concept catering service is used in the context of this study to refer to the process of providing a food service to boarding students at the three study site universities. In this section, the educational intent underlying the catering service management strategy as perceived by participants from the *Student Service* at the three universities are described to identify cross-border learning implications of the process.

It was shown in sections 1.3 and 2.2.3 that since the downfall of the Dergue regime in 1991, multiculturalism and equality of religions were proclaimed at national level. The participants from the *Student Service* claimed that students are provided with religion based catering services in accordance with religious diversity needs of students as practised in the society in accordance with what is envisaged by the *Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009* (see section 2.2.3.1). The *Student Affairs* officer of ASTU argued that the service constitutes a “religious equity catering service strategy” because he believed that members of different religious affiliations should be provided with an equal, yet distinct, catering service in congruence with their respective religious doctrines.

With regard to a catering service that subscribes to requirements of different religions, the *Student Service* offices participants indicated the principles that are applied as follows:

- The foods for Orthodox Christian and Muslim students are prepared separately;
- The daily schedules of the catering services are similar and uniform at the three study site universities;
- The content of the foods for different religious affiliates at the study sites is usually similar;
- Regardless of religious differences different religious affiliates are provided with fasting foods on Wednesdays and Fridays, which are the fasting days for the Orthodox Christians and non-fasting foods on other days.

A *Catering Service* clerk participant from AAU described the catering service as follows:

There is no difference between Christian and Muslim meal schedules. For example, if it is a fasting day [the fast day here refers to the Orthodox Christian fasting days], we do not prepare non-fasting foods for non-fasting students. We prepare the same type of foods for all. If the day is a fasting day, fasting foods are served for all. If the day is not a fasting day, non-fasting foods are served.

[Students] are served from different dishes. In our university case the Main Dining Hall is only for Orthodox Christians. In the Christmas Hall the food for Muslims and the food for [other Christian sects] are separately served. We don't know the reason behind [this] but the Orthodox [Christian} students are served in the Main Café. The Muslim and Protestant students are served in the Christmas Café. ... But there are no Muslim students in the Main Café.

The argument of the above participant suggests that the catering service schedule for all religious groups is made in accordance with the fasting practices of the Orthodox Christian students. Since students from other religious affiliations are served in accordance with the Orthodox Christian fasting practice, it could be argued that the equality of food provision may not verify the equality of religious practice as discussed in section 2.2.3.3.1 (cf. section 3.2).

Except for AAU where one meal-hall is specifically reserved for the Orthodox Christian students, it was reported that the Christian and Muslim student groups were served foods from separate kitchen compartments specifically built for each religious group at different corners of the same hall at the other study site universities. Participants added that students are advised to have their meals in areas reserved for each group. They, however, pointed out that some students often disregard the demarcation according to religion and tend to eat together. They stressed that they carefully wash and cleanse the used dishes separately so that those who do not like the “mix” would feel comfortable to use the dishes during future meals.

The more precise participants underlined that during the fasting seasons, like Easter and Id Al Fetir, students are free to attend either the fasting or the non-fasting meal services. They added that special meal times are arranged for the Orthodox Christian and Muslim fasting groups during the respective fasting seasons in accordance with the doctrine of the respective religions. They pointed out that during Christian (Christmas and Easter) and Islamic (Id Al Fetir and Id Al Adaha) holidays special foods are prepared separately for campus residing students for the celebration of these special occasions. The individual interview participants reported that, in the past, Orthodox Christian students used to make special preparations in terms of decorating the hall where they have meals for Christmas and Easter but this arrangement has been stopped because other affiliates were dissatisfied with the special treatment they received. The participants stressed that no religious group is allowed to make its own decorations and that these have to be made by the *Catering Service* units of the universities. They emphasised that equal service provision is

meant to establish social cohesion that reflect the national motto, namely “unity within diversity”.

The *Student Service* clerks and officers agreed that students differed with regard to religious commitment and classified students in terms of meal practices into four major categories:

- Students who are conservative and prefer to sit in isolation and never mix with other religious affiliates during meal times.
- Liberal students who often sit with other religious affiliates for meals and have established friendships across religious boundaries. The participants contend that although these students sit together at a table for a meal, they take care not to mix their foods.
- Students from different religious domains who disregard demarcations based on religion and share dishes with students from different religious domains. (These, according to most of the participants, are very rare and exceptional).
- Nonbeliever students (atheists) who often forsake religious demarcations and attempt to obtain service from the most convenient religious compartment.

Although some participants reported that religion based catering service management strategy is carried out in a similar fashion at each university, they seem to have divergent opinions in terms of the service. The participants from AAU and DBU felt that the religious based catering service:

- is divisive and discriminatory and encourages students to organise themselves on the basis of religion for other in-campus activities which further polarises student differences;
- is contrary to the secular education policy of the government and the multicultural objective envisaged by the universities because students develop ethnocentric attitudes; and
- is counterproductive to collaborative learning.

However, most of the *Catering Service* clerks considered the catering service as equitable and a manifestation of the equality of religions. They held the following views:

- Since the service is fair and equal to all, it cannot encourage ethnocentric attitudes; rather it fulfils students' religious requirements and encourages mutual respect.
- Since the catering service provides an equal delivery, meant to satisfy all students' religious requirements, the service cannot be a flashpoint.
- As religious issues are serious matters in Ethiopia, the catering service which follows socio-cultural norms practised in society is a significant management response to the diverse religious needs of students.

The above argument emphasises the view that equal treatment of different faiths could promote positive identity formation and becomes the basis for mutual trust among different religious groups (see sections 3.2.3 and 4.3.1).

6.2.1.2.2 Management of religious duties and practices not relating to catering service

As indicated in section 5.2.21.2, most of the *Student Service* participants were affiliated with the Christian faith. Except at DBU where the display of any religious content and the singing of religious songs were not allowed in offices (personal communication with the Director of *Student Service* office), Christian faith indicators such as verses from the Bible and pictures of saints were observed and sacred songs were heard in most of the *Student Service* offices at AAU and ASTU (researcher's observation). The officers in addition to providing the religious based catering service discussed in section 6.2.12.1, implemented different management strategies that relate to religious duties and practices of students (see section 2.2.3.3.1 a).

The Director of the *Student Service Directorate* at DBU explained the strategy applied in relation to clothing:

The other thing is the care we take starting from clothing style. It is forbidden to wear anything that advocates religion. Well, it is not complete; there are in and out things. ... For example, simply, wearing T-shirts which promote Christ, or Allah, or St Mary ... is forbidden here; even for the Muslims, unless there is evidence from the Mosque which could confirm that they are religious leaders, it is not permitted. The Hijab, niqab, veil, etc. are forbidden here. Even in the dorm, posting religious pictures is totally forbidden. We forbid it. We do not allow [group] prayers in dormitories.

Interview participants are of the opinion that guiding principles have been set in place, which are in line with religious equity training which have been conducted by the government at the beginning of each academic year since 2010 at the universities.

The focus group interview participants of the *Student Service* offices argued that since the prohibition of religious clothing and group prayer were set, bearing all groups in mind, their strategies were diversity sensitive. They contended that the prohibition was not discriminatory because the denial was applicable to all groups. They emphasised that individual prayer was permitted as far as it complied with the rules set in the *Student Codes of Conduct* of each university, and as far as it did not affect the tranquillity of the environment. A participant from AAU elaborated this point as follows:

Within a dorm there might be Muslims, Christians, etc. ... They may live together. This might happen to them by chance. Here comes a problem which affects their communication. The Muslims organise themselves and start to pray in the dorm. ... When the

Muslims start spreading mats or sheets or towels, on the ground and start to open the Quran for prayer, the Christians put on the Christian songs. This means they wanted to create violence.

The narrative of the participant seems to suggest that the prohibition strategy was set in place in order to avoid religious rooted conflicts and to create peace among different religious groups. His argument implies that in a religiously diverse students' dormitory, practising religious codes may not be tolerated since it would reflect prejudice and instil disruptive behaviour such as disrupting the prayer of the counterpart. The care taken to prevent clashes related to religious beliefs concerning dietary equipment (see section 6.2.1.2.1) and the prohibition mentioned in this section may seem somewhat paradoxical. Contrary to the measures taken in the catering service which emphasise due attention and respect for religious differences, the prohibition or denial of religious practices expressed in the form of clothing and group prayers seem very strict (cf. section 3.2.3). Some of the *Student Service* offices participants confirmed this apparent paradox. Some of them argued that:

- The prohibition policy is applied to all religious groups and is based on the assumption that the denial to all is equivalent to a right provisioned for all.
- Religious group practices are prohibited on the campuses in order to avoid religious conflicts, facilitate peaceful co-existence of various religious groups, and to implement the secular education premise stipulated in the *Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009* (see section 2.2.3.1).

Some *Student Service* office participants refuted the above argument based on the following reasons.

- The prohibition violates the religious rights enshrined in the *EFDR Constitution*.
- Religious clothing and group prayers are mandatory practices for adherents to some religions.

- Since group religious practices are not equally mandatory in all religions, the prohibition does not affect all equally, and it is therefore discriminatory (cf. section 3.2).

6.2.1.2.3 Students' perceptions of religion based provisions

Student participants had various views on religious diversity management practices at the study site universities. Some students tended to decline to discuss religious issues which they considered delicate and untouchable. However, most of the participants agreed with the view of some *Student Service* participants that the prescriptions in terms of practices by the universities were contrary to some religious principles and practices:

- They contended that the prohibition of religious clothing and group prayers was contrary to the religion based catering service which addresses the religious diversity needs on a collective basis (see section 6.2.1.2.1).
- Some student participants argued that there are peculiar religious customs which require religious clothing and collective practices and that banning as such does not constitute equal treatment. They pointed out, for instance, that it is customary for Orthodox Christians to wrap over a Netela (a wide cotton traditional scarf) for church services; and it is a religious requirement for the Muslims to wear the Hijab, niqab, veil, etc. and to partake in group prayers, whereas wearing styles are not requirements for Catholic and Protestant Christian followers.
- They argued that the prohibition of these practices would be against their religious traditions and dogmas and could hardly produce the peace claimed by the individual interview participants.
- They further contended that since the character of religions differ in their practices, the prohibition might instigate a sense of inequity and discrimination in a group which becomes more disadvantaged as a result of the prohibition.

- Since religion is a way of life, breaking any of the rules and norms of social life could be equivalent to forsaking religious faith (cf. section 3.2.3).
- Most of the students emphasised that they had mutual respect as regards religious differences and that they cared for the religious practices of one another (see section 6.2.1.1.3 a).
- Contrary to the assumption forwarded by the *Student Service* participants who reported that on-campus group religious practices might instigate hostilities, the students asserted that a very few conflict scenarios can be attributed to religious differences and argued that students hardly resort to conflict due to differences in religious practices. They gave the example of empathic practices of some Orthodox Christian and Muslim students living in a dorm who awaken each other at 5:00 am for dawn prayers (see section 6.2.1.1.3 a).
- They reported that students prefer to negotiate a reshuffle of students from dorm to dorm when irreversible conflicts emerge among differing affiliates.
- Despite the strict prohibition on religious clothing and group religious practices on campuses, the student participants confirmed that they comfortably undertake small group prayers and celebrate holidays collectively at their dormitories.

A student, for instance, reported holiday celebration scenarios in dormitories at ASTU that transcended group prayer of religious groups as follows:

When a holiday approaches, just a week for the holiday, the followers of a religion contribute money together without disclosing it to none followers. ... They prepare everything just as it is done in the community. ... They invite students [to] the neighbourhood [including students from other faiths] for the celebration.

Most of the student participants agreed that since accomplishing religious duties is a mutual need of every religious affiliate, it would hardly lead to hostility.

6.2.1.3 CBLEs in relation to multilingual service management strategies

In the context of this study, the practice of using languages other than the specified linguistic provision (English or Amharic) at the universities by the *Student Service* and lecturer participants is referred to as a multilingual service management strategy. In this section, an attempt is made to explore how services delivered through multilingual strategies underpin CBLEs of multilingual students.

As indicated in section 3.2.2, English is the instructional medium of communication in the Ethiopian higher education context whilst non-academic office activities are usually carried out in English as well as Amharic. Yet, most of the students who come from non-Amharic speaking communities were not in a position to express themselves either in English or in Amharic (see section 3.2.2). The *Student Service* participants confirmed that they often came across students who speak neither English nor Amharic and emphasised that language is one of the diversity challenges that influences academic outcomes of students. An individual interview participant from the *Student Service* of ASTU aired a similar observation with regard to linguistic challenges of students at his university:

[Students] come here to ask for services. As you know the office language of the Federal Government is Amharic. But they come and say that they want to use their first language for communication. They say that they can explain themselves better in their mother tongues. ... They are not claiming it as a right but to succeed in communication. They ask us to cooperate with them because they could not express themselves in Amharic.

Similar linguistic problems were observed in the offices when written communication was required. The *Student Service* participants emphasised that most of the administration forms, which students are expected to fill in to request for services, are prepared in Amharic and English and that students are expected to fill them in in Amharic or English. They reported that a significant number of students fill in the forms in their mother tongues, for example Afan Oromo, Sidama, Somali, Afar, Tsegreña, Guragigna and Harari.

Linguistic challenges were also observed in areas of teaching and learning. The lecturer focus group participants of the universities confirmed language difficulties experienced with students. They stated that students, who do not have an adequate command of Amharic, often avoid discussions with lecturers and interaction with other officers because of language barriers even though they are in dire need of academic as well as administrative support. Most of the student participant groups from non-Amharic backgrounds reported similar linguistic challenges at their respective universities. In this regard, a student participant from ASTU said: “When I first joined this campus, I spoke Afan Oromo only ... everything was strange to me ...”. Student participants confirmed that students from the Somali, Gambella and Tigray regions experienced similar linguistic challenges.

In order to mitigate communication problems of students from non-Amharic speaking communities, some of the *Student Service* and lecturer participants of the study sites stated that they often use languages which are intelligible to students informally to overcome communication difficulties. They emphasised that although this practice was not formally acknowledged in the regulations of the universities, they find this strategy instrumental to facilitate equitable services when students are linguistically challenged. The “multilingual service management strategy”, as they termed, are integrated informally with other management processes.

The *Student Service* participants, when asked how the multilingual service was implemented at their institutions, reported that they use three major strategies:

- They use any of the languages which they speak and which they consider to be intelligible to a particular student. The *Director of Student Service* and the *Dean of Students* (individual interview participants) stated that they speak at least two Ethiopian languages each and that they often use their polyglot capacity to serve students in Amharic, Afan Oromo, Kambata and to some extent in Tsegreña languages.
- They sometimes use code-switching which means using different languages within a sentence for ease of communication. The *Student Service* clerks specifically pointed out that whenever they come across students who experienced difficulty to interact in Amharic, they try to use the home language of students if they have the vocabulary required.
- They also make use of translators to fulfil the communication needs of students. Most of the *Student Service* clerk participants reported that whenever they encounter a student who speaks a language which is not intelligible to them, they ask the student to bring someone who could translate the particular language for them. Sometimes, however, the *Student Service* clerks seek help for themselves. A clerk from AAU gave his personal account by saying that

there are students from Somali, Afar, etc. when they say ‘we don’t speak Amharic’, we find someone who speaks their languages and we treat them this way.

The views of the above participants support the view that making efforts to interact with the available linguistic proficiency, including students’ mother tongue, would give students a sense of belonging to the institutions (see section 3.2.2).

With regard to the multilingual services, the bio-data of the *Student Service* participants and observation data do not always support the views aired above. As shown in section 5.2.2.1.2, the majority of the *Student Service* participants were

monolingual speakers of Amharic. The observation data showed that students who were not adequately proficient in Amharic often refrained from consulting with an officer, unless they found someone who could serve as a translator (researcher's observation). Some student participants also reported that they often encountered officers who were less willing to help them when they failed to present their issues in Amharic, although the service clerks reported that they tolerate and accept fill-in forms and applications written in unofficial languages for routine matters. Since languages other than Amharic and English are not officially recognised at the study site universities, such documents would not be acceptable for official purposes (see section 3.2.2).

In spite of the differences in opinion mentioned above, most of the *Student Service* participants emphasised that the multilingual service strategy has social implications for their customers. Firstly, some of them pointed out that the flexibility in language use shows the concern of service providers to make the environment comfortable for linguistically diverse students and encourage them to develop a sense of partnership and belonging in the communities of the institutions. Secondly, other participants added that if students develop a sense of belonging, they are motivated to engage in interaction despite their low level of linguistic proficiency. This, they said, results in students improving their social relationships. They suggested that, as a result of their service, linguistic diversity may cease being a factor causing discrimination; and social relationships established through multilingual services could broaden social cohesion and inter-group understanding across linguistic variations (cf. section 4.3.4.2). However, these suggestions may not hold true in all circumstances, since some *Student Service* participants were monolingual and did not show the courage to learn or use the languages of others (researcher's observation).

6.2.1.4 CBLEs in terms of co-curricular management strategies

In this study, co-curricular activities refer to programmes in which students are engaged on a voluntarily basis during their spare time. At the study site universities,

students are provisioned with the right to establish and run different organisations of which the activities could be considered as co-curricular in nature. As shown in Table 6.1, a number of co-curricular activities and student organisations have been set in place in the form of student unions or councils, clubs and student organisations dealing with festivals and recreational activities. These co-curricular activities are similar to those of student organisations and activities discussed in section 3.5.1 which are aimed at enriching educational experiences of multicultural students. The individual interview participants emphasised that although the co-curricular activities were primarily established as recreational activities, they form integral parts of academic activities because they supplement the teaching and learning processes. In this section, the CBLEs relating to co-curricular activities are analysed in the light of the educational objectives envisaged in the policy guidelines of the universities (see sections 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.2).

As shown in section 5.2.2.1.2, the institutions are situated in socially and geographically different environments: AAU (in Addis Ababa City, the capital), ASTU (in Adama city, in the Oromia Regional State) and DBU (in Debreberhan Town, in the Amhara Regional State). Nevertheless, the universities employ similar policy implementation guidelines and co-curricular activities as listed in Table 6.1 below. These activities are similar with regard to the educational purposes of the activities.

Table 6.1: List of co-curricular activities by University

Types of co-curricular activities in the universities			
1	Student Union or Council: AAU Student Council, ASTU Student Council, and DBU Student Council		
2	Clubs		
2.1	Exclusive clubs		
	AAU	ASTU	DBU
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Association of students with disability</i> • <i>GAASO (Gumii Adaafi Asoosama Saba Oromoo) (Oromo Culture and Literature Club)</i> • <i>Hibir Culture Club (Amhara)</i> • <i>Ti'amot Club (Tigray)</i> • <i>Gender club</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GAASO Club (Oromo)</i> • <i>Hibir Culture Club (Amhara)</i> • <i>Tamra Wubet Club (SNNP)</i> • <i>Ti'amot Club (Tigray)</i> • <i>Somali Student Club</i> • <i>Girls Club</i> • <i>Association of Students with Disability</i> • <i>Gender Club</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GAASO Club (Oromo)</i> • <i>Hibir Culture Club (Amhara)</i> • <i>Tamra Wubet Club (SNNP)</i> • <i>Ti'amot Club (Tigray)</i> • <i>Awi Development Association</i> • <i>Gaeda'o Association</i> • <i>Amhara Regional Youth Network Association</i> • <i>Gender Club</i>
2.2	Inclusive clubs		
2.2.1	Institutionalised inclusive clubs		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Academic and Professional Interest clubs,</i> • <i>African Initiatives</i> • <i>Arts and Performance Club,</i> • <i>Awareness and Advocacy Club,</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anti-AIDS & Literature club</i> • <i>Anti Corruption Club</i> • <i>Peace Club</i> • <i>Human Rights Club</i> • <i>Charity Society</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental Protection & Beautification Club</i> • <i>Anti-drugs Club</i> • <i>Peace Club</i> • <i>Know Your Country Club</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anti-AIDS and Literature Club</i> • <i>Community Service Clubs,</i> • <i>Literature club,</i> • <i>Multicultural Activities or Clubs</i> • <i>Peace Club</i> • <i>Special Interest Club, etc...</i> • <i>Sports and Recreational Club,</i> • <i>Volunteer and Service-Related Activities or Club</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>IT Club</i> • <i>Space Science</i> • <i>Science and Technology Club</i> • <i>Environmental Protection & Beautification Club</i> • <i>Foreign Relation and Country's Image Building Ambassadors Club</i> • <i>ASTU Bridge Team</i> • <i>Model United Nations (MUN-ASTU)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anti-AIDS Club</i> • <i>Anti-Corruption Club</i> • <i>Charity Society</i> • <i>Scout Club</i> • <i>Cultural Club</i>
2.2.2	Festivals and events		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inter-college Sport weeks</i> • <i>Nations and Nationalities Day</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Colour Day</i> • <i>Culture Day</i> • <i>Nations and Nationalities Day</i> • <i>Inter-College Sport Weeks</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nations and Nationalities Day</i>

Sources:

AAU, 2013: online; ASTU.2013: online; ASTU. 2013. Student Union letter dated 06/05/2013; DBU. 2013: online; DBU. 2013: letter dated 26/08/2013

The *Student Service* officers viewed the management processes employed in running co-curricular activities as educational practices which were organised in order to respond to diversity needs of students and strengthen social relationships (cf. section 2.2.3.2). The Dean of Students at AAU explained how his office attempted to address the diversity needs of students through organising the co-curricular activities:

The major duty of the office is organising students into clubs. Students are organised under varieties of clubs like Peace Club, Grievance Handling Club, HIV/AIDS Club, etc. We support the activities which students undertake in their clubs such as inviting guests, conducting meetings, discussions and demonstrations, and providing permission for halls, entrance permits. ... All these arrangements are set for the wholesome development of students, to facilitate their interaction. ... During teaching learning times they are preoccupied with academic activities and they don't have time to share life experiences because they focus on academic matters.

Other *Student Service* participants emphasised the fact that the co-curricular activities were introduced to develop positive and supportive relationships among students. They seemed to imply that students could acquire social skills through collaborative and engaging social activities set in the form of co-curricular activities.

The individual interview participants classified the co-curricular activities of each university into identity based exclusive clubs, inclusive clubs, and occasional festivals and events (see Table 6.1). However, it was found that the occasional festivals and events could be either inclusive or exclusive, based on the social setup supported by members involved (researcher's observation). The director of *Student Service* at one of the study sites contended that most of the inclusive clubs dealt with social welfare issues such as AIDS, educational support, peace, and student unions, whereas the exclusive clubs were established on the basis of identity criteria such as gender, ethnicity and language. All the *Student Service* areas participants, however, strongly denied the existence of any

kind of organisation associated with religious affiliation. The directors argued that both inclusive and exclusive co-curricular activities are run by voluntary or interested groups. They contended that the inclusive co-curricular activities are managed by heterogeneous student groups while the exclusive clubs are run by homogenous groups. The data obtained from all participants, including the student participants confirmed that exclusive clubs were identity oriented whereas all-inclusive clubs were non-partisan because students from varied backgrounds were free to join the clubs. In the following sections an attempt is made to analyse the management processes involved and educational values associated with activities in order to identify the overall cross-border learning assumptions underlying the co-curricular practices relating to each category

6.2.1.4.1 Cross-border learning implications of inclusive organisations

In sections 2.2.3.2 and 2.2.3.3, it was mentioned that policy strategies of the universities indicated that both the exclusive and inclusive co-curricular organisations were established in order to supplement the wholesome development of students. As shown in Table 6.1, the inclusive student organisations were subdivided into “inclusive institutionalised clubs” and “occasional events and festivals”. As mentioned, the former included clubs at which a student may participate voluntarily, regardless of differences attributed to ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender and ability/disability backgrounds. These organisations are involved in occasions and festivals such as the *Nations and Nationalities Day*, *Culture Day* and *Colour Day* in which both inclusive and exclusive co-curricular activities are combined. The whole university community is assumed to partake in these events.

a. Institutionalised inclusive clubs

As indicated in section 6.2.14, the participating director of the *Student Service* office, *Dean of Students*, *Student Affairs* officer and *Student Service* clerks claimed that the underlying aim of co-curricular activities of, for example, the *Anti-AIDS Club*, *Peace Club* and *Sport Club*, was to establish social cohesion among students. With regard to

institutionalised inclusive clubs, the individual interview participants emphasised that the organisations are non-discriminatory and that they fulfil the unbiased premises envisaged in the objectives of the institutionalised inclusive clubs (see section 2.2.3.3.2) since the activities were run by voluntary student teams from different socio-cultural backgrounds.

Some student participants agreed with the view of the individual interview participants but contended that since students join the clubs at random and on an involuntary basis, it could be difficult to measure the degree of heterogeneity and corresponding inter-group relationship outcomes (informal discussion with some student co-curricular club leaders). A student commented during a focus group interview that in the *Peace Club* at his university student heterogeneity depends on the club leadership. If the leaders relate strongly with a certain identity group, they are likely to attract students from their background. Some student participants emphasised that since the membership criteria are non-discriminatory and open, any student could join the clubs. They emphasised that nobody is excluded from membership in terms of his/her identity. Some student participants contended that there were instances when ethnic homogeneity was deliberately discouraged when inclusive clubs were established. A student focus group participant from AAU explained this state of affairs as follows:

I am a member of the African Initiatives. It consists of about 2000 students and the students are divided into groups of 10. The 10 students join together from different regions and nationalities and we meet once a month to discuss different issues such as HIV/AIDS, etc. From my point of view, I think, this kind of connection could bring students into unity. Even if we are from different faculties and different departments, whenever we meet on our ways in the campus, we don't pass across without greeting each other. We are like brothers. I think the same is true for the Peace Club.

However, most of the student participants contended that these inclusive clubs were not as active as the exclusive clubs. They emphasised that most students preferred to take

part in exclusive cultural clubs because they are more engaging and reflect their cultural identities. All the participants complained that most inclusive clubs are short-lived because the sustainability of an inclusive club depended on the availability of financial resources, with the result that clubs dissolve when they run short of money.

b. All-inclusive occasional events and festivals

Most participants from the *Student Service* offices and student participants claimed that occasional festivals are more inclusive and engaging in terms of co-curricular activities than other inclusive clubs. The participants identified events such as the *Nations and Nationalities Day*, *Culture Day*, *Colour Day*, and *Sport Weeks* and programmes such as European football on TV as engaging experiences irrespective of differences. They reported that the events and the TV programmes are scheduled every year at the universities for recreation purposes, as well as bringing the diverse student population together, thereby improving inter-group understanding.

The *Nations and Nationalities Day*, which is often interchangeably called *Culture Day* by participants, is annually celebrated nationwide on 7 December. On this occasion, students display varied cultural songs, dances, clothing and costumes and practices of their respective societies to demonstrate their cultural identities to the wider university community (researcher's observation). Since each cultural group presents its show at the same event, the audiences at the respective institutions enjoy the colourful costumes, cultural dances, clothing styles and practices of diverse societies. The shows are open to all campus community members and are considered as an inclusive activity. The *Public Relations* officer participant described the celebration at ASTU as follows:

On *Culture Day* we arrange lots of things so that [students] promote different cultures in the university. We make them come to a stage to introduce their cultures. Students from different ethnic groups of the country stage their cultures. In this way we make them have common values.

Some of the *Student Service* officer participants criticised the fact that students were primarily preoccupied with promoting their respective cultures and disregarded those of others on *Culture Day*. Yet some student participants confirmed that the occasion presents good opportunities for furthering inter-cultural understanding. In this regard a student participant said:

I am proud of that [Culture Day]. When you see everybody showing his/her culture, really it is very interesting. First, all the nine regions had a constant schedule to show their cultures to their groups. On the Culture Day all clubs come together and present their respective cultures. You enjoy versatile and varied cultures which magnify the diversity Ethiopia is made of. The scenario is interesting. It is really lovely. Really it is impressive.

Most of the participants of the *Student Service* offices and the student participants stressed that on the *Nations and Nationalities Day* (or the *Culture Day*), students get a chance not only to present themselves as identity groups but also to learn about the varieties of cultures and their values. According to the participants, the occasions could help students to recognise cultural commonalities and differences, thereby advancing an inter-cultural perspective.

In addition to the festivals, the student focus group participants from ASTU identified sports TV channels as inter-group recreational activities. They identified watching European football matches as a fun inter-group activity and agreed that because students from different backgrounds often support the same team, they usually establish friendships. Social interaction in terms of watching the sport shows was described by a student participant as follows:

Specially, there is something common that brings students into one direction. This is the European League or the Western football. In the

programme, let one be from anywhere, he will be with his team supporters. He goes to support; let him support any team, nobody worries about that. [Students] shout; they insult each other in offensive terms; they exchange offensive words. But nobody goes to fight for the offense. On the other day, the team which lost today may win and the supporters on their turn could annoy their counterparts. It is where you show your youthful behaviour and supportive character. Football is the first essential recreational activity. It is the first in rank. ... There is a football field where you go out and play football yourself or recreate yourself. [It] involves mixed groups; you play either by department, by school, college, etc. However, it does not have that much student participation.

Some ASTU student participants emphasised the fact that those who support the same team always remain friends regardless of their differences in terms of ethnicity, language and religion. Some students added that although groups supporting different teams often exchange offensive words, these are not taken seriously; instead they fascinate spectators and enhance interaction among spectators. Students accentuated that conflict between two counterpart fans remains momentary and never develops into inter-group conflict.

As opposed to the situation at ASTU where students had four sport channel TV sets in an open field, the sport TV facilities at AAU and DBU were limited to small rooms (researcher's observation). That could be why the student participants at these two universities could not verify that watching football on TV promotes cross-border interaction among students. However, they validated the view of ASTU students that viewing sport events on TV would bring about a better understanding and social cohesion among different groups. They cited the *Sport Weeks* of their university to substantiate their argument. They reported that during inter-departmental; inter-college and inter-university sport weeks, students of different backgrounds support their respective teams. They reported that the *Sport Weeks* of the universities provide a great chance for student

inter-group socialisation at department, college and institutional levels. They contended that when students from different cultural backgrounds sing and dance together, relationships are strengthened.

6.2.1.4.2 Cross-border learning implications of exclusive clubs

The concept *exclusive club* signifies co-curricular activities during which students' involvement is determined by criteria pertaining to identity, such as gender, language ethnicity and religion (see sections 3.2.1; 3.2.2 and 2.3.3). These are contrary to inclusive activities which students join collectively without adhering to any form of criteria as discussed in the preceding section. Table 6.1 includes the following exclusive clubs: The *Girls Club*, the *Hibir Culture Club* for Amhara students, the *GASO* for Oromo students, the *Amot Club* for Tigray students and the *Tamra Wubet Club* for SNNP students. The *Girls Club* is gender based whereas the other clubs constitute ethnic, linguistic and region based student organisations. Although this study focuses on ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity issues, it has to be borne in mind that in terms of exclusive clubs only disability, gender, ethnic and linguistic affiliations are officially recognised by universities.

The analysis in this section focuses on data collected concerning service management strategies employed and the cross-border learning implications in relation to ethnic and linguistic based cultural club practices. As shown in section 3.2.2.2, ethnic and linguistic attributes are often intertwined and in this analysis the concept 'ethnic based cultural club' is used to signify both ethnic and linguistic identities.

The data from student participants at the study sites indicate that they hold mixed opinions regarding the educational benefits of the existing ethnic and linguistic based cultural clubs. The attitudes towards identity based clubs ranged from scepticism about the worth of the clubs to uncritical recognition of the advantages of the clubs. In this section the data explaining these arguments are analysed.

a. Arguments against the educational values of exclusive cultural clubs

Those *Student Service* participants who argued against the ethnic based cultural clubs preferred a single heterogeneous club which accommodates students from different ethnic backgrounds and which promotes what they called “unity within diversity”. They emphasised that ethnic based cultural clubs:

- enhance and strengthen in-group supportive relationship only,
- augment ethnocentrism and damage social cohesion of the entire student population,
- are linguistically exclusive and discriminatory to out-groups, and
- confine students to within-group socialisation with the result that their boxed identities prevent them from developing wider perspectives.

A *Student Service* officer explained the state of affair as follows:

We have five [identity based] clubs ... Amhara, Oromo, Tigray, SNNP and Somali students clubs. We organised these clubs in order to help the students [of each cultural group] assert themselves and feel comfortable on the campus. It helps them to get together as a group to share ideas and resolve different problems. They could advise one another [during club meetings] on how to cope with campus life. They could manage themselves. They can also air unique problems they encounter as an identity group or as an individual ... that could be a concern to all as a group. Nevertheless, we do have problems with these [clubs since students] confine themselves to their own identity and do not strive to broaden their perspectives. They ignore others and this creates discrimination. As you know there were serious ethnic problems on our campus.

The participant recognises the social value of identity based clubs in terms of self-assertion but seemed to suggest that since exclusion entails differential treatment, exclusive clubs could affect collaborative learning relationships of students across cultural boundaries. The participant tended to associate student hostilities such as those discussed in section 2.2.3.3.3 with the ethnic based clubs. In this regard, the Director of *Student Service* at DBU commented:

In the culture clubs, students promote their cultures. For example, there is the Oromo culture, Amhara culture, Tigray culture, SNNP cultures, etc. The goal is to introduce their culture to others. In these there are drawbacks because they do everything in their mother tongues. Since they use their own languages, the conditions are less inviting to other students. What is important is that they bring the members of their ethnic groups together for better collaboration. When they undertake these, they can invite lecturers from the campus, guest speaker from outside; they can have music shows of their cultures. ... Therefore, it is limited and specific to the nationality concerned. For the future there may be a way to involve different ethnic groups in consultation with the students. At the moment they focus on self-assertion and our duty is to facilitate that process.

The Dean of Students at AAU and *Student Affairs* officer at ASTU agreed that organising students on an identity basis could be an effective management strategy in order to address the needs of each student groups. They, however, viewed the practice as counterproductive for developing student social cohesion across identity boundaries.

Some student participants upheld the view of the above individual interview participants. One of the students from AAU said the following in this regard:

If I am not mistaken there are four cultural clubs. The Amhara is called Mudai. The Oromo, GASO, the Tigrean SNNP; anyway they are four. These are good in one way. Helping [students of] each region to reflect [on] their culture is good. However, I personally don't think this scheme is good. Ethiopia is [one country]. Why do we have separate clubs? We should have one mixed club. It looks like an individual meeting place and the existence of a separate ethnic based programme is not good. I also recommend the University to think over this scheme and this should not exist. During culture presentation for the Amhara group the medium is Amharic, for Oromo group Afan Oromo, for Tigrean group Tegrigna, like that and the attendants are also the same language speakers. For me I don't think this is good. University means a place where students from different corners of the country come together. They represent the country. Therefore, I think, what is done here has to represent the country, not regional states.

Both the individual interview participants and some of the student focus group interview participants seem to recognise that ethnic based cultural clubs could create a comfort zone for in-group members, helping them to adapt to the campus environment which is a learning outcome that would pave the way for the development of CBLEs.

Since each club emphasises collective-self assertion by means of the in-group medium of communication, it was considered that the activities of each club hardly contributes to inter-group understanding and to the educational development of out-group students. The arguments of both the Director and the student participant who were critical of exclusive clubs emphasised two aspects. One is that the clubs could be effective if they used a language intelligible to all groups. This is contradictory to the aim of self-assertion of the clubs (see sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). The other is that linguistic based clubs isolate out-groups and that a heterogeneous cultural club would engage all students as opposed to the ethnic based ones which promote student unity in line with the multicultural policy stipulated in the *Higher Education Proclamation no, 650/2009* of the country (see section

2.2.3.1). Nevertheless, it was argued in section 3.6.2 that students who get comfort and warmth from an in-group would easily mix with out-groups than those who lack the opportunity.

b. Arguments in favour of ethnic based cultural clubs

Most of the participants from *Student Service* offices and the student participants who argued in favour of the existing ethno-linguistic based cultural clubs emphasised that the clubs provide a means of collective-self assertion for different groups. They refuted the arguments for a single heterogeneous cultural club discussed in the preceding section saying that a single heterogeneous club, according to their experience, would hardly contribute towards the “unity within diversity”. They argued that it is difficult to establish a single club that equally serves students from all cultures. A student focus group interview participant, who used to chair a heterogeneous group club at ASTU, reported the difficulty in establishing and running a heterogeneous cultural club:

I am a little doubtful about the view that [a heterogeneous cultural club] could bring students together. I rather feel that it capitalises on differences. There was a Culture Council, organised from the members of the Hibir Culture Club [for Amhara students], the GASO [for Oromo students], the Amot Club [for Tigray students] and the Tamra Wubet Club [for SNNP students] to establish a heterogeneous cultural club that represents all students. I mean I was the chairman of the Council. ... We established the club and it was meant to represent the cultures of students from nations and nationalities in the country. Now both the Council and the club are non-existent because [students] did not reach a consensus on the presentations. This was because ... [there] were some groups who wanted to make their culture the sole representative of the country ... When I see their outlook, they see themselves, I mean... as the only Ethiopians. They do not have accommodative attitude. They do not give equal chance to all

participating cultural groups. They always tried to take all the show time for themselves and ignored other groups. They at times openly denied ... the identity of others and tried to glorify their old history in the name of the club meant to represent all cultural groups. Therefore, the [Council] totally disagreed on running the club and both the Council and the club were dissolved. Thus, instead of bringing us together, it rather heightened our differences. ... Because [the] ethnic issue is sensitive, it is difficult to organise such a heterogeneous group on this campus.

The participant is of the opinion that there are groups who claim their cultures as being representative of the country and who undermine and stereotype other cultures. According to him such an attitude creates unhealthy and antagonistic, self-assertive competition among different cultural groups. He emphasised that any form of unequal treatment is likely to aggravate unacceptable mistrust and suspicion. He argued that as a result of imbalanced practices displayed at the heterogeneous cultural club, not only the club but also the council which was meant to run the club were dissolved. Most of the student participants from the other two universities who argued in favour of the ethno-linguistic based cultural clubs, underlined the following views:

- Students who are organised into identity based clubs obtain in-group supportive relationships and can easily adapt to a diverse environment.
- If cultural clubs are organised on an ethnic basis, cultural groups will have ample time to practise their cultures and at inter-cultural events audiences can observe and get to know various cultural expressions of different groups.
- There need not be unhealthy competitions among groups vying for the stage.
- Since each club presents various shows at different times during the academic year, audiences have the chance to become familiar with various cultural practices.
- Ethiopian cultures share many commonalities and Ethiopians cannot be alien to different cultures in the country.

- Since the presentations are briefly translated to help non-speakers, language should not be a barrier to understanding the shows.
- If dominant cultures are prevented from exerting pressure on others in the name of heterogeneity, different cultures would obtain equitable recognition and cultural differences would cease to be a student flashpoint.

Some participants argued against a single heterogeneous club on the ground that historical hostile political relationships between different societies could again manifest in politically loaded shows in terms of songs, drama and cultural practices could instigate animosity amongst students. Two student focus group interview participants at AAU and ASTU respectively explained this view as follows:

The student from AAU:

Although I did not participate much [in] the culture centre, I attended it three or four times. What students reflected there [in the programme] are different literatures, cultural practices, etc. These could contribute to the study of Ethiopian languages. However, I feel that the negative side would outweigh the positive side. This means it creates regional division [regionalism]. Even when there is all Ethiopian games [inter-universities sports festivals], the Amhara say “We, sons of Tewodros [Emperor Tewodros II] and sons of Minelik. [Minelik II]” and the Tigreans say “we sons of Yohannis” [King Yohannis IV]. These kinds of things force you to recall the past and remember the atrocities made against your people.

The student from ASTU:

If students bring out all the cultures from every corner, let alone the nine regions, even within [the] Oromia region itself, there are different cultures, our clothing styles, feeding styles, our accents, all vary.

Showing these [cultural values] could be educative for anybody. However, there are times when it goes beyond learning and becomes sources of conflict All of them [students] show their cultures on the Nations and Nationalities National Day. On that occasion, I like the shows of the Southern Region [SNNP]. It focuses on the colourful cultures of diverse societies in the region. However, there are times when those from Amhara and Tigray go beyond the boundary. ... There is 'Fakarsa' [a patriotic song and dance used when going to wars in old days]. The 'Fakarsa' was used to suppress other nations and nationalities during wars in the early times. When they present this suppressive song as a culture here, other ethnic groups take [it] as if they are doing today what they did yesterday. ... That attitude is persistent in these societies because culture shows what actually exists in the society. In those who sit and watch what they present, it ultimately creates an image that the old attitude is still persisting in the new generation. ... When it crosses the set boundary, it transgresses from learning to other things [conflict]. Showing culture ... if it is carefully done, I don't think there is anything else other than culture which teaches the society and which enriches human experiences.

Both of the participants quoted above suggested that songs that praised the kings who are perceived as tyrants by members of other societies were provocative and hostile. In this regard, names of Tewodros, Yohannis and Minelik which respectively refer to Emperor Tewodros II, Emperor Yohannis IV and King Minelik II are identified with the Semitic-speaking Christian population (see section 2.2.1; cf. section 1.3). The above two participants seem to associate Emperor Tewodros II and King Minelik II with the Amharas and Emperor Yohannis IV with the Tigreans. These rulers symbolise opposing views in the minds of students. For students who come from the Amhara and Tigray societies and who praise and adore these kings, they signify braveness, whereas for students from other societies, who had suffered suppression at their hands, the kings are assimilators

and subjugators (see sections 2.2 and 2.2.1). The participants suggest that, for students from latter social groups, songs singing their praises symbolise repression, subjugation and domination. Although student participants from politically dominant groups contended that the kings symbolise unity and that the songs dignify all societies in the country, and complained that they were blamed for issues relating to historical animosity, student participants from cultural groups who had experienced domination, categorically stated that the singing of the songs is an act of repression. According to a student participant from ASTU, the songs are a reminder of past brutality and that similar sentiments are still held with regard to students from out-group ethnic societies. Conversely, students who were claimed as being from politically dominant groups, said that they were blamed for atrocities committed by historical rulers. Some students from these two groups accentuated that they do not like to attend shows that reflected the political attitudes of counterparts.

Most student participants from AAU and ASTU reported that cultural presentations which are not politically loaded are educative and emphasised the constructive roles that shows play in developing CBLEs in terms of inter-group understanding and the learning of the languages of out-groups. Students' views underpinned the need for a critical and in-depth understanding of the social, historical, political and cultural background that influences student relationships to prevent clubs becoming a breeding ground for identity based student flashpoints (cf. section 3.6.2).

The next section deals with CBLEs in terms of student generated diversity coping strategies, since they have implications for management practices relating to cross-border learning on campus.

6.2.2 CBLEs and students' diversity coping strategies

Section 6.2.1 and its sub-sections portrayed that service management strategies for lodging and catering services and co-curricular recreational activities constitute CBLEs that relate to inter-group social cohesion between diverse students at the study site

universities. Since the major aim of the study is to explain the relationship between institutionally established management strategies and practices and the development of CBLEs of students, relevant information that may not have a direct connection with management activities but have a bearing on student inter-group relationships are considered. A theme in this regard is student generated diversity coping strategies. In this regard student participants expressed themselves in terms of personal and collective socio-cultural values which helped them to cope with diversity challenges both individually and collectively. As will be shown below, these practices constituted components of CBLEs that supplement the formal management strategies discussed in section 6.2.1 because students used the practices to constructively cross their identity boundaries and those of others, thereby benefiting academically as well as socially. The practices in this regard constitute components of CBLEs that supplement the formal strategies discussed in sections 6.2.1.1; 6.2.1.2; 6.2.1.3 and 6.2.1.4.

In this section the informal socio-cultural practices of students that relate to CBLEs are discussed in terms of personal strategies for coping with diversity challenges and collective socio-cultural practices. They relate to the answers to the second major research question and its sub-questions (see section 6.2.1.1.3):

II How do students practise their multicultural life at the universities in terms of the higher education policy provisions set for addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences?

- How do students cope with diversity challenges at the study site universities?
- What socio-cultural practices do students use to establish social relationships?
- What components of cross-border learning experiences can be drawn from the socio-cultural practices of the students?

The use of informal strategies emerged when student participants were asked to describe their social diversity experiences during their pre-university education and their diversity challenges encountered once they joined the university. It was found that strategies employed to cope with campus diversity challenges also contain elements of CBLEs.

Most of the student participants at the universities reported similar and complementary individual and socio-cultural diversity coping practices and attested that these strategies are employed by new entrants as well as senior students. The main categories discussed in this section are diversity challenges and diversity coping strategies to address them. This section shows the instrumentality of informal CBLEs in developing inter-group understanding and constructive interpersonal relationships with out-group students.

6.2.2.1 Challenges hampering cross-border learning

Some student participants from the three study site universities reported that they experienced campus diversity as a fascinating cultural happening, while most of them reported that they went through ethnic, linguistic and religious challenges on campus. The participants attributed challenges to:

- a lack of awareness of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity in the country during the pre-university lives;
- a lack of exposure to a multi-ethnic, multilingual and pluralistic religious community environment;
- monolingual backgrounds (inability to speak languages of other cultures);
- stereotypical attitudes and prejudices towards others; and
- anxiety, mistrust and suspicion towards ethnic, linguistic and religious groups other than their own (cf. sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.1.4.2).

Three student participants, one from each university, explained their experiences relating to the above situations as follows:

An AAU student's comments on linguistic diversity challenges:

[I]n my area Amharic is the only language but when I came here in the dorm there were many ethnic groups. You may know the background of students ... by the names list. It was only one student who was able to speak in Amharic properly. Because we were not able to talk to each other, it was a very difficult time. However, through time we started to adapt ourselves to the diversity environment

A DBU student's comments on threats attributed to linguistic differences:

When you speak another language [which is not intelligible to others] there is a feeling attributed by others to your background. At the beginning when someone comes [to your dorm] and talks in another language [to someone else in the dorm], you think that whatever he talks is about you. When an Oromo talks to his friend, you feel he is talking something against you; the same is true when a Tigrean talks in Tigregna.

An ASTU student's comments on challenges in terms of religious diversity as:

When I came first, what I saw was that I was the only Protestant amongst my eight dorm mates. [The other seven students] were not sleeping well during the first 15 days. They told me later that they thought, "what if you slaughter us, what if you kill us ...". They all came from one area and they did not know the existence of any other religion except that of their Orthodox Christian religion. Later [when they became friendly] they told me, "we knew something about the existence of Islam; a person with a different religion is considered as Aramene [which means non-believer who might not

hesitate to kill others]. It might mean he would be harmful to us. We think that he would kill us.” It was a very difficult situation, but by the way, I did not feel afraid of them. Later I told them that “I am not Aramene and I am not a killer. I am a free person” Through time they started to interact with me

The students quoted above are from Amharic, Tigreigna and Afan Oromo speaking societies respectively. As shown in section 5.2.2.1.2, these societies are considered more populous than the non-dominant groups. The data show that not only the non-dominant groups, but also the students from populous communities, are equally challenged by campus ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity in the Ethiopian higher education context.

The narratives of the students also demonstrate the following:

- The students were stereotypical in their views toward students from other ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds because they considered the environment as threatening even though none of them reported any harmful event.
- In the multi-ethnic and multilingual educational environment where inter-language use is minimal and each is confined to his/her own language for communication, there does not seem to be an advantaged group and all seem to adjust themselves to the diversity environment during inter-group interaction.

Based on the diversity challenges described by the above students, the participants were asked to explain how they managed to overcome them. The diversity coping strategies revealed during the interviews are outlined below.

6.2.2.2 Diversity coping strategies

A student participant from AAU commented that:

When you see the students, some of them are welcoming and you can easily approach them. Others are very much anxious about you; they don't even want you to touch anything of their own. These anxieties and mistrusts ... come from what they have been told in their family and community before they come to the campus.

From the observation of the student, it seems that students classified as “welcoming” were those who had embraced campus diversity as an opportunity and adapted to the environment while those who were signified as being “anxious about others” lacked pre-university diversity experiences and most probably used individual strategies to cope with diversity challenges (see section 6.2.1.13). The strategies of both groups are discussed under individual and collective diversity coping strategies in the sections that follow.

6.2.2.2.1 Individual strategies

As discussed in section 6.2.2.1, most of the student participants reported that they found the social diversity on campus challenging and threatening. In this section, the following key individual and personal strategies are identified: “provisional diversity avoidance”, “diversity persistence” and “diversity celebrating” strategies.

a. Provisional diversity avoidance strategy

Provisional diversity avoidance strategy in terms of this study signifies a temporary escape of an individual to students of the same background where they find refuge and time to adapt to diverse environments. Although it was reported that the practice was not appreciated by proctors, student participants stated that a student personally takes refuge with friends if he fails to resist anxiety attributed to challenges such as those discussed in section 6.2.2.1. Most of the students reported that students who came from ethnically, linguistically and religiously homogeneous communities often practised this strategy to overcome the environmental anxiety. They added that senior students also practice a similar refuge when they find diversity in a dorm uninviting and threatening.

The students reported that when they were unable to find partners from their background and felt lonely and isolated in a dorm, they often took temporary refuge to friends with the same background in other dorms until they became adapted to the diverse environment. The experiences which students reported can be summarised as follows:

- Students became oriented in terms of the campuses and were learnt how to mix in a diverse campus from their friends who were most probably senior students and possessed adequate experience concerning campus life.
- Senior students provided new students not only with training in adapting to the new environment by sharing ideas on handling diversity, but also gave them comfort.

The practices of the students described relate to a provisional diversity avoidance strategy since the students temporarily fled diversity anxiety until they could embrace it. It could also be assumed that peer orientation and sharing experience with students from other cultures in the same dorm influenced their attitudes positively toward others. Peer orientation could therefore be considered as a CBLE for students.

b. Persistence to diversity as a strategy

Some student participants explained that they withstood the pain of being different in diverse situation by establishing social cohesion with out-group dorm mates. In this study context, the attitudinal consistence to cope with diversity challenges by remaining intact with out-groups dorm mates is termed “persistence to diversity”. This strategy relates to the third of the following strategies reported by students:

- exercising minimal interaction with out-group students from other cultures;
- passively resisting visible and invisible discriminatory practices by other groups in dorms; and
- learning to tolerate intolerance patiently and neutralising stereotyping and misconceptions of students who were suspicious about them.

The experiences of the students seem to verify that as a result of their campus experiences, living with diversity, the students not only learnt to cope with differences but also managed to influence intolerant counterparts to constructively change their attitudes. This inter-group learning outcome underpins the idea that embracing diversity not only effects self-efficacy but also serves as an instrument for mutual emancipation and the recognition of the reciprocal significance of others to the self (cf. sections 3.6.1 and 4.3.3.1). The re-conceptualisation and recognition of the worth of others align with the realisation of the country's envisaged "unity within diversity" paradigm which relates to her citizens (see section 2.2.3.1). Information collected from students indicates that both provisional avoidance and persistence strategies underlie cross-border learning strategies because both strategies evolved into the social skill of dealing with others peacefully and adjusting to diversity circumstances.

In section 3.4.2 it was argued that transformational diversity management does not only imply the celebration of uniqueness and peaceful co-existence of people with differences, but also the willingness to shift one's mindset to work collaboratively with others to bring about the development of mutual learning. Findings showed that provisional diversity avoidance and persistence to diversity practices gave way to transforming from a suspicious and stereotypical mindset to a diversity embracing personality. The transformational changes resulting from the lodging service strategies demonstrated that the students who participated in the persistence strategy emancipated from their preconceived views and underwent cross-border learning in a socially diverse institutional environment.

However, the persistence of a student to live with out-group students may not reflect reciprocal acceptance from both sides. One may not have an alternative to escape the circumstance. Most of the time students who were found sitting together in places like cafés, green yards and group study circles shared the same identity (researcher's observation). Had the persistence to diversity strategy been successful in all cases, identity based grouping of students might not have been observed outside the dorms. Some of the student participants reported that there were times when their efforts of

neutralising stereotype attitudes of dorm mates from other cultural backgrounds failed. In such cases they either lived in a dorm without communicating with out-group students or were forced to change dorms for good (see also section 6.2.1.2.3).

c. Welcoming diversity as a learning opportunity

In contrast to the practices of the students who initially resisted diversity (see section a-b above), other student participants found the diversity on campuses a fascinating opportunity to further experience cultural variety, widen their perspectives and get to know others better. These students reported that campus diversity was a suitable environment for practising multicultural life and for learning not only more about others but also about the self.

These student participants viewed living a life of diversity as a common inter-cultural practice which they had been accustomed to in their pre-university lives. In this regard, participants of the student focus groups from SNNP, non-dominant social groups from heterogeneous communities, narrated their rich diversity experiences and peaceful co-existence with people from other cultures. They emphasised that they had lived in diverse communities and that the campus environment was an extension of what was experienced in their communities. For instance, a participant at ASTU who comes from the Guragae community, explained diversity as a normal way of life by referring to the religious differences within his family members:

I have two sisters and none of them follow our religion [Orthodox Christianity]. One is a Muslim and the other is a Protestant. ... My elder sister married a person who was converted to Christianity from Islam background ... but later he was reconverted to Islam. We agreed ... [that] our sister ... also convert to ... Islam. My other sister was a Protestant even when she was with us at home. In our family one has the right to choose his/her own religion. ... Therefore, I did not have a significant difficulty to adapt myself to the campus life.

Participants emphasised that they exploited their experience of diversity at home to embrace social differences on campus. Students who come from homogeneous populous societies, like the Oromo and the Amhara societies (see section a-b above) reported that they were more challenged by social diversity on campus than students from heterogeneous communities. This means that students who experienced diversity during their pre-university development easily adapt to social diversity on campus and could easily cross identity boundaries without difficulty to establish positive relationships with out-group students. Students who viewed diversity as an opportunity also claimed that they enjoyed experiencing the cultures, languages and religions of out-group students. They emphasised that they use the situation as an opportunity to broaden their self-concept, an assumption which underlie CBLEs (see section 1.2.4.2).

Students reported that as a result of the collective dormitory life, they obtained the chance to learn both the spoken and written forms of the languages of their dorm mates. In this regard, a student from the Sidama ethnic group of the SNNP at AAU commented:

When I came here, I thought, I would join the eighty something nationalities and would learn a lot from these diverse cultures. I live with these friends [two of the participants]. Now I have completed preliminary speaking skills and writing practices in Somali. I also have some languages for interaction. Now they have started to invite me to work in their region. ... When I was in my region, I was trying Afan Oromo. Now the campus has opened an opportunity to further improve my proficiency in the language because I have Oromo dorm mates. ... I also try Guragigna. Because of coming here, I got chances to learn other languages, other cultures, and other outlooks.

The inter-language learning benefit was not equally recognised by all student participants. Participants of some focus groups reported they did not make efforts to learn the language of other groups. As mentioned in section 6.2.1.1.3, most of the student participants with an Amhara background reported that they did not pay much attention to learning the

languages of other mates because most out-group students tend to interact with them in Amharic. They also commented that they are not encouraged to learn other local languages because they are not linguistically challenged and obtain service in their language. They seemed to suggest that since Amharic is the working language of the institutions they do not need to bother themselves to learn other languages.

The information in section 6.2.2.2.1 confirms that differences in sensitivity to the campus social diversity could be attributed to students' level of diversity experiences during their pre-university life. It shows that students who came from relatively homogeneous and populous ethno-linguistic backgrounds such as the Oromo and the Amhara, and students who came from the dominant religious groups such as Orthodox Christianity and Islam seem to be equally affected by on-campus issues relating to diversity. For instance, most of the students who took temporary refuge to friends from their backgrounds in other dormitories as well as those who reported enduring diversity challenges, were from Amhara, Oromo and Tigrean societies and had an Orthodox Christian or Muslim background, whereas most of the students who welcomed student diversity in dorms come from heterogeneous non-dominant communities and religions. The situation might be attributed to the following: Students from relatively populous groups have always had the privilege of finding friends from the same background and have not become accustomed to diversity whereas students from non-dominant groups have been forced to adapt to live with other communities and therefore adapted to live a heterogeneous life.

6.2.2.2.2 Collective socio-cultural practices as strategies

Some of the student participants reported that they took part in different socio-cultural practices which were not officially recognised by the universities but which they found useful in establishing constructive relationships with out-group counterparts. The socio-cultural practices included sharing resources, consoling and supporting one another during times of grief, and celebrating joyous holidays together. Student participants emphasised that they willingly became involved in supporting one another academically as well as socially, thereby establishing social cohesion across identity boundaries. The

data on socio-cultural practices of students were collected with the assumption that through reciprocal collective practices, students would obtain access to know and value both the cultural lives and significance of others and the self (see sections 3.6.4 and 4.3.4.2). Evidently this analysis relates to the manner in which the social and cultural activities play a role in CBLEs by establishing mutual supportive relationships between heterogeneous student groups.

a. Sharing academic resources

The data for this section were collected and analysed bearing in mind that ethnically, linguistically and religiously heterogeneous students who study a discipline together are likely to support each other academically (see section 3.6.2).

The student participants from the three universities differed in opinion concerning academic support practices. Some of them reported that they either worked individually for personal success or collaborated with classmates based on their ethno-linguistic and religious affiliations, whereas others emphasised that they often worked with out-group students. Those students who contended that they work individually held various opinions:

- In the fierce competitive academic environment, no time is to be sacrificed for others.
- Available support often relates to ethnic, linguistic and religious affiliation. Discriminatory support practices provided by some lecturers (see section 6.2.3.1.2) and by religious institutions were cited as examples (see section 6.2.3.2.2).
- Some students are selfish by nature: “one who knows something does not want to share it with another; not even with his friend”.

Other participants, however, related that they had given as well as received academic support to and from out-group counterparts. They held the following views:

- Although they work with out-group students, they consider some students to be individualistic and ethnocentric. They perceive this to be a common phenomenon amongst first year students.
- Participants from second year onwards often share academic resources including reference materials such as books, handouts, notes, etc.
- Even though students obtain academic resources from their respective religious institutions outside the campus, they often share these resources with out-group students.

The following narratives explicate the supportive practices of the students:

A student from DBU:

With regard to academic support, I think we are exemplary in that during our 2nd year time there were students whose mid-year results were very low and we organised ourselves and helped each other even without the guidance of the University and made our mates survive in the programme. ... We did not consider our backgrounds; rather we helped each other, just any student who is in need of support at our department level.

A student from AAU:

When you live with others in dorms you leave your family. ... The dorm mates become your brothers.... They become everything for you. When a student finds it difficult to do his assignment, they cooperate to make him understand the question by giving examples. They try with him and show him how to relate to his experience. They spend their time helping the student as much as possible. They take responsibility to enable you. They force you to try repeatedly. They

do not hesitate to share their knowledge with you. For me they have contributed a lot. ... You may get a similar support from students of your background, but the difference is how they look at an issue. They give you different alternatives.

The above views show a disregard of differences and an emphasis on mutual support for academic success. Students from DBU reported empathetic support for out-group students triggered by the failure of fellow students. The practice of the students demonstrated that in a positive and collaborative environment, humanity could transcend not only social diversity and difference but also the pressure of competitive academic circumstances.

The supportive relationship described by the DBU student participants above underpins the transformational outcome of bringing students from different cultural backgrounds together in an institution in a peaceful inter-cultural social environment. In section 3.3.1 it was contended that diversity policy provisions should incorporate aims that transform students in such a way that they can contribute to bring about social cohesion. In the supportive practice described above, social cohesion was furthered by academic support amongst students who claimed that they obtained alternative perspectives and insights into study subject matter from out-group students. This practice is remarkable in the sense that organised support was given to students in need in a competitive academic environments. Neither the hostile backgrounds described in section 2.2.3.3.3, nor the existing identity based suspicion and mistrust discussed in section 6.2.2.1 and the identity based support from outside campus quarters mentioned above, deterred students from supporting one another. The evidence which students provided in favour of inter-group supportive relationship suggested that it outweighs the individualistic and cultural based practices of some students mentioned earlier in this section. Thus, the supportive and humane relationships which students demonstrated verify the value of cross-border learning in a multicultural environment as discussed in sections 1.3.2; 3.4.2 and 4.3.1. Socially, the practices of the students also suggest that the supportive relationships developed into a new group identity that transcends ethnic, linguistic and religious

identities. This change could be taken as a transformational change resulting from CBLEs within a collective social situation.

Sharing non-academic resources

The interviews showed that students support each other by sharing non-academic resources despite the fact that they represent different cultural groups who have varied cultural values and practices (see section 3.6.2). Non-academic support to out-group individuals provides insight into the manner in which inter-group relationships are established and mutual trust is developed.

During the interviews, students related their experiences concerning non-academic support between out-groups in terms of sharing food. In the Ethiopian context, a cultural food is a reflection of the uniqueness of an ethnic group. Students from different cultures often take different foods related to their cultures to campuses. These they would eat when required. In this regard, a student reported as follows:

The other thing is the diversity in our feeding habit.... . There were students who had never had 'Injera' I did not know the region they came from, but they said they have never had this kind of food. I have never thought that there are people who do not eat 'Teff Injera'. They did not know how to handle the food when they tried to take it to their mouth.

Injera which is a staple food for most of the highland regions of the country and which is prepared from seeds of Teff, a fine grain about the size of a poppy seed (Maskal Teff online: 2015), is not common to students who come from lowland areas such as the Somali, southern parts of Oromia and SNNP and Gambella regions. The experience of the above student demonstrates how the higher education environment facilitated inter-cultural understanding amongst students. The narrator came to know of the existence of students who did not know the food and conversely, his out-group counterparts learnt

about the existence of a particular food. Due to the diversity mix, both groups acquired a cultural experience from one another which qualifies as cross-border learning (see section 3.6.4).

Similar to the preceding section, the student participants had varied but overlapping opinions concerning inter-group non-academic supportive practices. Some of them accentuated the fact that students use non-academic resources which they brought to the campus, either individually or in collaboration with friends of similar backgrounds, whereas others emphasised that students often used their resources in the dorms collectively with dorm members irrespective of their backgrounds.

Both groups agreed that there were a few students who keep whatever they have for themselves because:

- The resources might not be enough to share with others.
- Some may not have become accustomed to a collective life and may think that the practice is unnecessary.
- Some sense conservative stereotypical attitudes from out-groups which prevent them from accepting the resource (see section 6.2.1.2.1).
- Some think that others have no need for the resources.
- A few are selfish and therefore do not share what they have.

Most of the student participants argued that it was customary that students from different regional states bring different kinds of foods from their areas at the start of a new academic year and after semester breaks (after vacations). They pointed out that although foods which bear relevance to a specific culture are brought by individuals for personal use, they were often consumed collectively by all interested dorm members. A student from ASTU reported as follows:

When we joined the dorm most students from Amhara did not know Chukko [a cultural food which is mostly prepared in Oromia areas]

and I gave them the food and they liked it. For example, a student from Gonder [a province of Amhara National Regional State] first hesitated to eat it, but he liked it after he tasted the food and [he] found it delicious and started to eat with us. ... When I go home for vacation, all my dorm mates call me and order me to bring them the food. I bring it and we eat it together. Now, I also bring honey and we use it together.

Another student from AAU confirmed the sharing of food narrative when he said:

After two or three years, now I am accustomed to something, Chukko. I had not been accustomed to it before; it is not prepared in our area. There is my dorm mate from Oromia; he brings it. Just you can say he does not use it for himself... . He often leaves it for us.

Regarding sharing cultural foods, almost all the student participants confirmed that sharing cultural foods was reciprocal and that many students from different regional states bring or prepare peculiar foods of their respective societies for their mates.

The participants associated collective eating in the dorm areas with a communal social norm of societies in Ethiopia. One student accentuated that “students from rural areas know the saying ‘*hanyaannu*’ [join us] to invite others for food”. The expression *hanyaannu* (in Afan Oromo) or *inibla* (in Amharic) is a cultural commonality amongst Ethiopian societies. It finds expression in various forms in other languages of Ethiopia. The person who is invited is free to join or decline the invitation politely. Although it may be said that the students practised a normal social behaviour upheld by Ethiopian societies, the student participants demonstrated a positive attitudinal change towards others through the mediation of a socio-cultural practice contrary to the inter-ethnic, inter-linguistic and inter-religious mistrust and suspicion and hostility at universities (see sections 2.2.3.3.3 and 6.2.1.2.2). In sharing food, the students not only reflected kindness and generosity, but also built trust and fraternal relationships with others. The cross-

cultural connection which students established by sharing resources could be considered as being a cross-border learning experience.

The socio-cultural practice of sharing resources may positively flash on the families of the students because most of the non-academic resources are provided by the parents of the providing student. Parents who prepared the foods for their child may feel empathetic towards other dorm members and may take them into account when preparing the food. Most of the student participants appreciated the empathy and compassion shown by parents of their dorm mates.

b. The socio-cultural practice of consoling persons who grieve

Consoling a person in grief is a cultural and social practice which students identified as a cross-cultural occurrence which underpins CBLEs. Many student participants reported that they often participate in consolation practices to ease the burden of sorrow of fellow students. A student described how students from different backgrounds joined hands on campuses to console a student whose relative had passed away:

We do everything that the society does when a person is in grief so that the guy would not feel dejected so much. ... Most of us are from Arsi [a province in Oromia Nation Regional State] and know how the society consoles a person in grief. ... Students from different backgrounds came and consoled him and contributed money to support him. ... All came, no distinction as Amhara or Oromo, etc. ... He comfortably went home and attended the funeral ceremony and came back.

This narrative of the student relates to social skills that elucidate the multicultural co-existence of students and constitutes an element of CBLEs. Through consoling a student in grief, the students from out-group backgrounds would become aware that

- mourning is socio-cultural specific and practices vary from culture to culture;
- the sense of humanness is a commonality which demands support to people who suffer, by way of, inter alia, contributing money to support the student in difficulty;
- inter-group mistrust can be replaced by mutual inter-group supportive relationships;
- through supportive practices on campus, social life skills of helping one another contributes towards collective wellbeing;
- the practice of consoling persons who grieve is a practice which has lifelong implications and students can use it after having completed their studies; and
- one can know about the lives of others and realise the significance of collaboration with out-group students without losing one's own identity.

The practice of consoling people who mourn is a common social practice in Ethiopia and forms part of what is commonly called *Idir*. It has different names in different language communities. *Idir* is a formal social institution which is governed by bylaws set by members. The members contribute savings at a given time interval, usually at the beginning of every month, to support a member whenever he/she encounters sorrow. It could be assumed that the cumulative effect of socio-cultural based inter-group supportive relationships which students experience comprise meaningful elements of CBLEs which further a holistic education.

c. The socio-cultural practice of celebrating joyous occasions collectively

The collective celebration of joyous holidays and occasions was another socio-cultural aspect which student participants reported. Almost all student participants cited celebrating religious holidays as a blissful occasion for reflecting on their social partnerships. Two students from ASTU reported as follows on how students rejoice collectively on holidays:

When a holiday approaches, just week before the holiday, the followers of the religion contribute money together without disclosing it to non-followers. They prepare everything just as it is usually done in the community. They invite no followers in the neighbourhood for the celebration. ... Secular music in different languages is played on tape ... Everybody enjoys together.

The second student added:

I had a chance to live with a Muslim friend for one year. ... As you see the University is diverse, we live with tolerance and respect to one another. ... Our dining halls are different. When it was an Islamic holiday, we [dorm mates] contributed money and went out to recreate ourselves with our Muslim friend. He also did the same thing during the Christian holidays.

In the first narrative, the expression, “They prepare everything as it is usually done in the community” was uttered by the student to show that the celebration followed the social norm developed by societies irrespective of a particular faith. As mentioned in section 6.2.1.2.1, authorities also take religious events into consideration. In the Ethiopian context, for instance, it is the norm that animals are killed separately for Christians and Muslims. That is why students are served separately according to their religious identities in the catering service (see section 6.2.1.2.1).

With regard to the collective celebration of holidays, most of the participants agreed that the practice was determined by student relationships that had been established. Although the practice may not be applicable across the board, since there are conservative students who do not mix with other religious affiliates (see section 6.2.1.2.1), students who participated collectively at holiday celebrations verified how they organised the celebration by bringing soft drinks and foods into the campuses with the permission of proctors. They stressed that since religious differences are recognised and respected,

invited student guests are served according to their religious norms. They indicated that the collective practices gave them opportunities to experience community life and forget their homesickness. They argued that since students attended the celebrations on a voluntary basis, the practice resulted in strengthened interreligious interaction and social attachments.

Student participants suggested that the social and cultural practices in terms of sharing resources and collective engagement in diverse socio-cultural practices are grounded within traditional norms and would promote mutual respect and positive relationships, thus endorsing CBLEs amongst a diverse student population.

In terms of identity based institutional practices such as religious based catering (see sections 6.2.1.2.1 and 6.2.1.2.2) and ethnic based clubs (see section 6.2.1.4.1) it has been shown that students who welcome the involvement of out-groups transcend identity boundaries and make a meaningful contribution to cross-border learning.

Celebrating a particular cultural occasion would allow attending out-group students to engage in reciprocal collective practices. Through collective practices, students from homogeneous communities are given the chance to practice a life of diversity within the student community. Collectiveness would presume discussion and engagement amongst students involved in communal practices which allow them to recognise commonalities and differences in social values. As a result, students involved in socio-cultural practices would ascertain that commonality does not mean sameness and that difference does not necessarily mean enmity (see section 3.6.4).

It was also reported by some students that some conservative religious affiliates do not like to mix with other religious groups. Thus, it could be argued that collective socio-cultural practices should not be considered as a standard working model in the context of this study. Even though collective socio-cultural practices were not endorsed by all student participants, it could be assumed that inter-group activities and collective practices reported by those who took part in them would break down stereotypes,

prejudices and anxieties and ease ethnic, linguistic, and religious tensions amongst students in an accommodating multicultural context.

6.2.3 CBLEs within teaching and learning management processes

Sections 3.6.3 and 3.6.4 showed that group learning activities that involve students from heterogeneous backgrounds could broaden students' perspectives. Data in this section were collected from lecturer and student participants in order to identify elements of CBLEs relating to teaching and learning management strategies and practices. This discussion shows how group learning strategies, which are primarily used for academic achievements in teaching and learning processes, become instrumental in establishing genuine inter-group relationships amongst students. The analysis focuses on finding answers to the third major questions and its sub questions:

III How are group learning activities managed at the universities?

- What types of group learning activities are practised at the study site universities?
- Which grouping strategies underlie cross-border learning experiences?
- How aware are the practitioners of the educational impact of cross-border learning experiences embedded in the teaching and learning management processes?

These questions were considered by analysing diversity sensitivity in terms of in-class and outside-class group teaching learning management processes. The analysis made from lecturer and student perspectives were compared to identify common grouping strategies at the universities. In this analysis, the common grouping strategies for the two groups are aligned in order to find working strategies that underlie CBLEs for in-class and outside-class teaching and learning activities.

6.2.3.1 Lecturers' perspectives concerning CBLEs relating to teaching learning management processes

This study which focuses on social learning processes practised in terms of collaborative group learning processes discussed in section 3.6.4 (cf. section 4.3.4.2) does not assume that group learning is a panacea that guarantees educational success in all circumstances. It is emphasised that collaborative, heterogeneous group learning processes aimed at academic problems could develop mutual supportive relationship and inter-group understanding in a diverse student population (see section 3.6.2). In the light of this assumption, in this sub-section, the organisational approaches used by lecturers to group diverse higher education students for group learning activities were taken as an area of investigation in order to find educational links between teaching and learning management processes and CBLEs (see section 3.6.4 and 4.3.4.2). Since this study focuses on inter-group learning processes that take place across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries, the strategies for organising students for group learning activities were analysed in terms of their heterogeneity and inclusivity. This analysis focuses on diversity perception, sensitivity and practice of the lecturers in relation to organising students across identity boundaries for in-class as well as outside-class learning activities. The next section relates to answering the first sub-question of the third major research question which asks:

- What types of group learning activities are practised at the study site universities?

In relation to the neurological and sociological theoretical interface of learning (see section 4.3.4.1), it was suggested that sensitivity to student diversity is theoretically based on the assumption that in a teaching and learning process, learning is influenced by the knowledge that is imparted and how it is delivered, processed and received. The argument implies that lecturers are expected not only to have knowledge of the subject matter and know what effective delivery thereof entails, but also how students could learn better by taking relevant factors that could influence their learning into account.

In this study, the understanding of student socio-cultural differences and using that to organise students and facilitate learning processes is conceptualised as being diversity sensitive teaching and learning process, whilst disregarding the differences or considering them to be minor and not taking student diversity into account when organising group learning activities, is viewed as diversity insensitivity (see section 3.6.3). In other words, a diversity sensitive teaching activity is understood as a purposefully designed all-engaging learning experience which heterogeneous students collaboratively execute during actual teaching and learning situations, whilst a diversity insensitive teaching process refers to a learning approach which assumes that the accomplishment of tasks should be left to an individual, or students who organise themselves into groups.

Based on the above assumptions, the lecturer focus group interview participants at each university were asked how they viewed and employed ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity of students in their teaching processes. The participants differed in opinions on the issue of recognising and using student diversity. Information collected showed that their attitudes in terms of the implementation of diversity sensitive teaching and learning ranged from observable favouritism, indifference, indignation, anxiety and frustration on one extreme, to an earnest recognition of the importance of the matter and a knowledgeable practice thereof, as well as a sad awareness of hindrances on the other. These findings verified the view that lecturers are not unanimous with regard to their views of dealing with student diversity (see sections 2.2.3.3.2 and 3.6.3). The contributions of the lecturers relate to preferential treatment practices, adherence to diversity insensitive practices, and their opposing views towards diversity insensitivity.

6.2.3.1.1 Preferential treatment occurring in the practices of lecturers

It was suggested that teaching academics are expected to recognise the composition of the student population and work closely with institutional management to bring multicultural policy objectives to success through teaching and learning processes (see sections 2.2.3.3.2 and 3.6.3). However, the data obtained in this regard revealed signs of favouritism reflected by giving preferential treatments to students based on parameters

of social identity which indicated that not all lecturers' diversity sensitivity was optimised. The lecturer participants considered practices displaying favouritism in terms of ethno-linguistic and religious based preferential treatments (cf. section 2.2.3.3.2).

a. Ethno-linguistic based preferential treatments

Some lecturer participants mentioned that they sometimes observed preferential treatment given to students who are from the same ethnic group. In this regard the Amhara, Oromo, Tigrean and some non-dominant groups were named in terms of the following situations:

- Amhara lecturers favouring Amhara students but being indifferent to others;
- Oromo lecturers favouring Oromo students but being indifferent to others;
- Tigrean lecturers favouring Tigrean students but being indifferent to others,
- lecturers from non-dominant groups favouring affiliates of his/her ethno-linguistic identity

b. Religious based preferential treatment

Most lecturer participants contended that some lecturers provide preferential and unfair support to students with whom they share religious affiliation. The Orthodox Christian, Muslim and Protestant Christian affiliates were singled out during the interviews.

c. Reflections on preferential treatment

During the focus group interviews, the lecturer participants of the three universities stressed that any form of identity based student-lecturer relationship could easily be interpreted in terms of preferential treatment and favouritism. They, however, characterised observable indicators of favouritism which were reflected in the practices of some lecturers:

- establishing closer social attachments with students on religious and ethnic bases;
- providing supplementary materials to students who were favoured on the basis of their ethno-linguistic attributes whilst denying others;
- favouring students who share their identity during marking;
- explaining academic issues exclusively in the mother tongue of some groups in the presence of non-speakers;
- briefing or translating a discussion in a language which is not always intelligible to non-speakers;
- elaborating ideas in Amharic with the assumption that all students understand the language even though, in practice, a significant number of students hardly understand the language;
- harassing and humiliating students who they consider as being “others” in class and during office consultation;
- articulating hatred speech aimed at some identity groups by, inter alia, depicting cultural customs of certain groups as signs of depravity and immorality;
- displaying stereotypical attitudes and making out-group students concerned about their otherness;
- using “we” when referring to their ethno-linguistic identity which they share with some students and “they” when referring to other ethno-linguistic identities; and
- being indifferent to out-group students who do not talk to them in their languages during consultation.

The lecturer participants argued that the above practices perpetuated suspicion and mistrust among different identity groups in the institutions. They added that any form of discrimination on the basis of one’s identity could easily lead to unnecessary competition and hostility among students. A lecturer participant highlighted the educational impact of the unfair practices:

In terms of the University community, if there is [a discriminatory] attitude [against] students ... based on ethnic, religious and [other

variables], the [lecturer] is in another world. ... I cannot continue teaching while humiliating the language of the student. ... We cannot deny that some of us, lecturers, have difficulty to accept and respect the identity, belief and otherness of students. A student who worries about the security of his identity cannot pay attention to his education.

The data obtained from the lecturer participants were confirmed by student participants (see section 6.2.3.2.1). It showed the existence of ethno-linguistic and religious based preferential practices by some lecturers. The data seem to confirm the frustration reported by students and the criticism of lecturers expressed in section 2.2.3.3.2. The arguments show a lack of consistency in the implementation of the multicultural policy provision for higher education and participants' dissatisfaction with the diversity management of universities.

6.2.3.1.2 Lecturers' adherence to diversity insensitive practices

Although the literature underpins that, in multicultural educational environments, lecturers should be diversity sensitive in their practices (see section 3.6.3), information collected showed that some lecturers were found to be indifferent to the social diversity of students, assuming it was not important, whilst some of them found the issue politically sensitive and frustrating (cf. section 2.2.3.3.2).

During the lecturer focus group interviews, some lecturers attributed their diversity insensitivity to cultural commonalities found amongst the student population, as well as the unevenness of student diversity in classes. Some of these participants claimed that they wanted to be fair to all and disregarded "minor differences" since students from different ethnic backgrounds shared cultural commonalities due to long standing and sustained inter-cultural contacts. They strongly warned that lecturers should not entertain anything related to social diversity and that aspects relating to either homogeneity or heterogeneity should not feature in teaching and learning practices since it would

- affect student unity negatively and fragment the student population into smaller groups and create a social rift and inter-group hostility; and
- categorise students in terms of their identity which would encourage them to only think in terms of their culture and discourage them to develop broader inclusive perspectives, such as that of “unity within diversity” which is advocated by the Ethiopian government.

Lecturer participants who attributed their insensitivity to a lack of uniformity of student diversity in classrooms suggested that grouping students for learning activities in terms of students’ sitting proximity and student self-selection could provide students the liberty to organise themselves and ostensibly help to accommodate students from non-dominant backgrounds. It was argued that they either simply used student name lists and ID sequence to establish groups or gave students the liberty to organise themselves, assuming that those who form their own groups would feel comfortable to work collaboratively. Lecturer participants emphasised that it is very difficult to establish an evenly diverse student cohort in a class and that non-dominant members would remain disadvantaged because the dominant majority would very likely dominate in heterogeneous study groups. A lecturer verified this state of affair as follows:

There could be one student from Afar ... two or three from Tigray ... and some from others. The [non-dominant students] are affected when they do group assignments because the dominant students ... work jointly and comfortably; the [non-dominant students] may feel discriminated [against]. It really affects their academic performance. The [dominant group members] have close relations and are friends; they can collect different materials together and work together. For the [non-dominant students], even if they are in the group, they feel that the [dominant group] discriminates against them.

Some lecturers who emphasised their insensitivity pointed out that they deliberately de-emphasised diversity issues because they found these politically sensitive. A participant elaborated as follows on this point:

Based on the experience I got from teaching History, I try to ignore some issues related to ethnicity, religion etc. as if they are not social issues, as if they do not concern me. However, internally I think students should discuss ... make debate and see it from every possible angle, but the students [do not] seem to be interactive and are indifferent on matters of such kind. I learnt this not in Civics and Ethical Education but in teaching History. ... When I talk about Christianity I put myself as a dedicated Christian and when I talk about Islam I put myself as a full-fledged member. I am very much careful about my words. Where I find the topic a topical one, I don't lead students to discussion and I don't comment on it myself. I do this not because I thought it is right 'yes', just [that] I should do [it] that way.

The participant seemed to be suspicious that raising contentious social issues related to diversity in the teaching and learning process could instigate conflict among students and implied that using diversity grouping would do the same. He also seemed to fear political implications of such practices because the tone of his voice when he said “*I do this not because I thought it is right 'yes', just I should do [it] that way*” implied frustration and a foreseen possible adverse outcome to a debate on contentious issues. Utterances of participants confirmed the fear and frustration reported in section 2.2.3.3.2 which showed that lecturers at some universities had become wary of diversity issues in classrooms. Arguments of lecturers seem to verify the view that although some educators have a basic understanding of student diversity, they fail to take that into account in their teaching practice (see section 3.6.3).

6.2.3.1.3 Lecturers' arguments against diversity insensitivity

In this section various aspects that need consideration in advancing diversity sensitivity at the study site universities are considered. The views described in the preceding sections (see sections 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2) indicated that diversity was considered a minor issue, a threat or a significant educational resource which complements teaching and learning processes. Most of the lecturers holding the latter view were sceptical about the diversity opposing assumptions of their colleagues. For instance, a lecturer participant expressed his concern about the diversity assumptions of his colleagues as follows:

[I]f the lecturer was sensitive and was looking at students' backgrounds, their environments and their origin, and mixed them accordingly, ... it could be nice; ... for example, mixing students when forming groups, mixing them in representations ... but it is difficult for me to say there is sensitivity formally. ... Manipulating student diversity ... and to use the existing student diversity at the institution, at department level and the lecturer himself ... err, I don't think; ... instead of making students diversity positive, seeing it negatively, making it antagonistic ... that sort of thing [seems to be common].

The narrative seems to suggest that lecturers are aware about the pedagogic value of student diversity during teaching activities. However, the expression “instead of making students diversity positive, seeing it negatively, making it antagonistic ... that sort of thing” implies suspicion of lecturers who claimed to be insensitive to student diversity and who might have used diversity counterproductively to justify their unfair academic practices (see sections 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2).

Concerning identity based interaction patterns and unevenness of student diversity in a class, some lecturers contended that unevenness in the student composition, which is a normal phenomenon, could be treated by means of constructive diversity management interventions. They stated that whenever they encountered an irregular distribution of

students in a teaching and learning environment, they pedagogically exerted constructive pressure on students to mix by promoting an awareness of the purposes of integration. They argued that they managed to enable students to get out of their comfort zone and mix with out-groups without affecting their individual identity. A lecturer explained the organisational strategies he employed as follows:

We cannot deny the fact [that the] human tendency and inclination towards identity based alignment is natural and is attached to human nature. To some extent [these] religious and ethnic alignments are observable with students. However, as much as possible, in order to minimise the effects of these, for example, when group work, tasks and homework are given, you should use your own mechanisms to organise students. Do not allow them to organise themselves. You can use random ID grouping, [and] distribute students [amongst] good performing students. Concerning organising students [amongst] top students, the government is also promoting what you call the “andi-lamist” [one-to-five] policy of organising students as well as lecturers Even the communities outside ... I am using it for organising students across identity boundaries... . Possibly ... in [these ways] you could organise them but we cannot deny that students have the tendency of aligning themselves [according to] some form of identity grounds.

The main argument of the lecturer seems to be that if a lecturer knows his/her students well, it is likely that he/she could design a mechanism to group them in a way that facilitates inter-group learning. He verified that students who experienced both homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings in services such as lodging, catering and co-curricular activities (see sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.1.2.1; 6.2.1.4.1 and 6.2.1.4.2) could be grouped in a heterogeneous manner in terms of teaching and learning processes by means of the alphabet or ID sequence, mixed ability and “one-to-five” forms of grouping

which are discussed below. According to him lecturers should not feel afraid of breaking up identity based grouping in favour of diversity sensitive grouping.

The “one-to-five” grouping was established by the EPRDF government in 2010 as a nationwide policy strategy for grouping people in communities and personnel in different governmental and non-governmental institutions. It applies to the grouping of, for example, employees, students, teachers, farmers, small and big business enterprises to bring about better performance in respective activities (see FMOE 2013: 3). According to this policy people are organised into a group of five of which one becomes the group leader for carrying out tasks. Although the degree of implementation of the scheme varies from institution to institution, the “one-to-five” student grouping pattern has been introduced to the study site universities since 2011 according to personal communication with staff participants at the study site universities.

The above quoted lecturer argued that since the one-to-five pattern of grouping is promoted by government, lecturers should incorporate diversity sensitivity into the grouping process in order to foster “unity within diversity” as envisaged by the national multicultural perspective. He seemed to suggest that since the grouping principle presumes the union of five persons working together, the scheme could be constructively used to arrange people into heterogeneous groups. He thought that incorporating diversity sensitivity into the “one-to-five” grouping strategy could complement the name list and the ID list strategies in grouping students into heterogeneous learning units. Another lecturer who agreed with these views commented that he would take administrative measures whenever he sensed that students grouped themselves according to a certain identity basis. He stressed that he knew that student diversity could develop team-spirit and that a diversity sensitive group could create a sense of interdependence among students. Some lecturers also pointed out that the “one-to-five” policy strategy has been institutionally accepted to improve the academic achievement of slow learners by placing them with active and better performing students. The overall argument of lecturer participants with regard to “one-to-five” grouping strategy supports the view that students’ learning improves when they are able to interact with

knowledgeable others constructively than when they are confined within their own identity zones (see sections 1.2.4.2 and 4.3.4.2).

Some lecturer participants emphasised that the mistrust and suspicion of students towards some lecturers (see section 6.2.3.1.1) could be minimised if lecturers recognise differences and address them constructively. With regard to distinguishing students in terms of their identity, the lecturer participants

- emphasised that students from identity based regional states who have been brought up in an identity based community often willingly disclose their identities at higher institutions if the environment is welcoming and if it could facilitate teaching and learning activities (see section 6.2.3.1.2);
- pointed out that they were able to roughly identify the ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of students from observable features like student names, clothing styles, religious adornments and languages used during group discussions, as well as their proximity to other students in class;
- asserted that they prepare sessions in which students introduce themselves to the class at the beginning of a course programme and arrange them into groups using students' identity numbers to facilitate heterogeneous inter-group interaction;
- prepared classroom discussion forums at which heterogeneous student groups share information about their cultural backgrounds with other classmates;
- orientated and encouraged students with regard to the advantages of heterogeneous groups as opposed to homogeneous groups in terms of developing varied perspectives in learning. In this regard, a lecturer commented as follows:

I advice them: 'If you are mixed groups, you would get better understanding.' ... Whenever I observe students forming homogenous groups, I ask them, 'your ethnic identity or religious identity?'... Because they sometimes try to organise themselves on

the basis of religious affiliation ... if I sense these things, I would break that without their awareness as much as possible. I tell that those who organise themselves on homogeneous bases do not generate varied opinions. Their ideas are confined and the same.

The participant was not only aware of the pedagogic value of student diversity but also a supporter of diverse groups which promoted inter-group learning activities. Other participants added that they used their initial impressions of their students at the beginning of a course programme to assign each student a role or code number to facilitate the establishment of temporary or permanent heterogeneous groups for in-classroom and outside learning activities. The cultural discussion forums which are used by lecturer participants underpin inter-cultural understanding and are geared towards orienting students in terms of various cultures (see section 3.6.2). The lecturer participants argued that in addition to inter-cultural understanding, students improve their English proficiency during discussions because English is used to describe their cultural values. Ultimately, both social and academic learning skills are developed. As discussed in section 3.6.3, these learning outcomes relate to CBLEs that result from collaborative learning processes during which students cross identity boundaries to know each other better.

The majority of lecturer participants contended that they were able not only to understand the identity of students but also to recognise trends of changes in identity formation. A participant explained his experience:

Most of the first year students ... tend to organise themselves on ethnic basis, like Oromo in one place, Tigreans in another place, like this In the later years this type of attachment loosens and religious affiliation gets stronger and stronger; it grows. Those who follow the same religion often tend to sit together in class.

Lecturer participants not only recognised the identity of students but also how identity formation shifted from ethnic to religious affinity and how grouping strategies could be revised bearing the dynamism of identity formation in mind.

6.2.3.1.4 Lecturers' views on student homogeneity and heterogeneity

Most of the lecturers emphasised that the application of diversity sensitive grouping strategies is determined by the socio-cultural heterogeneity of the student population at institutional as well as classroom levels. They commented extensively on homogeneity and heterogeneity in terms of teaching and learning activities.

a. Classification of student homogeneity

Lecturers asserted that they were aware of the educational role of student diversity but complained about student homogeneity at some institutional and classroom levels. Particularly, lecturer participants from AAU and DBU reported how student homogeneity obstructed group learning activities by citing examples of student homogeneity that prevailed at institutional and classroom levels.

1. Student homogeneity at an institutional level:

All the lecturer participants from DBU accentuated that the large majority of the 2010/2011 entry students came from areas in the *Amhara National Regional State* and were largely ethnically homogeneous. They, however, emphasised that the students differed to some extent as far as religious affiliations were concerned. They agreed that most of the students were Orthodox Christians while some were Muslims, and that a very few were Protestant Christians. They pointed out that most of the third year Social Sciences students during the 2012/2013 academic year were from the Wollo area, a province in the *Amhara National Regional State*. They, however, stated that, in their institutional context, students from other ethnic backgrounds including students from the most

populous ethnic groups in the country, such as the Oromo, constituted a minority and were disadvantaged in the classroom environment.

2. Student homogeneity at classroom level

Although most of the participants from AAU did not acknowledge the view that students were ethnically homogeneous at institutional level, they agreed that they found more ethnically homogeneous student cohorts in certain departments such as the *Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Psychology* and to some extent in the *Departments of Foreign Languages and Literature* during 2011-2013 academic years. Although they did not want to mention the names of the ethnic groups, they stressed that some departments were also dominated by staff from certain ethnic backgrounds. Even though they did not confirm any correspondence of student homogeneity with staff homogeneity at departments, the lecturer participants contended that staff homogeneity at a department could be a factor for student homogeneity at the same department when they discussed the reasons for students joining a department:

- the assignment of students of similar backgrounds to a specific university by the *Federal Ministry of Education*,
- lack of proper orientation concerning different departments during study field selection,
- misguided information by senior students about different departments,
- peer pressure,
- personal preference for an academic discipline which could result in them joining homogeneous students affiliated with a department,
- an awareness of the ethnic homogeneity of staff in a department which could benefit them, and
- an awareness of favouritism and unfair practices of some lecturers in some departments against students with similar backgrounds than theirs which result in them taking shelter in a department which has a majority of staff with similar backgrounds to theirs.

- b. The impact of student homogeneity versus heterogeneity in terms of teaching and learning processes

The lecturer participants who reported on the homogeneity of students were asked to explain their experience of managing teaching and learning processes. They related their experiences in terms of homogeneous dominant groups vis-à-vis students from non-dominant backgrounds involved in such groups. The characteristics listed below could be deduced from their answers and show that diversity sensitive heterogeneity is advantageous.

1. Effects of homogeneity on group learning activities:

- In group learning projects, the top scoring students sometimes do not mind working in the name of the team. Since other members of the group do not take part in the project with accountability, they are less likely to benefit academically from the process.
- Members of a group often hold similar perspectives on issues and projects often lack critical thinking and a variety of views.
- Classroom discussions are less interactive.
- Students easily reach consensus on issues which require answers in terms of their validity.
- Students are organised easily and act in unison. The latter practice sometimes jeopardises both the administrative management and the realisation of academic activities. For instance, students could boycott classes, force lecturers to comply with their academic schedules and could unfairly unite against management's academic decisions and apply pressure to avert decisions.
- As shall be shown in the next section, the voices of non-dominants who form part of a predominantly homogeneous group are often neglected.

2. Teaching and learning in a predominantly homogeneous group with non-dominant members

The lecturer participants explained the behaviour of non-dominant students within a mostly dominant group in terms of diversity sensitive and insensitive dominant groups.

i. Non-dominants within a discriminatory and diversity insensitive social environment where non-dominant students sense that the group environment is discriminatory, they

- withhold their opinions and hardly present ideas that oppose the dominants' viewpoints;
- show indifference and dissatisfaction in terms of group discussions;
- dissociate themselves from group practices and tend to resort to individual instead of team work;
- withdraw from a group activity when they find a particular act inappropriate;
- sometimes become intolerant and develop violent behaviour geared towards resisting segregation and the manifestation of discrimination in a hostile environment;
- develop negative attitudes towards the dominant homogeneous group; and
- sometimes become so frustrated with classroom homogeneity and the atmosphere it creates in the classroom that they are forced to change department or drop out of tertiary education.

ii. Non-dominants within a diversity welcoming social environment

The non-dominant within a diversity welcoming dominant homogenous group

- openly reflects his/her opinion;
- often takes a leading role in organising learning activities of the group;

- provides advisory and constructive comments on the decisions of the dominant homogeneous groups;
- sometimes fulfils the role of referee on matters concerning all students in the class in terms of a particular practical context,
- provides alternative perspectives that balance arguments when biased viewpoints are taken by the dominant group.

The data with regard to diversity insensitive and diversity welcoming practices discussed above shows the significance of CBLEs for effective teaching and learning processes and the development of inter-group understanding of students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. The positive contributions of student heterogeneity in terms of CBLEs for effective teaching and learning processes are presented below.

- c. Lecturers' observation of student heterogeneity in terms of teaching and learning and inter-group social development

This section focuses on a description of the significance of student diversity in teaching and learning processes as reported by lecturer participants. The analysis attempts to answer the third sub-question of the third major research question which asks:

How aware are the practitioners of the educational impact of cross-border learning experiences embedded in the teaching and learning management processes?

Contrary to the views of some lecturers who were opposed to student diversity (see sections 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2), other lecturer participants considered CBLEs to influence understanding and academic progress positively. The following quotation which deals with homogeneity alludes to the importance of heterogeneity:

When students are homogenous, for example, if they are Muslim students and one of them is hard working, he does not mind [to do]

the whole project in their names and writes their names on the report and presents it. The mixed grouping has something different: because they are different, the clever student would question why others benefit at his expense If one does not participate, [he won't], include the name [of that student] into the group project.

The quotation above verifies that student heterogeneity could be a means for managing individual accountability in group learning activities. Thus, the argument seems to agree with the view that students who solely associate themselves with peers of similar backgrounds may not be exposed to new and different perspectives (see section 3.6.2).

Ethnic and religious identities play interrelated roles in terms of group formation and knowledge concerning these variables could be useful for a lecturer in a multicultural context in establishing criteria for grouping students into heterogeneous groups. The view was aired that the lecturer participants identified the following advantages of heterogeneous groupings:

1. Advantages in terms of classroom teaching and learning activities
 - Whereas group homogeneity often decreases individual accountability and participation due to sympathetic and emphatic relationship among members, group heterogeneity encourages shared accountability and collective effort for mutual success. The argument concurs with the view that diversity is a social and educational asset in multicultural societies which advances the development of a just society (see section 3.6.2);
 - Heterogeneous students bring diverse experiences to classroom discussions. For instance, Christians and Muslims may explain religious morality from different angles. A varied explanation would broaden student perspectives and sometimes lead to interreligious understanding. However, the participants cautioned that discussions need to be closely monitored since dialogues which

are not conducted reasonably and unaccompanied by empathy, could easily inflame interreligious hostility.

- Student diversity is useful to elucidate and concretise difficult and abstract academic concepts such as *morality*, *relativism*, and *universalism*. It is difficult to gain an understanding of “taboos” in different cultures in *Moral Philosophy and Civics and Ethical Education* courses, unless views from representatives of different cultures are obtained.
- Student diversity facilitates classroom interaction when teaching *Communicative English Skills* courses. If students represent different ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds relating to different life styles, lecturers can easily generate discussions on various issues. Student diversity has a bi-dimensional function of supporting academic understanding, for example mastering the English language, as well as promoting inter-group understanding in terms of inter-cultural experiences.
- Student diversity facilitates classroom management processes and overcomes the effects of homogeneity (see section 6.2.3.1.4).

A lecturer demonstrated the latter point by comparing the differences between heterogeneous and homogeneous student groups:

If students come from different ethnic backgrounds, if one goes to conflict with a lecturer the others would say: ‘Leave it. Get calm.’ The other group may also say: ‘No we don’t want to be involved in this, or in that matter.’ In these ways students could learn patience; they could learn how to be fair in supporting different ideas. Here [at his university] if they are mostly homogeneous students, if there is a disagreement with a lecturer; they stand against the lecturer in unison. They speak in one voice. This might be attributed to their one culture and speaking one language. It limits them not to think in different perspectives. Absence of diversity makes the class difficult

for a lecturer to manage. ... It makes classroom management difficult.

The argument of the lecturer shows that student diversity which is built in terms of CBLEs can smooth student-student as well as student-lecturer interpersonal relationships and contributes in improving the teaching and learning processes. The lecturer participants also outlined advantages of heterogeneous student groups in developing CBLEs in terms of outside classroom teaching and learning activities.

2. Advantages in terms of outside classroom learning activities

The points below were given by lecturers although some of them were not always directly involved in out-side classroom learning activities (see section 6.2.3.2).

- Group homogeneity in out-side classroom learning activities often decreases individual accountability and participation in group learning projects due to sympathetic relationship among members, whereas group heterogeneity encourages shared accountability and collective efforts for mutual success.
- Outside class group learning projects are more successful and meet both social and academic learning objectives when carried out by heterogeneous team members.
- Student heterogeneity would be useful for increasing individual participation and group accountability and would advance a more successful accomplishment of an academic task.
- Grouping students across ethnic, linguistic and religious parameters for field trips, field observations and apprenticeships which require students to visit different socio-cultural areas, enhanced students' performances in projects because students who were not acquainted with a particular culture of a community were supported by those who belonged to it or were familiar with the customs of the community observed. In the process both parties enjoyed the

mutual partnership and recognised the significance of being familiar with other cultures for personal success.

- Students, who did not have close relationship with each other before field trips and who collaborated during the trip, often established positive sustainable relationships.
 - Diversity sensitive grouping, intentionally designed for academic purposes pertaining to outside classroom tasks, also contributed to the reduction of prejudices and advanced social cohesion for building collaborative relationship among diverse students.
3. Advantages in terms of inter-group social development and relationships

Diversity sensitive grouping is an instrument for

- developing inter-group tolerance, inter-cultural understanding, and inter-language learning,
- creating an awareness of cultural diversity in the country which is difficult and often almost impossible in life outside educational institutions,
- establishing a better understanding of social skills of collaboration for mutual success, and
- developing an understanding about cultural universals (commonalities) and differences.

As shown in sections 3.6.4 and 4.3.4.2, a CBLE is educationally rooted within an inter-group learning context. In the teaching-learning processes, it often emerges from incidental occurrences or planned organisational techniques which lecturers employ to help heterogeneous groups. The next section focuses on the actualisation of CBLEs in teaching-learning processes.

6.2.3.1.5 Actualisation of CBLEs in teaching learning processes

In this section, the data collected with regard to diversity sensitive practices of lecturers pertaining to the actual teaching-learning processes at the three study sites are analysed. The information related to the second and third sub-questions of the third major research question:

- Which grouping strategies underlie cross-border learning experiences?
- How aware are the practitioners of the educational impact of cross-border learning experiences embedded in the teaching and learning management processes?

Data obtained from the lecturer participants focused on in-classroom and outside classroom student grouping strategies and showed that the participants differed in view with regard to organising students for group learning activities. While some of them argued that they de-emphasised group learning activities, others reported that their knowledgeable practical experiences made group learning activities possible. Both groups listed a number of factors to substantiate their arguments.

a. Reasons that force lecturers to de-emphasise group learning practices

The lecturer participants from the three study site universities who reported that they gave less attention to group activities attributed their de-emphasis to the structure of classrooms, the inflexibility of classroom seats, their use of the lecture method in order to cover loaded course contents in time, and their lack of confidence in the efficiency of group learning practices in the social context:

1. Structure of classrooms

Most of the lecture auditoriums and classrooms were described as teacher-fronted which means that students usually sit in rows on immovable seats. The lecturer participants

commented that such locales are not suitable for organising group learning activities and result in the lecture method being emphasised.

2. Content of courses

Some lecturers argued that they often use the lecture method to cover the contents of courses that comprise comprehensive contents and that they do not have sufficient time allowing them to encourage classroom discussions.

1 Lack of confidence in group learning practices

Some lecturer participants reported that they did not pay attention to organise group learning activities because

- the student cohort in classes was very homogeneous and the expectation of gaining varied perspectives during discussions was low,
- grouping does not necessarily promote learning because active students mostly dominate discussions, and
- the large number of students in classes made organising group discussions difficult.

b. Reasons for emphasising grouping learning activities

The lecturer participants who asserted that they are diversity sensitive (see section 6.2.3.1.3) emphasised that they go beyond awareness and exploit student diversity for developing the academic and social skills of students. Most of them stated that they usually established groups for classroom learning activities comprising course exercises, laboratory experiments and reports, simulations and project presentations. They contended that outside-class learning projects such as library based group assignments, field study projects (for *Agriculture, Geography and Environmental study* and *Law* students), field trips (short visits) and apprenticeships (community based learning)

activities often required the collaborative involvement of heterogeneous students. They reported that they often organise students into groups to carry out these group learning activities, using:

- self-selection,
- name alphabet, ID number sequence,
- students' proximity to others in classroom,
- mixed ability grouping,
- one-to-five grouping, and
- heterogeneous grouping (explicit diversity sensitive grouping: inter-ethnic, inter-linguistic, and interreligious grouping strategies).

Most of the participants at the study site universities reported that they used these strategies flexibly for grouping students into pairs, small groups (3-5 students), as well as large groups (6-10 students). Most of the participants, who reported that they used the above-mentioned grouping strategies, confirmed that grouping strategies which take student diversity into account could facilitate student interaction across identity boundaries during group learning activities.

All the lecturer participants contended that working in groups outside classrooms is very important for integrating and synchronising theoretical aspects covered in classrooms with practical outside classroom learning experiences. Some added that outside classroom learning activities such as field trips and apprenticeship learning activities often necessitated heterogeneous student groups since out-group students needed to be grouped with students who speak the language of the community and who are familiar with the socio-cultural environment in which activities were carried out to facilitate student-community interaction.

The grouping strategies which lecturers reported can be classified into covert and overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies, based on the mechanisms used to form groups. The grouping of students using self-selection, proximity in the classroom, name lists and ID number, regardless of students' ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity, can be

designated as a covert diversity sensitive grouping practice. Lecturers who deliberately overlook student diversity thereby allow students to organise themselves (self-selection) (see section 6.2.3.1.2) and those who use students' own seating arrangements and name or ID number lists for group works could possibly be identified as diversity insensitive (see section 6.2.3.1.3 and 6.2.3.1.4). However, these practices imply the covert use of diversity sensitive grouping strategies since they may result in heterogeneous groups. In other words, grouping students using name lists, ID sequence and students' seating proximity may imply the at random inclusion of students from different backgrounds together into a jigsaw group, although it does not guarantee the heterogeneity of a group. The underlying assumption in which the indifference of lecturers to heterogeneity is rooted may be an antagonistic over-sensitivity to diversity or a lack of commitment (see section 6.2.3.1.4). It is noteworthy that diversity sensitive and insensitive lecturers sometimes use similar grouping strategies.

Some participants argued that name lists and university ID number sequence may not guarantee diversity sensitive grouping since homogeneous students may be grouped together. Others pointed out that the strategy could be used successfully in contexts where names of students from different backgrounds are distributed on a list. They contended that when students from different regional states are assigned to universities and given a university ID number, their names are likely to be mixed alphabetically and that they are likely to be mixed again when they choose a field of study. Some lecturer participants pointed out that ID numbers, mixed ability, one-to-five and heterogeneous grouping strategies could bring diverse students together if they are intentionally used for promoting inter-group collaboration.

Supportive arguments from lecturers who adhered to heterogeneity verified the theoretical view that in socially conducive learning environments, diverse students would construct knowledge obtained not only from professors and teaching materials, but also from peers (see sections 3.6.2; 3.6.3 and 4.3.3.1). In general, the practices described by lecturer participants verify that inter-group learning activities are organised covertly and overtly in different forms at various stages and that they can be sustainably used during

various phases of a programme. Classroom group learning activities were to some extent complemented by outside classroom curriculum based group learning activities

The lecturer participants in favour of heterogeneity contended that grouping strategies are effective when students willingly accept each other and when lecturers exert extra efforts to bring about harmony when students do not welcome arrangements of heterogeneity. They emphasised, as mentioned in section 6.2.3.1.4, that active students often support students from similar backgrounds and that less achieving students may assume that they can academically benefit more if they are grouped with active students from their backgrounds. They pointed out that academically active students sometimes feel that they are overburdened with the responsibility of supporting slow learners from other backgrounds and sometimes think that their compatriots in other groups may not get equivalent support from active students from other backgrounds.

Discussions with lecturer participants could be summarised by saying that despite the differences in diversity sensitivity level of lecturers, most of them confirmed that they prepare group learning projects for both in-class as well as for outside class group learning activities in the form of course work exercises, laboratory experiments, simulation practices, library based study assignments and projects, field trips and apprenticeships. It was found that they use covert and overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies. These grouping strategies confirmed, in many cases, the implementation of CBLEs. However, the findings suggest that the level of inter-grouping strategies in terms of cross-border learning is determined by lecturers' commitment to diversity relating to ethnic, linguistic and religious variance of the student population (cf. sections 3.6.3 and 4.3.3.2).

6.2.3.2 Students' perspectives concerning CBLEs relating to teaching and learning processes

The analysis in the preceding section showed that lecturers held different perspectives on practices with regard to student diversity. Most of the student participants at the three

study sites reported similar observations which confirmed the above arguments and substantiated the answers for the third major research question and its sub-questions.

6.2.3.2.1 Students' observation concerning preferential treatment practices of lecturers

Most students contended that they sometimes came across lecturers who displayed observable unfair academic and social support for students of their own ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds (cf. sections 2.2.3.3.2; 6.2.3.1.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2). The following transpired from the interviews:

- Some lecturers explicitly displayed hatred towards students from other ethnic groups and blatantly humiliated them in class.
- Some students were discouraged to consult some lecturers at office because lecturers had been indifferent towards them and neglected their needs if they failed to address them in their languages.
- Even students from backgrounds other than those of some of their lecturers who perform academically very well suffer deliberate avoidance of recognition of success by lecturers and are reprimanded and humiliated when minor errors are made.
- Some lecturers often show appreciation for academic efforts of students from their cultural backgrounds irrespective of their academic standard.
- Some lecturers often grade students from their cultural backgrounds favourably.
- Unfair practices of some lecturers resulted in some students being forced not to complete their course programmes in the prescribed years. They either had to pursue their studies in other departments or quit their tertiary education.
- Unfair practices of some lecturers caused unfair competition, mistrust, suspicion, and hostility among students.

Some students reported that they formed groups which included students who were favoured by lecturers for working on group learning projects in order to be graded equally. They pointed out that equal marks are given for all group members for team projects.

They, however, complained that in some instances students who identify themselves with biased lecturers, preferred to organise themselves into homogeneous groups, thereby excluding out-group students.

6.2.3.2.2 Student grouping strategies for learning activities

Since student participants reported grouping strategies for in-classroom and outside-classroom learning activities similar to which were reported by the lecturers across the study site universities (see section 6.2.3.1.5), this analysis presents an integrated explanation of student grouping strategies for teaching and learning activities at the three universities. Since a key aim is to obtain knowledge concerning inter-group learning dynamism across ethnic, linguistic and religious heterogeneity, this analysis focuses on inter-group processes.

This analysis focuses on student engagement in diversity sensitive learning activities and their evaluation of lecturers' diversity sensitivity and responsiveness in relation to in-classroom and outside-classroom teaching learning processes. It is believed that juxtaposing the perspectives of the lecturer and student groups would provide theoretical grounds underlying student grouping strategies for teaching learning activities that underlie CBLEs aimed at the holistic development of students as envisaged by the universities (see section 2.2.3.3)

The results of this analysis would provide an evidence based explanation with regard to educational interconnections between lecturers' teaching management strategies and the development of CBLEs of the students.

All the student participants of the three universities agreed that they were often involved in group activities given for in-class as well as outside-class situations and confirmed the view of the lecturer participants with regard to group learning activities. Their group involvements are summarised below:

- a. In-classroom learning activities:
 - coursework exercises,
 - laboratory experiments and reporting outcomes,
 - planned group discussions, and
 - group project presentations.

- b. Outside-classroom learning activities:
 - assignments,
 - practical work,
 - library based study projects,
 - field trips, and
 - apprenticeships.

During the focus group interviews, the student participants confirmed the following grouping strategies for in-classroom and outside-classroom group learning activities identified by lecturer participants (see section 6.2.3.1.5) which included:

- self-selection,
- covert diversity sensitive grouping strategies (name list order, university ID sequence and classroom sitting proximity), and
- overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies (criteria based groupings: mixed ability grouping, one-to-five and socio-cultural based heterogeneous grouping strategies aimed at heterogeneity).

Most of the student participants agreed that student groupings for learning activities were not only influenced by the knowledge and attitudes of lecturers (see sections 6.2.3.1.2 and 6.2.3.1.3) but also by in-classroom and outside-classroom situations. With regard to in-classroom factors, the participants confirmed the argument presented by lecturer participants (see section 6.2.3.1.5) namely that most of the lecture venues are not suitable for undertaking group activities. Some added that seats are not only immovable but also

scarce and that some of them are dysfunctional. Students have to compete to obtain comfortable seats proximal to lecturers.

6.2.3.2.3 Impact of the diversity variables on student group formation

With regard to preference for grouping, a few students asserted that they do not mind to work with anybody in the class, but the vast majority of the student participants emphasised that they preferred to work with good performing students as well as students with which they can identify in terms of ethnic, linguistic and (sometimes) religious affiliation. Some student participants reported that after three to five years on campus, they still experience discomfort to do group activities with out-group students. The data associated with their preferences are presented in terms of ethno-linguistic and religious affinities.

a. Reasons for ethno-linguistic affinity in group formation

Most student participants reported that they preferred to form groups for learning on an ethno-linguistic basis and attributed this preference to the following factors (cf. section 6.2.3.1.4):

- They feel comfortable if they sit with students from their backgrounds during group learning activities.
- They do not always feel free to speak their minds in the presence of out-group students.
- Joining out-groups as an outsider may affect the privacy amongst members of homogeneous groups.
- Identity based groupings are common practice in society in terms of ethnic based parties and religious based institutions; and they are therefore practising what already exists in the communities from which they come.
- They feel isolated and marginalised when other group members interact with each other using a language they do not understand.

- If they were to join a group which uses a different language, they would be forced to speak another language poorly and would be humiliated for that reason.
- They lack an opportunity to share their views if other members of the group use their mother tongue.
- Since students often discuss issues in their first language, joining out-groups who use a different language would affect their learning opportunities.
- The group may be forced to resort to speak Amharic or English (see sections 6.2.1.3), in which they cannot express themselves clearly, as an attempt to appease out-group members. This would result in low quality group work (cf. section 6.2.3.1.2).
- A group which identifies itself with the ethnic identity of a lecturer may not like to include out-group students as it could negatively affect their exploitation of the favour of the lecturer (see section 6.2.3.1.1).

During the interviews some student participants used negative rhetoric like “I don’t feel happy”, “I get angry” and “I develop hatred” while reflecting on their experiences with out-group students. This suggests sustained mistrust; suspicion and frustration.

With regard to the role of ethnic affinity, most student participants emphasised that students from Amhara, Oromia and Tigray are often not interested in executing group learning tasks with out-group members. A Tigrean student participant commented that other students did not like to work with students from Tigray because “most of the students think that students from Tigray have “arms”. In this context “arms” may not necessarily refer to the possession of physical weapons, but it symbolises an assumed political alignment of Tigrean students with the EPRDF government which is often signified as the “Tigrean government” (see sections 1.3 and 2.2.3.3.3). The dissociation of the Amhara, Oromo and Tigrean student groups seems to be related to two factors. Firstly, since the groups are likely larger in number at the campuses, they may easily find friends from their respective backgrounds and may not bother about getting involved in heterogeneous groups. Secondly, the dissociation could be related to political power relationships which

explain the root cause for inter-group mistrust, suspicion, and hostilities between the three groups (see sections 1.3 and 2.2.3.3.3).

- b. The relation between religious affinity and the selection of partners for group work

Student participants remarked that after the completion of their first academic year, students tend to establish groups based on their religious affinity. This view concurs with the view of the lecturer participants that students in their second and further academic years tend to organise into groups on religious rather than ethnic grounds (see section 6.2.3.1.4). A third year student participant remarked as follows on the role of religious affinity in group formation:

In my class there are thirty-eight students. Out of these two are Protestants and one is a Muslim. When a group project is given others organise themselves according to their religion. They ignore us because we are Protestants and the other fellow is a Muslim. Even if we join them by pressure they neglect us.

Most of the student participants attributed religious based grouping preferences to the following factors:

- Students of the same religion usually attend off-campus religious services together and as a result they establish relationships, even if they differ in terms of other diversity variables (ethnicity and language). This encourages them to form groups on the basis of religious affinity.
- Most students are automatically grouped by their respective off-campus religious institutions into groups such as Bible or Quran study groups and they often apply that alignment for undertaking group learning activities on campus.
- Some religious institutions provide students with social and academic resources. Since academic activities are competitive by nature, religious group

may not want to share the resources with other religious groups. This assumption seems to indicate that religious institutions in close proximity to the campuses foster unfair discrimination based on religious affiliation.

- Some students group themselves on the basis of the religious affinity they share with a lecturer. They do not like the inclusion of students adhering to other religions as it would hinder their exploitation of the favour of the lecturer (see section 6.2.3.1.1).

Some student participants also reported that student groups had initiated tutorial programmes based on religious affiliation. Some of them remarked that although the practice was officially stopped in 2012, this practice is still being carried out unofficially at ASTU and DBU.

c. Grouping impetus of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables

Student participants differed in their opinion concerning the synergy between grouping and ethnic, linguistic and religious variables. Most of the student participants from Amhara and Tigray backgrounds reported that they prefer a group based on religion identity whereas the counterparts from Oromo, SNNP and Somali backgrounds emphasised that they prefer ethno-linguistic based groupings. The difference in the grouping preferences of the participants from the Semitic (Amhara and Tigrean) and Non-Semitic (Oromo, SNNP and Somali) might be related to diversity related factors. Firstly, it might be attributed to the fact that ethnically homogeneous students tend to establish groups on basis of religion (see section 6.2.3.1.1) which would verify the assumption that diversity dynamism changes from context to context and that homogeneity in one may not imply that other diversity issues cease to exist (see section 3.2). Secondly, it might be associated with the instrumentalist view of ethnic identity according to which people who do not experience discrimination related to ethnic identity do not consider ethnicity to be an issue, whilst ethnic groups who know discrimination foster a strong sense of ethnic identity (see sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.3). Since the Amhara and Tigrean ethnic groups have been considered dominant in the Ethiopian political arena (see sections 1.3 and 2.3.3.3

a), the students from these ethnic backgrounds may be less affected by matters related to discrimination based on ethnic identity than their counterparts from other ethnic groups.

The data presented in sections 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2 showed that where diversity sensitive strategies are de-emphasised and where students are allowed to form groups on a basis of self-selection, they tend to organise themselves on a basis of homogeneity which results in segregation. The organisational preferences of the students demonstrate the vitality and the intertwining nature of ethnic, linguistic and religious identities. The differences in preference of grouping of the participants for group learning activities between the participants from the Semitic (Amhara and Tigray) and non-Semitic (Oromo, SNNP and Somali) backgrounds seem to have diversity related implications. It may imply that in a multicultural situation, homogeneity in terms of a specific diversity variable may not hold true for all groups. Another variable may also be a criterion for grouping. The religion based group preference of Amhara and Tegrean students which followed a diluted ethnic based grouping shows the complexity of grouping. Secondly, lecturers have to be aware of diversity dynamism so as to address different socio-cultural contexts. The disengagement experiences of students in mixed group activities which were reported, indicate the persistence of mistrust and suspicion among students of different backgrounds and explain diversity insensitive attitudes and practises of the lecturer participants and homogeneous orientation of students (see section 6.2.3.1.1).

d. Conditions for heterogeneous grouping

Some student participants who were asked about the conditions which would bring about group forming with out-group students reported that they form groups with out-group students for group learning activities when:

- they are confident of their academic capability and feel comfortable to work with out-groups in the class,
- they are too small in number to form a homogeneous group which excludes out-group students,

- they find out-group students hard working in terms of their studies,
- they observe academic difficulties, anxieties and failure experienced by out-group students and sympathise with students and therefore want to help them,
- they sense favouritism in the practices of a lecturer who has an affinity with a certain group and also want to share the benefits (cf. section 6.2.3.1.1),
- homogeneous majority groups need an out-group student/students who has/have an affinity with a lecturer and who might be favoured because of his/her/their backgrounds and who could lead the group (it was pointed out that the names of outstanding students would appear at the top of the list of written group projects that are submitted), and
- lecturers organise groups in terms of covert diversity sensitive grouping strategies (name list order, ID sequence, and classroom seating proximity) and overt diversity sensitive groupings such as mixed ability, heterogeneous grouping and the one-to-five grouping strategies.

6.2.4 Assessment of implementation of inter-group development strategies

Two individual interview participants reported that they had not yet prepared impact assessment mechanisms for the implementation of diversity management strategies practised in the service units. They emphasised that thus far they had measured the impact of the implementation of diversity management practices in terms of the absence of inter-group hostility. They stated that since the implementation of diversity sensitive lodging, religious based catering services and inclusive and exclusive co-curricular activities, inter-group hostilities and conflicts have significantly decreased (see also section 6.2.1.1.2).

A director participant reported that his department distributes a questionnaire to students at the end of every academic year (see Appendix IV) which requires respondents to evaluate the performances of departmental employees. The director argued that since the result of the survey is used to improve the quality of services, it could assess the implementation of diversity management strategies and indirectly provide input that would

further facilitate the CBLEs of students. Some individual interview participants and *Student Service* focus group interview participants emphasised that although it was not empirically verified, they sensed that student inter-group conflicts and hostilities have decreased since the implementation of diversity sensitive service management strategies during the 2010/2011 academic year. Some *Student Service* focus group interview participants contended that in most cases students indulge in inter-group conflicts on campus when they feel that students from their cultural background have been treated unfairly. They associated the decrease of on-campus student inter-group hostility with external political pressure by government.

With regard to assessing the impact of group learning management strategies, most of the lecturers reported that they assess heterogeneous social cohesion of students in terms of group work accomplishments, intact heterogeneous group performance in subsequent group learning activities, and the absence of complaints attributed to inter-group misunderstanding.

6.2.5 Conclusions of empirical data

In this chapter empirical data collected from individual and focus group interviews and observations were analysed and triangulated with the contextual literature review (including documentary analysis presented in Chapters 2) and the theoretical framework to arrive at comprehensive answers to the research questions stated in the first chapter of this study. The questions focused on institutionally set service management strategies and teaching and learning management processes in terms of CBLEs that would further the holistic development of students in a multicultural context at selected study sites.

The findings of the study showed that the three study site universities (AAU, ASTU and DBU) employed similar management strategies in their administrative units and curriculum based teaching and learning processes to address student differences which underlie CBLEs. Key findings concerning the empirical data were provided in relation to CBLEs embedded in service management strategies, student socio-cultural practices,

diversity sensitive teaching and learning management strategies, and challenges pertaining to diversity management implementation practices. By means of summarising the findings, an attempt is made to find answers to the last major research question and its sub-questions:

IV How complementary are management practices relating to *Student Service* units and the teaching and learning areas to developing cross-border learning experiences?

- What opportunities facilitate the implementation of cross-border learning experiences within management processes?
- What kinds of challenges affect the utilisation of cross-border learning experiences within management processes in the context of this study?

6.2.5.1 Elements of CBLEs embedded in service management processes

The study showed that the management strategies employed to provide students with services in the form of lodging, catering, and multilingual services, as well as co-curricular activities, comprised elements related to CBLEs. Most of the student participants who utilised diversity sensitive services were able to overcome stereotypes and prejudices and became comfortable with campus social life in the presence of people from out-groups (see sections 6.2.1.1.1; 6.2.1.1.2 and 6.2.1.1.3).

6.2.5.1.1 CBLE outcomes within diversity sensitive lodging services

The lodging service implementers recognised the social and academic advantages of the diversity sensitive lodging service and used the provision to enhance the holistic development of students. As a result of the diversity sensitive lodging service which allocated students by means of name alphabetical order, ID sequence or department (see sections 4.3.3.2; 6.2.1.1.1, 6.2.1.1.2 and 6.2.1.1.3):

- Students who had been stereotypical and suspicious about students from other cultures when they joined the university, were enabled to understand out-groups. Since they overcame their stereotypical attitudes and anxieties, they established supportive relationships with out-groups.
- Students became familiar with aspects pertaining to the socio-cultural life of out-groups, for example, feeding customs, language and religious practices, without disregarding their own.
- Students developed multiple perspectives which broadened their horizons, both socially and academically (cf. sections 4.3.4.2 and 6.2.1.1.3).
- Students were able to constructively uphold their socio-cultural values whilst accommodating universal norms and skills for adapting to collective community life which reflects an acceptance of differences.
- Students recognised that being different allows one to learn from others and understand their significance in gaining a better understanding of oneself (cf. section 4.3.3.1).

These learning outcomes are grounded in theory concerning CBLE which supports the view that cross-border learning is a reciprocal process that breaks down identity borders (see sections 1.2.4.2; 3.6.4 and 4.3.2).

6.2.5.1.2 Cross-border learning outcomes related to services concerning diversity in religion

In sections 6.2.1.2.1 and 6.2.1.2.2 it was mentioned that universities provide religious based catering services and permit individual prayers but outlawed group religious practices and observable religious oriented clothing styles. It should be noted that although the prohibition of religious group practices was considered as a means of implementing the secular education policy and avoiding interreligious conflicts, the majority of the student participants considered religious group practices at universities as common social phenomena which reflect practices in larger communities. They considered this prohibition as being contrary to the freedom of religion enshrined in the

Constitution (see sections 2.2.3.1 and 6.2.1.2.3). Students also held the following views (see sections 6.2.1.2.2 and 6.2.1.2.3):

- Conducting religious group practices, despite the prohibition, would help students to develop mutual trust that anchors peaceful co-existence, and further the skill of mutual respect for other religions (cf. sections 3.5.2 and 4.3.2).
- An understanding of differences in religions results in realising the significance of others in understanding and gaining deep insight into one's own religion (cf. section 4.3.4.2).

These learning outcomes emphasise that equitable identity based services can play significant roles in the development of CBLEs of multicultural students (cf. sections 3.2 and 3.6.2).

6.2.5.1.3 Cross-border learning outcomes in terms of multilingual services

In section 6.2.1.3 it was shown that in addition to the official language of communication, some officers and lecturers emphasised the significance of using languages other than Amharic during service in an informal manner to ease linguistic challenges of non-Amharic speaking students. This implies that multilingual office support was found to be an effective strategy to ease communication barriers between the service providers and students and develop interpersonal relationships (cf. sections 3.6.2 and 4.3.4.2); the findings showed that:

- Multilingual assistance is an advantage for both service providers and the students.
- Through the flexibility in the use of languages at offices, the service providers demonstrate their concern for students, thereby creating a welcoming environment for linguistically diverse students.
- The practice in multilingualism encourages students to develop a sense of partnership and belonging to a community at the institutions.

- Students are motivated to engage in interaction irrespective of their level of proficiency in other languages, and are helped to develop social bonds.

These outcomes, which originate from the informal multilingual office service, contribute towards an institutional environment which is conducive to study and social activities amongst multilingual students (cf. section 3.2.2). Since the practice of using different languages decreases sense differentiation (see section 1.2.4.3), the initiative of the participants who apply the multilingual support facilitates CBLEs (cf. sections 3.5.2 and 4.3.2).

6.2.5.1.4 Cross-border learning outcomes of co-curricular activities

As mentioned in section 6.2.1.4 and shown in Table 6.1, the co-curricular activities at the universities comprise exclusive and inclusive clubs. The inclusive clubs are non-partisan collaborations which are established with the purpose of enhancing inter-group interaction and developing social cohesion of students, whilst identity-based clubs focus on cultural activities pertaining to a particular culture. Mixed interest and attitudes were displayed in terms of the clubs (see section 6.2.1.4.2).

For those who considered the existence of identity based clubs as being discriminatory, these clubs:

- augment ethnocentrism and diminish social cohesion of the universities' student population;
- are linguistically exclusive and discriminatory and therefore constitute a threat to out-groups;
- confine students to socialisation within a specific group and therefore hinder the development of wider perspectives; and
- should not have been established because a single heterogeneous club would have promoted "unity within diversity" which is in line with the multicultural national policy of the *Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation* (2009).

For those who upheld the validity of the identity based clubs, they:

- provide a means for group self-assertion;
- enhance and strengthen supportive in-group relationships;
- create confidence in in-group members, helping them to establish positive relationships with out-groups and adapt to the campus environment;
- provide ample opportunity to exercise their culture;
- avoid hostile competition among members of different cultural groups since everybody is on the same footing;
- present no language barrier since brief translations of productions which are provided to speakers of other languages show that language need not necessarily be a barrier to understanding the attitudes of others;
- provide an equitable service preventing dominant cultures from exerting pressure on non-dominant cultures under the guise of a heterogeneous group; and
- diminish the perpetuation of inter-group mistrust and hostility.

The above findings verify the fact that heterogeneity of a club does not necessarily bring about equal participation of all members. Conversely, the homogeneity of a club does not mean a total isolation of out-groups. Both club types comprise complementary CBLEs that can contribute to the development of inter-group relationships amongst students (cf. sections 3.2 and 4.3.4.2). The differences between them do not seem to disprove the value of identity based services and activities, although they emphasise the need for appropriate management processes (see sections 1.2.4.3 and 3.5.2) to promote CBLEs of students.

6.2.5.2 *Cross-border learning outcomes of diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices of students*

As mentioned in sections 6.2.2.2.1 and 6.2.2.2.2 CBLEs which were effected as a result of diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices, even though not always directly, were the following:

- Students who took refuge in the company of senior students of the same background gradually benefited by gaining confidence in adapting to a multicultural setting.
- Students who resisted diversity by exercising minimal interaction with out-group students in their dorm and passively resisted visible and invisible segregation, eventually learnt to tolerate differences and liberate their stereotypical mindsets.
- New students who welcomed diversity as a learning opportunity benefited from CBLEs since their arrival at universities.

Cross-border learning outcomes related to collective socio-cultural practices (see section 6.2.2.2.2) were characterised by the following benefits:

- the sharing of academic and non-academic resources with out-groups,
- social support as evidenced by consoling an out-group student who experience grief, and
- gaining an understanding of other religions as a result of celebrating religious occasions collectively.

These findings emphasise the need for the official recognition and support of the management units concerned with student diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices (cf. sections 3.5.2 and 4.3.4.2)

6.2.5.3 *Components of CBLEs related to teaching and learning processes*

Diversity sensitive teaching and learning processes are based on the assumption that teaching and learning activities are influenced by the manner in which knowledge is delivered and processed as well as factors which affect learning (cf. sections 3.6.1 and 4.3.4.2). The following was found (see sections 6.2.3.1.3 and 6.2.3.1.4):

- Heterogeneous students bring meaningful diverse experiences to classrooms discussions.
- Student diversity is an instrument for advancing inter-group tolerance, inter-cultural understanding, inter-language learning, and for creating an awareness of cultural diversity in the country.
- Student diversity is useful in elucidating and concretising complicated and abstract academic concepts such as taboos, morality, relativism and universalism which are difficult to explain.
- Student diversity facilitates classroom interaction and serves the bi-dimensional function of supporting academic as well as inter-group understanding during group learning activities.
- Student diversity can aid the classroom management processes and counteract unjustified acts which could find support in a homogeneous setting.

It was found that CBLEs are facilitated when group learning activities are conducted by heterogeneous students who are grouped in terms of:

- covert heterogeneous groupings (name list order, ID number sequence, classroom seating proximity, mixed ability grouping, one-to-five grouping) and
- overt heterogeneous grouping (according to explicit diversity sensitive interethnic, inter-linguistic, and interreligious grouping strategies) (see section 6.2.3.2.1 and 6.2.3.2.2).

The overall findings of the teaching learning management processes suggest that in multicultural teaching and learning environments, group learning activities and the process of grouping heterogeneous students in terms of identity variables make an interdependent equivalent contribution in developing cognitive and affective skills of students (see sections 4.3.3.2 and 4.3.4.2). This implies that both the process of organising collaborative groups and specific learning outcomes should be highly valued to bring about the holistic development of students by means of CBLEs (cf. sections 3.6.4 and 4.3.3.2).

6.2.6 Complementary diversity management strategies relating to the service and teaching and learning areas

Table 6.2 below provides a concise matrix of complementary diversity management strategies conducted in the student service and teaching and learning areas as well as related educational assumptions that underlie CBLEs.

Table 6.2: A matrix of diversity management and development of CBLEs in service and teaching and learning processes

Educational assumptions underlying the practices	Service management practices	Teaching and learning management practices	Educational outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering of social skills pertaining to peaceful and harmonious and diverse co-existence, and broadened perspectives (see section 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.3.2.2. d) Successful group learning projects conducted by heterogeneous group members (see section 6.2.3.1.3 and 6.2.1.1.3) 	Assignment of heterogeneous student groups to dorms by using name list sequence or ID number sequence or department (see section 6.2.1.1); inclusive clubs and exclusive co-curricular activities (see sections 6.2.1.4.1 and 6.2.1.4.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covert diversity sensitive grouping strategies: name list order, ID sequence, and classroom seating proximity, Overt criteria based groupings (mixed ability grouping, one-to-five and heterogeneous grouping strategies) (see section 6.2.3.1.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students helped each other with academic activities by sharing learning resources, handouts, etc., elucidating intent of assignments and sharing ideas (6.2.2.2.1 c) Shared social life. Inter-cultural understanding (see section 6.2.2.2.2). Development of shared accountability and collaboration for mutual success (see section 6.2.3.1.5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation of cross-language interaction and helping students to develop partnership and a sense of belonging in institutional community (see section 6.2.1.3). Facilitation of cross-language interaction and helping students partnerships and sense of belonging to institutional community 	Multilingual office services (see section 6.2.1.3)	Demonstration of subjects in the language intelligible to students (see section 6.2.3.1.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of students are motivated to engage in interaction despite level of linguistic proficiency and develop social relationships. Ease of communication and linguistic differences cease to be sign of discrimination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A means of self-efficacy, collective-self assertion and effective strategy to address group identity needs 	Identity based catering service and ethno-linguistic based clubs(see section 6.2.1.4.2)	Grouping student according to self-selection; lecturers' insensitivity to socio-cultural differences of students when organising group activities; fear of dealing with identity issues (see section 6.2.3.1.4 and 6.2.3.1.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-group supportive relationships, a means to mix with out-groups, promotion of "equality and unity within diversity and collaborative partnership for mutual success.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A means for recognition of cultural commonalities; promotion of "unity within diversity" and a strategy to overcome discrimination reflected in identity based clubs (see section 6.2.1.4.1) A means for facilitating teaching and learning processes 	Heterogeneous ethno-linguistic based clubs	overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies (see section 6.2.3.2.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unhealthy competition and perpetuation of mistrust (club) shared accountability and collective effort for mutual success (mixed group learning activities)

6.2.7 Transformational practices

The following cross-border learning outcomes which emerged from service and teaching and learning management practices demonstrate positive attitudinal changes that characterise the transformational practices described in sections 3.5.2 and 4.3.3.2.

- Some *Student Service* personnel, lecturers and students viewed identity based services and activities with indifference or anxiety based on their assumption that such practices result in the disintegration of student unity (see sections 6.2.1.4.2; 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2). However, students from homogeneous communities who were anxious about other groups came to know that diversity is a normal phenomenon in social life as a result of collective life which includes the religious based catering service (see sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.1.2.3). Some of them developed empathy with and concern for students from other cultural backgrounds and their religious practices. Despite the strict prohibition on religious clothing and group religious practices on campuses, they did not object to conducting group prayers in their presence. Sometimes they also attended religious ceremonies of their counterparts (see section 6.2.1.2.3).
- Students' empathy and reciprocal generosity and support of others in an academically and socio-culturally competitive environment demonstrated a transformational change in students (see sections 6.2.3.2.2; 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.1.2.3).
- Those who provided and received support to and from out-group students developed harmonious relationships with them and were able to cross identity boundaries, and transform into diversity embracing personalities (see sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.2.2.2).
- Most of the *Student Service* personnel recognised that students who had been challenged by ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity on campus and who had lived in anxiety and fear (see section 6.2.2.1), developed a sense of cross-cultural partnership and belonging to the campus community once their diversity needs were addressed (see section 6.2.1.3).

- Although some student groups did not have the courage to learn the languages of others, students who attempted to learn different languages developed fraternal relationship with speakers of those languages (see section 6.2.1.1.3).
- Students who had been challenged by ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity developed fraternal relationships with members of out-groups by means of co-curricular activities. For example, students from different backgrounds who supported the same institutional and/or European football clubs developed friendly relationships regardless of their difference in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious identity (6.2.1.4.1).
- Some students slowly adapted to an environment from diversity avoidance and transformed their suspicious and stereotypical mindset to one that embraces diversity (see section 6.2.2.2.1). Transformational changes underpin the significance of CBLEs for students in a socially diverse institutional environment (cf. sections 3.5.2 and 6.2.2.2)
- Through a heterogeneous collective dormitory life students came to know the essence of otherness as well as that of their own (see section 6.2.2.2.2). They came to a better understanding of the self. Transformational self-understanding found expression in the support of the slogan “I am, because we are”.
- By means of heterogeneous group learning activities, students shared accountability and worked collectively towards mutual success (see section 6.2.3.1.3).
- Although some students only felt comfortable in identity based group learning activities, heterogeneous students who successfully conducted group learning activities with heterogeneous groups developed close cross-cultural relationships (see section 6.2.3.2.2) which is essential for the holistic development of multicultural students for a multicultural work environment.

The above findings relate to the diversity climate described in section 2.2.3.3.3. It could be argued that students who experience positive relationships with out-group students refrain from discrediting the contributions of the out-group students in their lives (cf. sections 3.6.4 and 4.3.4.2).

6.2.8 Challenges to the implementation of CBLEs

The study revealed internal and external challenges related to the implementation of cross-border learning in terms of service management units and teaching and learning environments.

6.2.8.1 Internal challenges

The internal challenges include relative ethnic homogeneity of student cohorts in the context of a multicultural country (see section 6.2.3.1.4), lack of uniform positive attitudes amongst some service management personnel that are involved in the implementation of identity based services relating to the religious based catering service, group religious practices (see sections 6.2.1.2.1 and 6.2.1.2.2), ethno-linguistic based clubs (see sections 6.2.1.4.2), and preferential treatment practices and diversity insensitivity of some lecturers in the teaching and learning area (see sections 6.2.3.1.2 and 6.2.3.1.3). Diversity insensitive attitudes and practices have the potential to jeopardise the efforts of diversity sensitive service management personnel, lecturers and students and thereby dwarf the development of CBLEs which are significant for the holistic development of multicultural students (cf. section 2.2.3.3.1). In addition, the lack of an established assessment strategy to measure the outcomes of the implementation of CBLE sensitive measures could hinder the further improvement of CBLEs in the service and teaching learning management processes (see section 6.2.4).

6.2.8.2 External challenges

Ethnic identity rooted in political practices and religious based support exerted by external organisations jeopardise the internal implementation of diversity management practices at the selected universities (see section 6.2.3.2.2).

6.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter empirical data collected by means of individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations were analysed and interpreted to find answers to the research questions stated in the first chapter. The questions revolved around the manner in which institutionally established management processes in *Student Service* and teaching and learning areas could contribute to enhance the socially holistic development of the higher education student population of the selected universities in terms of cross-border learning experiences.

The findings of the study revealed that the three study site universities (AAU, ASTU and DBU) have incorporated management strategies in administrative services and curriculum based teaching and learning processes that address diversity needs, as well as induce a mutual inter-group understanding among the multicultural student population that facilitates academic activities. The practice of addressing student differences through management processes was found to be related to informal pedagogy rather than the formal multicultural education and diversity training implemented to deliberately reduce the prejudices and stereotypical views of majority and non-dominant groups (see section 3.6.2). In the context of this study the strategies were mainly embedded in administrative and teaching and learning activities. The data analysis indicated that the universities employed similar management strategies as far as lodging, catering, multilingual and co-curricular activities, and curriculum based group learning activities in the teaching and learning processes are concerned.

The findings indicated that the services rendered to students in the form of lodging, catering, and multilingual and co-curricular activities were based on inter-cultural and multicultural theoretical underpinnings of developing social interaction in an ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse student population across identity boundaries (see sections 6.2.1.1.1 and 6.2.1.1.3). Through these immersive service practices student participants, to a large extent, were able to develop an inter-group understanding across identity boundaries which confirmed the interface between management processes and

CBLEs which are aimed at the holistic development of socio-culturally diverse students (see section 6.2.1.2.3). The findings suggest that CBLEs could be designed and formally incorporated into management processes of the study site universities.

It was found that there were mixed opinions as regards the educational benefits of the religious based catering and ethno-linguistic based activities such as cultural clubs (see sections 6.2.1.2.2 and 6.2.1.4.1). The attitudes ranged from scepticism concerning the value of such services and clubs to an unqualified recognition of their educational advantages. It was inferred that the attitudinal differences suggest a lack of commitment, among some implementers, to the multicultural policy envisaged in *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (1994)* and *Higher Education Proclamation number 650/2009* which dictates that Ethiopian higher institutions should foster multiculturalism (see section 2.2.3.3.). In addition, the findings show that some students who obtained emotional attachment to and social support from fellow students with similar backgrounds as a result of identity based services, mixed more comfortably with out-group students in collaborative learning than those who lacked such social attachment and support. Hence, the findings underpin that in an accommodative and non-discriminatory environment, not only inclusive services, but also identity based group activities, could be used for CBLEs to develop a mutual inter-group understanding of students (see sections 3.6.4 and 6.2.1.4.1).

Concerning the teaching and learning areas, the findings showed that some lecturers were involved in favouritism and disregarded student diversity. Students were often organised for group learning activities, e.g. classroom group work, laboratory work, home assignments, projects, field trips and off-campus apprenticeships by means of self-selection) which brought about homogeneous grouping. Covert diversity sensitive grouping (name list and ID sequence, mixed ability grouping and one-to-five grouping) and overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies were used for heterogeneous grouping (see section 6.2.3.1.3). The findings show that covert and overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies complement the actualisation of CBLEs (see section 6.2.3.2.1).

The findings also show that heterogeneous grouping of students at the selected universities was challenged by indifferent service personnel, diversity insensitive lecturer practitioners, ethnic based political activities and external religiously based support to students (see section 6.3.3).

CHAPTER 7

SYNTHESIS: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this last chapter is to synthesise this study project into a conclusive chapter by establishing an evidence based linkage between diversity management strategies and CBLEs of a multicultural higher education students in the context of this study. To this end, chapters are briefly summarised and synchronised with the aim of establishing the interrelatedness between higher education diversity management strategies and CBLEs. The major findings of the study are intertwined and presented in a within-country diversity management conceptual model demonstrating how CBLEs could be designed and embedded into institutional management strategies to enhance the cross-cultural development of the study site student population. The chapter comes to a closure with recommendations and final remarks.

7.2 RESUMÉ OF CHAPTERS

The purpose of the study was to provide evidence based explanations concerning the issue of investigation, namely the interconnection between institutional management processes and CBLEs that would promote learning as well as social cohesion among students across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries (see section 1.3). The study was conducted at three purposefully selected Ethiopian universities, namely *Addis Ababa University*, *Adama Science and Technology University* and *Debreberhan University* using qualitative data collection strategies (see section 5.2.2.1.2). The major assumption underlying the research project was that management activities established to facilitate the implementation of service provisions and teaching and learning processes at the universities comprise elements of CBLEs that could promote academic and social development of socially and culturally diverse higher education students. In order to verify the assumption, the study examined the extent to which the management strategies within the service and teaching and learning processes addressed student differences

and promoted constructive relationships among socially and culturally heterogeneous Ethiopian students, thereby contributing in producing a cross-culturally cohesive multicultural learning community.

7.2.1 Chapter 1

In the light of the above assumption, the background to the study was highlighted and the significance of this research on a multicultural student population was elucidated in the first chapter. In this chapter the development of addressing socio-cultural differences in educational environments was outlined along historical trends of social changes in educational environments at global, regional and national levels. The first chapter highlighted the gap in research concerning the relationship between management processes and CBLEs aimed at developing inter-group cohesion among the diverse student population in the multicultural country of Ethiopia. The gap in research was determined by reviews of significant research outputs from areas in which diversity management and learning occur (see sections 1.2.4.2; 1.2.4.3 and 1.2.4.4). In line with this gap in research, research questions which guided the study were posed.

7.2.2 Chapter 2

In relation to the research problem and the research questions, a literature review was conducted and presented in the second and third chapters to contextualise the study and gain an in-depth understanding of the topic of research. The second chapter focused on a socio-historical contextual review of the treatment of students with socio-cultural differences in the Ethiopian education system. This review is significant in that it confirmed the significance of the study and located the study phenomenon into a within-country multicultural environment. Documentary sources and studies that dealt with addressing student differences in the Ethiopian context were extensively analysed. The review provided substantive contextual evidence with regard to the vitality of ethnicity, language and religion as diversity variables. It also demonstrated that the policy framework for addressing these variables has developed from the assimilation and

integration approaches of the respective Highlesilassie I and the Dergue eras to the multicultural *Ethiopian Educational and Training Policy (1994)* of the present EPRDF government (see sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2). The review attested that although a multicultural approach has been applied to manage student differences in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity by the present EPRDF government of Ethiopia, contrary to the previous regimes which used assimilation and integration approaches, student inter-group hostility has been sustained at universities. The sustained conflicts confirmed that the multicultural approach has not been successful to resolve the multifaceted diversity issues.

7.2.3 Chapter 3

The third chapter focused on examining international trends and perspectives concerning addressing social differences in higher education environments. From the review it was concluded that addressing socio-cultural differences in educational institutions has been mainly confined within the multicultural approach which mainly emphasises the recognition of and respect for differences (see section 3.3). Moreover, the review provided insight into the manner in which service management strategies and teaching and learning processes in an institution could provide elements of CBLEs that would develop constructive social relationships and academic engagement among ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse students (see sections 3.3 and 3.6). The review provides a management perspective of addressing socio-cultural differences to replace the multicultural approach.

7.2.4 Chapter 4

The contextual and global understanding of the study phenomenon obtained from the review of literature in the second and third chapters informed the development of a conceptual framework and theoretical lens which are provided in Chapter 4, which, in turn, anchored the research process in terms of data collection, analysis and interpretation. The theoretical lens is rooted in Education Management, Sociology of

Educator, Critical Social Psychology and social learning theoretical perspectives (see sections 4.3.1; 4.3.2; 4.3.3; 4.3.3.1 and 4.3.3.2). These theoretical grounds were used in developing a conceptual model that demonstrates the relationship between diversity management and CBLEs in an educational environment (see Figure 4.1). The sociological and management theoretical aspects were used to explain strategies of addressing ethnic, linguistic and religious differences and resultant inter-group social learning behaviours within management practices (see section 4.3.1), whereas the social learning theoretical aspect was used to explain the process of acquiring different perspectives that bring about conceptual changes through engagement in inter-group learning activities across identity boundaries (see section 4.3.2). The relationship between diversity management and learning is theoretically based on the view that knowledge is constructed in a context of social interaction where students critique, evaluate, interpret and reflect upon their social learning experiences (see section 3.6.1).

7.2.5 Chapter 5

The literature review on the conceptual framework and theoretical lens was used as a springboard for the design of the research in terms of a case study approach and qualitative methods for selecting data collection strategies, study sites and study participants, and developing analytical procedures.

7.2.6 Chapter 6

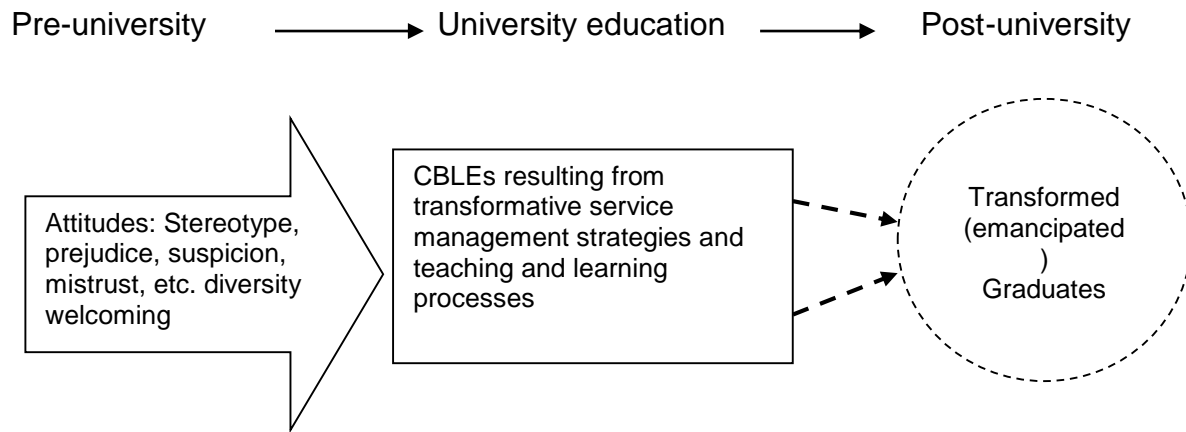
The findings of the study were related to relevant documentary sources reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 and empirical data collected by means of individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations which were analysed as per the study procedure provided in sections 5.2.2.2.1 and 5.2.2.2.2. The empirical data were cross-referenced with findings of the contextual review to explain the relationship between diversity management strategies and CBLEs. Findings drawn from a socio-historical analysis of the treatment of diverse students were related to the empirical findings of the study which

engages with service and teaching learning management practices employed to address socio-cultural differences and resultant student inter-group learning.

The major findings of the study which are analysed in Chapter 6 (see section 6.2) allowed the researcher to answer the overarching research question of the study and its sub-questions and verify that the service management processes, student socio-cultural practices and the teaching learning management strategies find expression in CBLEs. The CBLEs embedded within service management strategies are practised in terms of lodging, catering, multilingual office services, and co-curricular activities. The CBLEs anchored in student generated diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices were practised by students in terms of sharing academic and non-academic resources and participating in collective socio-cultural activities with out-group students. The CBLEs embedded in teaching and learning management processes were practised by means of in-classroom and outside classroom group learning activities organised in terms of covert diversity sensitive grouping strategies (name list order, ID sequence, classroom seating proximity, mixed ability grouping, or one-to-five) and overt criteria based groupings (heterogeneous grouping strategies).

As a result of the implementation of diversity sensitive service practices and teaching and learning management processes and activities which incorporate CBLEs, students developed inter-group social cohesion which contributed to their holistic development. The relationship between transformative diversity management processes and CBLEs in multicultural student population at the study site universities was established. An overall finding of the study in terms of the achievement of inter-cultural cohesion is presented in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 Transformational developments of students through HE diversity management processes



The above diagram is an attempt to show the flow of changes that result from CBLEs embedded within the services and teaching and learning management processes. The wider arrow indicates the diversity situation of students prior to their university education. The students came to the universities with varied levels of diversity experiences. Most of them were from relatively homogeneous community backgrounds and were familiar with stereotyping, prejudices and anxieties relating to people with other backgrounds. A few of them, however, had experienced diversity during pre-university life and embraced the diverse circumstances at the universities (see sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.1.2.1). As shown in the rectangular box, both student groups were engaged in CBLEs embedded within management processes. CBLEs found expression in terms of diversity sensitive lodging, religious based catering services, multilingual office services, co-curricular activities, individual and collective diversity coping strategies, and diversity sensitive group learning processes. As a result of students' engagement in cross-border learning processes brought about by these provisions, most of them exhibited significant constructive attitudinal changes towards out-groups which they would, in all probability, apply after graduation (cf. sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.3.1.5). The broken lines with arrows to the right which link rectangular box to the circle are used to show that a diversity welcoming higher education environment could enable students to embrace diversity (see section 6.2.1.1.3;

cf. section 6.2.1.1.3). In an accommodative environment, it would contribute in establishing a sense of tolerance among diverse groups. The two broken arrows and the broken circle are used to show the positive learning outcomes of CBLEs namely transformational changes attained at universities which are sustained in societies after graduation (see section 6.2.7).

The broken lines were also used to indicate that in a diversity insensitive environment, despite their engagement in CBLEs, students would remain stereotypical towards out-groups. It has to be borne in mind that the diversity sensitive management strategies were not uniformly embraced by all participants at the universities (see sections 6.2.1.2.1; 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2). Identity based religious services (including catering and group religious practices), ethno-linguistic based clubs and even diversity sensitive student grouping strategies for group learning activities have been viewed by some implementers as counteractive to cohesion. The fear was expressed that such practices could augment a homogeneous bond, fragment students into smaller groups and not necessarily contribute towards the development of a unified national outlook (see sections 6.2.1.2.1; 6.2.1.4.2 and 6.2.3.1.1). Nonetheless, the non-violent diversity coping strategies and socio-cultural practices displayed by students disproved the scepticism and fear of the implementers of diversity management practices (see sections 6.2.2.2.1 and 6.2.2.2.2). Indifference, scepticism and preferential treatment practices of lecturers (see section 6.2.3.1.3) would, however, have an adverse effect on the cross-border learning outcomes at universities as well as students' post-university lives.

7.3 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this section is to provide an explanation of the findings and to emphasise the significance of CBLEs for the cross-cultural development of socio-culturally diverse students in a multicultural social environment. The findings are discussed in terms of the policy formulation for managing multicultural higher education student populations, diversity management vis-à-vis multicultural education for managing socio-cultural diversity, the role of transformational diversity management processes that favour CBLEs

within institutional management processes, the development of a design model that makes provision for CBLEs within the management process, as well as implementation challenges and recommendations.

7.3.1 The diversity policy formulation and managing student diversity at higher institutions

The data presented in the second chapter, as a socio-historical review to contextualise the study, indicated that the methods of addressing socio-cultural differences of students in the Ethiopian education systems have been related to the socio-political, ethnic, linguistic and religious variables in the country (see section 2.2.1). The treatment of socio-cultural differences amongst students ranged from assimilationist “Amharanisation” and integrationist “Ethiopianisation” positions of the Hailessilassie I and the Dergue regimes respectively to the “multicultural” approach of the present EPRDF government (see sections 2.2.1; 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).

It was found that ethnic, linguistic and religion variables dictated the formulation of the present *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) and the *Higher Education Proclamation* (2009) that guide practices of dealing with student diversity at study site universities (see section 1.3; 3.2.1; 3.2.2 and 3.2.3). This highlights the vitality of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables in the higher education context and their determinant role in the formulation of diversity management policies. The contextual analysis also showed that stereotypical attitudes and prejudices shown to others by an identity group which considers itself as dominant could either be tolerated with contempt or develops into inter-group hostility by non-dominant groups (see section 2.2.3.3.3). The multicultural education paradigm which has been used to manage majority-minority relations might not resolve mistrust, suspicion and hostility among competing identity groups (see section 1.3). Since the multicultural notion is theoretically grounded within the majority-minority paradigm and promotes facilitation of self-assertion by non-dominant groups, the implementation of the institutional multicultural policy framework, stated in the *Ethiopian Education and Training policy* (1994) solely in terms of *Civics and*

Ethical Education and *Communicative English Language Skills* course programmes at the study sites, would be inadequate to address the complex and multifaceted socio-cultural relationships of diverse student populations (see section 2.2.3.2). It was shown that student inter-group conflicts have persisted in the higher institutions despite the implementation of the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* since 1994 (see sections 2.2.3.3.3). The findings suggested that the implementation of diversity management process in the *Student Service* areas and the teaching and learning management processes have significantly contributed in decreasing inter-group suspicion, anxiety and thereof inter-group flashpoints (see sections 6.2.1.1.2; 6.2.1.3; 6.2.1.4; 6.2.2.2.1 and 6.2.3.1.4)

7.3.2 Diversity management vis-à-vis multicultural education

Although the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) dictates the promotion of the multicultural perspective of recognising and addressing student differences on the basis of their identity, student differences at the study sites were by and large addressed constructively through management processes that incorporate CBLEs practised in terms of inclusive and exclusive service management strategies, co-curricular activities and a variety of group learning activities (see sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.1.2 and 6.2.1.3). The learning experiences that occurred as a result of the management schemes at the study site universities were true CBLEs, whilst the *Communicative English Skills* and *Civics and Ethical Education* were course programmes primarily designed with the explicit objective of improving English proficiency and training students about their rights and duties and how to live in equality with their fellow citizens respectively (see section 2.2.3.2 and 6.2.1.1.3). In spite of the implementation of these course programmes student inter-group mistrust, suspicion and hostility has sustained at the study site universities (see section 2.2.3.3.3). However, the study shows that the implementation of diversity sensitive management processes to facilitate student welfare services and teaching and learning activities comprised CBLEs that contributed significantly in developing inter-group mutual understanding and decreasing identity based hostility among students at the study site universities (see section 6.2.1.1.2).

7.3.3 Transformational diversity management at universities

The findings from the analysis of the inter-group implications of legislative rules, guidelines and student codes of conduct at the site universities (see section 2.2.3.3.2) showed that the strategies established for addressing student social and cultural diversity needs stemmed from the multicultural perspective stipulated in the national *Higher Education Proclamation* (2009) which was established in order to respond to the socio-cultural rights enshrined in the *Constitution* (see sections 2.2.3; 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.2). Yet, at the study site universities the multicultural perspective of the government was extended to a trans-cultural perspective in terms of management processes. Through engagement in the learning activities signified as cross-border learning experiences, students to a great extent demonstrated the ability to comfortably cross ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries to establish positive relationships with students from out-groups (see sections 6.2.1.2.3, 6.2.2.2 and 6.2.3.1.5). They came to know the cultural life of out-groups in terms of dietary requirements, language and religious practices without disregarding their own. These learning outcomes were found to be transformational changes since they often resulted from students' reciprocal attitudes and behaviour of crossing over identity boundaries without formal educational interventions (see sections 6.2.5.1.1; 6.2.5.1.2 and 6.2.5.2).

As a result, students served by the management processes not only developed the social skills of teamwork and interpersonal interaction, but also showed improved learning styles which contributed to satisfactory academic achievements (see section 6.2.3.1.5). Attitudinal changes which resulted from immersive management activities can be associated with transformational management processes rather than the multicultural education programme provided in the *Civics and Ethical Education and Communicative English Skills* courses (cf. section 7.3.2). Thus, the findings show that although both the *Student Service* and teaching and learning processes were primarily set in place for a general wellbeing of students on campus to support the academic success of students, they indiscernibly incorporated elements of CBLEs that reduced stereotyping, prejudice,

and suspicion and induced peaceful co-existence. They contributed towards social and academic success of diverse students in the context of the study (see sections 3.5.2 and 6.2.1.4.2).

It was found that the implementation practices of the *Student Service* provision management units at the study site universities in terms of lodging, catering, multilingual support and co-curricular activities transcended the multicultural perspective of recognition of differences and, to a great extent, qualified as transformational diversity management features discussed in section 3.5.2. As a result of service provisions the following occurred:

- Many students, who came to the universities with stereotypical and prejudicial attitudes toward others, emancipated and developed empathy to out-groups students and supported them socially and academically (see section 6.2.7).
- Some students came to recognise the significance of others in the development of their self identity (see section 6.2.1.1.3).
- Despite the scepticism of some service providers concerning identity based provisions, competing related to preferential treatment practices of some lecturers, differential treatment by external religious affiliations and identity based political practices, many students demonstrated emancipation by showing empathy with students from different backgrounds, helped one another and collectively celebrated religious holidays regardless of their differences (see sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.1.2.3).
- An exclusive religious based catering service, multilingual office support and co-curricular activities which occurred at ethno-linguistically based cultural clubs indicated that supportive self-assertion practices contributed to students being able to acquire social skills needed for peaceful co-existence with out-groups as well as transformational attitudes resulting in embracing diversity which they viewed as a normal way of life (see sections 6.2.1.2.3; 6.2.1.3.3 and 6..2.1.4.2).

As mentioned, the attitudinal changes which the students demonstrated can be considered to be transformational because students emancipated from stereotyping others and overcame their anxieties (see section 3.4.2 and 6.2.6). These progressive changes are transformational in the sense that they enabled students to critically reflect on their previous knowledge which was grounded in stereotypical attitudes, and acquire a new understanding that prevented them from resorting to their previously held negative attitudes (cf. sections 3.4.2 and 6.2.1.1.3).

The findings suggest that informal non-institutionalised diversity coping and socio-cultural practices not only helped students to learn how to cope with differences positively and to overcome their stereotypical attitudes and suspicion, but also assisted their counterparts in doing the same (see sections 6.2.2.2.1 and 6.2.2.2.2). It could be said that students who underwent a transformation in terms of attitude and behaviour could recognise the commonalities that people of different backgrounds share and realise that these do not imply sameness but that differences should not relate to enmity (see section 6.2.2.2.2).

Changes which resulted from service management processes aimed at facilitating the wellbeing of students in the campus environment, as well as teaching and learning activities aimed at improving academic achievements, can be associated with transformational institutional management strategies which transcend the multicultural educational approach (see section 6.2.7 and cf. 1.2.2; 1.3.1 and 3.4.2).

7.3.4 Challenges to CBLE related strategies within the multicultural approach

The study indicates internal and external challenges which impeded on the implementation of CBLEs related to the service management units and teaching and learning environments. The internal challenges include homogeneity of student cohorts, scepticism, indifferences towards student diversity displayed by some student service implementers (see sections 6.2.1.2.2 and 6.2.1.4.1) and preferential treatment practices and diversity insensitivity of some lecturers (see sections 6.2.3.1.2 and 6.2.3.1.3).

External challenges relate to identity based political practices and religious affinity based support of external institutions (see section 6.2.8.1).

The setbacks outlined above can be attributed to two key factors. Firstly, as mentioned in section 7.3.2, the theoretical underpinning of the multicultural policy which emphasises the promotion of identity seems to not have been successful because it failed to produce the desired social cohesion. Secondly, management activities relating to CBLEs were fragmented and scattered unobtrusively across the services and teaching and learning management activities without any planned management strategies to assess their impact and effectiveness in terms of cross-border learning outcomes. The above implementation shortcomings boil down to a lack of formal integration of CBLEs into the institutional management system. If the CBLEs identified in the study were formally planned and incorporated into the management system, their implementation could be monitored and evaluated.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The empirical evidence collected from documentary sources, individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations confirmed that the service and teaching and learning management activities comprised CBLEs which can bring about both inter-group understanding and mutual academic success among student participants of different socio-cultural backgrounds. However, the researcher believes that the learning experiences are not necessarily limited to the ones identified in this study and that other learning experiences might be related to other measures at institutions other than the study site universities. The researcher is of the opinion that the study would have been more comprehensive and would allow for generalisation had it included all other institutional management units at department, school, and college levels (see section 5.2.2.1.2). Their omission, however, made this study more focused, rigorous and manageable.

Since this research constitutes a case study with relative small samples, the researcher did not attempt to draw generalisations that imply external validity of his findings. The sensitivity of the research, which relates to ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables, could possibly have influenced some participants' willingness to disclose information. Self-reporting on vital diversity variables (ethnic, linguistic and religious diversities) which can be related to political views, (cf. section 1.3) holds no guarantee that participants would provide views which reveal their internal feelings concerning politically sensitive matters. In this regard it could be mentioned that the second level focus group interview of students was dropped from the data collection schedule because the pilot study (see section 5.2.5) revealed that students from different ethnic backgrounds were not very willing to engage in inter-group focus group discussions, most probably as a result of their political sensitivity. However, it is hoped that the contextual assessment of the study environment (see section 2.2.3.3) and the detailed description of the study procedure (see section 5.2.2.2), coupled with the empirical evidence (see section 6.2) of this study, would provide new insights into diversity management.

The present study could result in future research geared towards a detailed and comprehensive investigation into diversity management practices at the Ethiopian higher education institutions. A similar study focusing on other vital diversity variables such as gender, financial ability/disability and geographic areas (e.g. urban versus rural) could also be conducted to inform diversity management policy formulation, implementation strategies and outcome assessment. Further specific research areas may include:

- an investigation into management units other than those included in this study in terms of CBLEs that could possibly promote addressing the various diversity needs of students;
- an investigation into aligning CBLEs with education policy at national level; and
- a survey on all known diversity variables that should inform CBLEs policy development.

7.5 FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Globally, higher institutions have been attempting to facilitate the equality of opportunity to study and achieve academic results in order to produce skilled manpower (see sections 1.3.1 and 3.3). However, this research shows that equality of opportunity and academic achievement are not congruent with adequate education since students' cross-cultural knowledge and development are required for bringing about meaningful multicultural work environments and collective citizenship. The findings with regard to inter-group understanding (see section 6.2.1.1.3) accentuated the view expressed in literature (see section 3.5.2) that students in a multicultural society need to undergo cross-border learning which would enable them to emancipate from stereotypical views, prejudice and mistrust of "otherness" to become transformed personalities who embrace diversity as being a part of normal life and consider it to be a valuable asset for within-country multicultural work environments. .

As mentioned, most of the studies conducted thus far are founded on the view that student differences could be addressed by means of multicultural teaching learning processes that would create conducive learning environments for students who are socially and culturally segregated (see sections 1.3.1 and 3.6.3). Yet, the importance of majority-minority interrelations was not acknowledged and student ethnic, linguistic and religious based flashpoints were sustained despite the implementation of multicultural education (see section 2.2.3.3.3). The study further found that CBLEs embedded in the services and teaching learning management processes were instrumental in reducing stereotypes, prejudices and fear of out-group students and instilling mutual understanding and reciprocal respect among students of different socio-cultural backgrounds (see sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.2.2.1; 6.2.2.2.2 and 6.2.3.1.5).The finding validates the argument that educators should be strategic and intentional in fostering conditions that compel students to make the most out of inter-group interactions, both inside and outside the classroom (see section 3.6.4).

The findings of the study showed that the cross-cultural development of students in a multicultural country (see section 3.4.2) could not be realised by multicultural education programmes which are confined to curriculum based teaching and learning processes, but that broad learning experiences made possible by diversity management processes which form part of the service and teaching learning management processes played a significant role in this regard (see sections 6.2.2.2.2; 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.3). The final discussion and recommendations that follow are related to the answers to the research questions and relevant views which emanated from this study, as well as their implications.

7.5.1 Vitality of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity variables in context of this study

The findings confirmed that ethnic, linguistic and religious variables are vital because they play significant roles in the establishment of student social relationships. At institutional level related to policy guidelines, directives, strategies and institutional service and teaching and learning management processes (see sections 2.2.1.3.3 and 7.3.1).

Recommendation 1: The study site universities should formally institutionalise diversity management strategies in the service and teaching and learning areas at all levels to bring about meaningful CBLEs that would address ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity.

As shown in sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.1.3; 6.2.2; 6.2.3.1.3 and 7.2.6, positive feedback was received from most student participants concerning the value of cross-border learning. Since CBLEs have the capacity to bring about cohesion across borders of ethnicity, language and religion, it would be appropriate that CBLEs should be based on sound and formal strategies.

The basis of the recommendation is that the magnitude of ethnic, linguistic and religious based student hostilities which prevailed at universities since the implementation of the *Education and Training Policy (1994)* (see section 2.2.3.3.3) has significantly decreased

since the commencement of diversity sensitive management processes in the service and teaching and learning processes (see section 6.2.4). Formally setting up transparent diversity management processes would decrease pressures from external powers of certain religious and political organisations which are not in favour of cross-cultural cohesion (see sections 3.5.1 and 6.2.3.2.2). The application of management strategies should involve diversity planning, implementation and monitoring that guide institutional practices. An effective implementation and monitoring system would bring about uniformity of implementation practices based on synchronised inter-group learning outcomes related to different diversity variables. Addressing vital diversity variables sustainably through management processes would contribute not only to smoothening student relationships but also to the cross-cultural development of multicultural students, preparing them for their future work environments.

7.5.2 Diversity management vis-à-vis multicultural education

The study showed that one of the major differences between the previous regimes and the present EPRDF government was the position they took with regard to social diversity in policy formulation. Contrary to the policies of previous regimes which were based on assimilation and integration (see sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2), the present government has addressed the multicultural situation in Ethiopia by explicitly prescribing multicultural policy in the *Ethiopian Education and Training Policy* (1994) (see section 2.2.3.1).

As mentioned, the empirical evidence concerning the implementation of the policy showed that the multicultural approach was less successful in addressing the multifaceted diversity issues of the students and that identity-based mistrust and suspicion still manifest in the educational institutions (see section 2.2.3.3.3). This could be attributed to the tenet of multiculturalism which is theoretically grounded within the premise of establishing positive relationship between majority and non-dominant groups by recognising differences (see section 1.3.1), which does not necessarily imply accepting and embracing differences. This global multicultural approach finds expression in the promotion of tolerance to diversity and difference by means of teaching and learning

activities, such as multicultural education (see section 1.2.2). The findings verified that dealing with diversity issues amongst students can transcend tolerance and that they can be effectively addressed by means of management processes. Within the context of this study it was shown that management of lodging, catering, co-curricular activities and in-classroom and outside classroom group learning activities implicitly incorporated CBLEs that promoted positive social relationships among culturally diverse students (see sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.1.2.3; 6.2.1.4; and 6.2.1.4.2). Identity-based services such as religious based catering services and ethno-linguistic based clubs, which are in line with the multicultural policy of promoting self-assertion, were sometimes viewed with scepticism (see section 6.2.1.4.2), since it was assumed that identity based activities would necessarily negatively affect student unity. However, they were found also to be significant management processes which complemented inclusive services and curricular activities by instilling mutual inter-group understanding and respect, and promoting a peaceful co-existence of diverse students (see sections 6.2.1.2.3 and 6.2.1.4.2). Recommendations 2 and 3 are possible interventions in terms of homogeneous grouping strategies.

Recommendation 2: The present multicultural policy should be reviewed from a diversity management perspective so that identity based services and activities complement and become integrated into inclusive strategies which inform planning, implementation and evaluation practices.

The rationale for the implementation of this recommendation is that vital diversity variables (ethnicity, language and religion), in the context of this study can be adequately addressed if identity-based services and ethno-linguistic based clubs work together for bringing about sustainable peace and cross-cultural educational development of students which can be measured by means of well-managed evaluation processes.

Recommendation 3: The assignment of students to the universities at national level should adhere to the “representative mix” principle, taking into account socio-cultural diversity of students in terms of ethnicity, language and religion.

Contrary to the multicultural and the “representative mix” of Ethiopian *Higher Education and Training Policy* (see section 2.2.3.2), students at some study sites were found to be by and large ethnically and linguistically homogeneous (see section 6.2.3.1.4). This situation was found to be discouraging for the implementers in terms of dealing with diversity sensitive activities (see section 6.2.7). Students assigned to universities by MOE centrally, result in homogeneity of students at institutional and classroom levels which indicate a mismatch between the mentioned policy and the assignment of students to university by the Ministry (see section 2.2.3.2).

Inter-cultural interaction is an essential strategy for building a peaceful co-existence of multicultural communities of a country (see section 3.6.2). One of the strategies for facilitating inter-cultural communication is the establishment of an educational system in which students from culturally diverse communities come together and receive unbiased and equal treatment that enable them to develop mutual trust. Therefore, the alignment of the enrolment procedure with the socio-cultural diversity at national level would enable the educational institutions to facilitate CBLEs by means of the implementation of adequate diversity management strategies.

7.5.3 Inducing inter-group understanding through CBLEs aimed at meaningful cross-cultural interaction during employment

As shown, the diversity context in Ethiopia is characterised by the fact that different regional states have their own languages used at least for primary and junior secondary education, and for official communication (see sections 1.3 and 2.2.3.1). This would mean that success in life, including a career in another regional state, is largely determined by a person’s knowledge of the language and cultural customs of that region. This implies that inter-cultural competencies would increase job opportunities for graduates. Although, in the context of this study, students informally orientated students from other backgrounds towards an understanding of their culture by means of, inter alia, inter-language learning, the sharing of culturally linked food and costumes, and attending

socio-cultural practices across cultural boundaries (see sections 6.2.1.1.3 and 6.2.1.4.2), there was no official institutional training strategy aimed at developing students' inter-cultural competencies. The universities attempted to give expression to the prescribed multicultural approach through lodging and catering services and co-curricular activities. In the context of this study, the success in terms of inter-culturality depended on heterogeneity and voluntary collaboration of students (see sections 6.2.1.2.2 and 6.2.1.2.3). Similarly, the inclusivity of clubs was determined by the personal decision of individual students to become involved (see sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.1.2.3; 6.2.1.4.2 and 6.2.3.1.3).

Recommendation 4: The universities should officially establish inter-cultural competence development programmes for students

This recommendation is closely related to Recommendation 1. As mentioned, the students at the study site universities practised different inter-cultural competence development activities informally. In this regard the sharing of resources, culturally specific diets, inter-language learning, collective celebration of culturally linked holidays and supporting persons in grief across identity boundaries can be mentioned (see sections 6.2.1.1.3; 6.2.1.2.3; 6.2.1.4.2 and 6.2.3.1.3). Such cross-border learning practices are significant in bringing about inter-cultural competencies and could be used as a benchmark for running successful inter-cultural competency development programmes. Such programmes could be obligatory to attend because they would enable students to seek for job opportunities outside their regional states. They could be a means, not only in bringing about the appropriate use of trained manpower across regions, but also a strategy for building a cohesive inter-cultural society. Learning languages of choice, selected from relevant available language programmes at the universities, would be appropriate in this regard.

7.5.4 The need for an institutionalised celebration of diversity in terms of staffing and services

The staff who were interviewed varied in their attitudes towards sensitivity to diversity which extended from embracing and recognising diversity at one extreme to indifference, fear and anxiety to differences at the other (see sections 6.2.1.4.2; 6.2.3.1.1 and 6.2.3.1.2). These differences could be minimised by means of an institutionalised celebration of diversity in terms of staffing and diversity sensitive services. Recommendations 5 and 6 are made in this regard.

Recommendation 5: Universities should execute diversity planning and implementation in terms of staffing.

The diversity of the student population presumes a parallel diversity in terms of support and academic staff. The study indicated that students complained about preferential treatment of students by academics who share their cultural identities (see sections 6.2.3.1.2 and 6.2.3.2.2). This could be reduced by means of the realisation of the above recommendation. This does not necessarily mean that a representative of each ethnic, linguistic and religious group should be available at each university to fulfil all functions. It means that the universities should have realistic and meaningful diversity planning and implementation strategies relating to staff recruitment and placement. For instance, universities could show their diversity sensitivity by mentioning that polyglot competence would be considered as an advantage when applying for vacant posts.

Recommendation 6: Universities should establish multilingual service desks that facilitate inter-language communication.

In the study it was found that linguistically diverse staff is an advantage for the effective delivery of services to a linguistically diverse student population (see section 6.2.1.3). This implies that staff with diverse linguistic backgrounds facilitate inter-communication and lessen language barriers that hamper communication between service seekers and

service providers. Since the multilingual service has been informally practised successfully at the universities, officially institutionalising such service is advised. This would be useful in three ways. Firstly, it would systematise the strategy and facilitate the implementation processes. Secondly, the concern that the institutions show for their students by officially establishing a multilingual service desk would encourage students to develop a sense of partnership and belonging to the community of the institutions (see section 6.2.1.3). Thirdly, it would encourage students to engage in interaction, irrespective of their linguistic proficiency, in a language that is not their own. As a result, the lack of proficiency in a language would cease to be viewed as a deficiency and a cause of student anxiety and frustration. Institutionalised linguistic diversity sensitive services would become a sign of diversity celebration and a measure of cross-cultural quality at universities.

7.5.5 Transforming diversity management practices

It was shown that in terms of services to students, staff had started to flexibly use languages other than English and Amharic to facilitate inter-communication with students across linguistic boundaries. Students also started to cross their own identity boundaries regardless of the socio-cultural demarcations that prevailed in the country (see sections 1.3 and 6.2.1.1.3). Staff and students reciprocally overcame classifying people according to stereotypes and suspicion of other cultural groups. The change in attitudes demonstrated the possibility of breaking down identity based hostility and establishing a paradigm shift in the mindset of staff and students. They appreciated the otherness of people from other cultural backgrounds and came to an understanding that socio-cultural differences are a part of life (see section 6.2.6). Compared to the emphasis placed on affirmative group self-assertion at institutions and societies at large, the changes of attitudes in most of the students and some of the staff demonstrated an unprecedented development and transformation of both policy implementers and beneficiaries. The findings indicated that sustained exposure to CBLEs invisibly embedded in management processes eventually led students to socio-cultural emancipation (see section 6.2.6). This may pre-empt official transformative implementation practices which would allow students

to be emancipated. In this regard it could be said that leadership should continually question and challenge practices, beliefs, assumptions, patterns, habits and paradigms to further facilitate conditions for change and emancipation (see section 3.4.2). In this regard the following recommendation is forwarded:

Recommendation 7: Universities should apply transformational management strategies and practices.

As mentioned in section 6.2.7.1 some implementers of management strategies were insensitive and indifferent to student diversity. Parallel to this, some students remained anxious and suspicious of out-groups (see sections 6.2.1.4.2 and 6.2.7.1). Such obstructive situations could be avoided by charismatic, inspiring implementers of innovative models. Universities could organise transformative training programmes for implementers and students to promote emancipation processes. For instance, universities could use workshops aimed at promoting the awareness of diverse religions at the beginning of every academic year as a capacity building scheme to further the transformation of their university communities.

7.5.6 Incorporation of a design model of transformative diversity management and cross-border learning values into the educational system

The *Civic and Ethical Education* courses have been implemented across the education system starting from primary education up to and including university level in different forms based on the assumption that students would eventually develop positive attitudes towards others (see section 2.2.3.3.2). The findings indicated that most of the student participants showed stereotypical and suspicious attitudes to out-group contingents when they joined the universities (see sections 2.2.3.3.3 and 6.2.1.1.3). In addition, although the *Communicative English Skills* and *Civic and the Ethical Education* courses were given at the universities for more than a decade, student inter-group hostility only significantly decreased since the commencement of diversity sensitive management practices (see section 6.2.4). Promoting cross-border learning which is based on a comprehensive yet

comprehensible model which supplement and improve current school and university courses with appropriate management practices would promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation

Recommendation 8: Universities should propose to the MOE a model which could form the basis of promoting cross-border learning at universities

The study indicates that internal and external challenges impede on the realisation of CBLEs related to the service management units and teaching and learning environments (see sections 6.2.7.1 and 6.2.7.2). As mentioned, the internal challenges include homogeneity of student cohorts, scepticism and indifferences towards student diversity displayed by some student service implementers (see sections 6.2.1.2.2 and 6.2.1.4.2) and preferential treatment practices and diversity insensitivity of some lecturers (see sections 6.2.3.1.2 and 6.2.3.1.3). External challenges are attributed to identity based political practices and religious based academic supports (see section 6.2.3.2.2). The universities should propose a model which this researcher calls the *Transformative Diversity Management Design Model*, which is based on this study, for designing diversity management programmes which integrate CBLEs with services and teaching learning management processes (see Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: A design model for incorporating transformative diversity management and cross-border learning values into the educational system

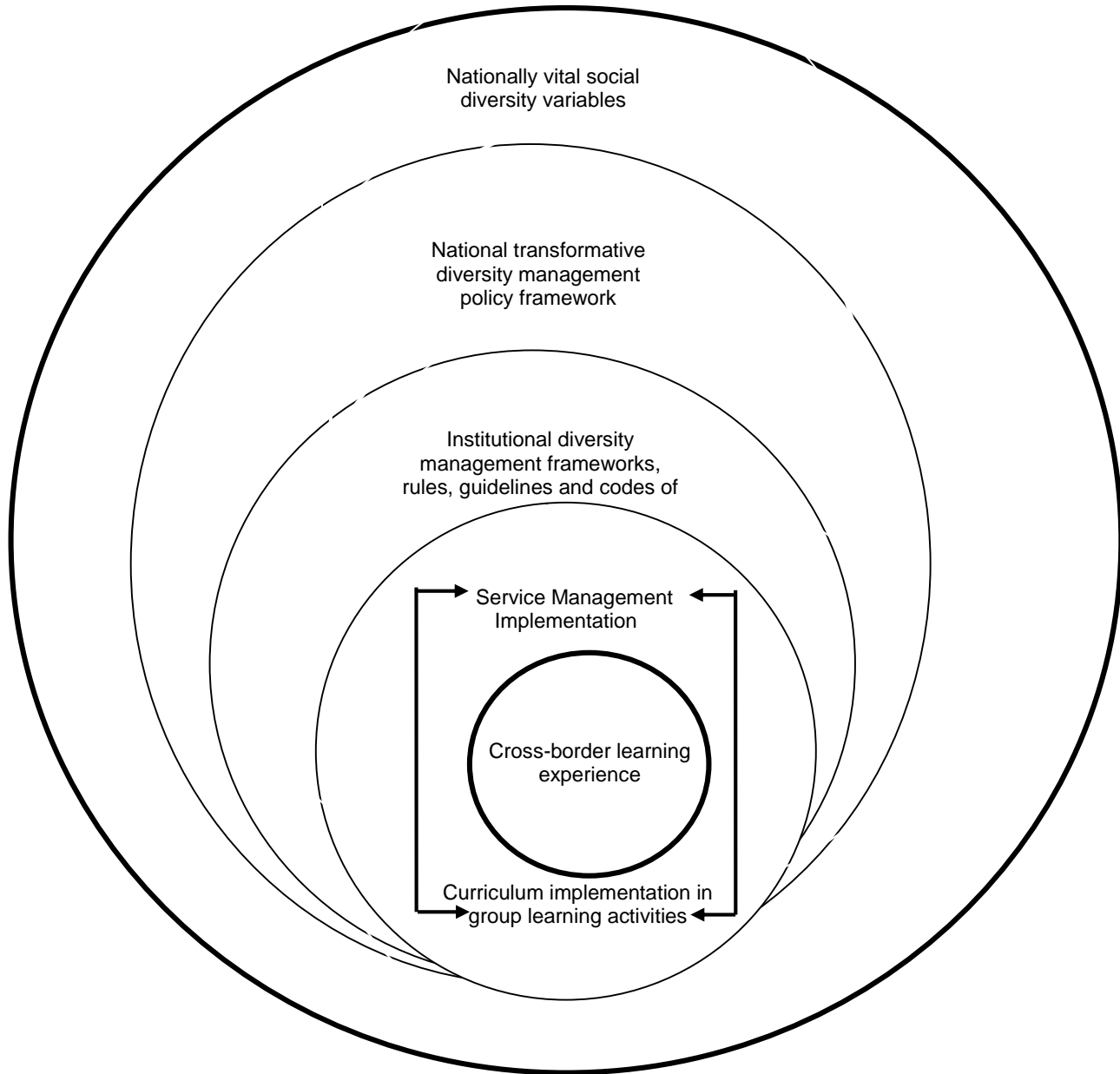


Figure 7.2 provides a working model for organising CBLEs within institutional service management and teaching learning processes aimed at enhancing inter-group social

cohesion and improving academic achievements of socially and culturally diverse students at the study site universities.

The model is based on the major findings discussed in Chapter 6. It depicts a theoretical basis for integrating CBLEs at universities in Ethiopia aimed at the cross-cultural development of students. It, however, also relates to other stakeholders. Transformative Management forms the basis of this model which is aimed at the emancipation of managers, lecturers and students to eradicate stereotyping, fear, anxiety, and attitudes of mistrust of “otherness” which relate to ethnic, linguistic and religious differences (cf. sections 3.5.2 and 4.4). It considers socio-cultural differences as essential social phenomena which provide learning opportunities. It could be used in developing diversity management policy frameworks and implementation strategies which incorporate CBLEs (see section 3.4.2). It could also include educational organisations other than universities.

The model is framed within stratified design layers. The components of each layer, except the outside layer, emanate from the immediate preceding outer layer and signify the relationship between layers. The size of each layer indicates the breadth and depth of the process of developing CBLEs within the management system and teaching and learning processes. The outer circle of the model comprises vital national socio-cultural diversity variables such as ethnic, linguistic and religious differences which determine social relations in societies and without which the management of the cross-cultural development of students would not be possible. Other diversity variables could be identified using national diversity vitality surveys and censuses conducted for public administration purposes, and their influence on the political, social and the economic spheres, as well as their appropriateness for policy formulation for higher education and other levels of formal education, could be determined.

The second circle of the model refers to a diversity policy framework at national level which could be adopted in accordance with the diversity variables through the educational system. It could be used to inform the development of policy implementation strategies that would help institutions to constructively manage vital diversity variables at an

institutional level. The third circle constitutes a contextualised institutional diversity management policy, which finds expression in rules, guidelines and codes of conduct and curricular materials that are in line with the national higher education policy. The fourth interior circle shows the selection and incorporation of components of CBLEs into student service management implementation strategies and teaching and learning processes with the aim of facilitating teaching learning processes and promoting mutual inter-group understanding amongst diverse students.

The two double arrows are used to show the complementary relationship between the service management strategies of the *Student Service* offices and those of the teaching and learning areas in developing and implementing CBLEs. These arrows would also relate to assessment strategies for improving and revising implementation strategies aimed at CBLEs. The central interior circle represents CBLEs drawn from and fostered by the service management strategies and curriculum based teaching and learning processes in terms of addressing the vital diversity variables. The CBLEs embedded in the student service activities would find expression in terms of lodging (see section 6.2.1.1.3), catering (see sections 6.2.1.2 and 6.2.1.2.3), multilingual services (see section 6.4.2.3), and co-curricular activities (see section 6.2.1.3). The CBLEs in the teaching and learning areas would be realised through group learning activities such as covert (name list alphabet and ID sequence, mixed ability and one-to-five groupings) and overt diversity sensitive grouping strategies (see sections 6.2.3.1.4 and 6.2.3.2.2). These grouping strategies need planning in terms of learning activity design, implementation, mentoring and evaluation. The evaluation of cross-border learning could be conducted in terms of learning outcomes, feedback and reflection on learning experiences. Based on the evaluation, further improvements could be made for refining CBLEs.

Recommendation 9: The universities should propose strategies to the MOE for integrating improved multicultural (inter-cultural) education into pre-university education programmes.

The inclusion of inter-cultural education in pre-university education would help in preparing students for multicultural life after high school education, including tertiary education, as well as the world of work. Such programmes would be important especially to students who pass the *Ethiopian General Secondary Education Leaving Examination* and could be included in the *Preparatory Programme* for higher education.

Recommendation 10: The universities should officially integrate CBLEs into service and teaching and learning management activities.

As shown in Chapter 6, inter-group understanding and trust amongst students at the selected multicultural universities were attained by means of CBLEs embedded in the service and teaching and learning processes (cf. section 3.6.2). Incorporating such learning experiences officially into the higher education service and teaching and learning areas would result in appropriate management processes. In this regard, two aspects can be mentioned. Firstly, institutions have already implicitly been attempting to alleviate the shortcomings of the official multicultural approach by embedding cross-border learning activities into service provisions and teaching and learning management strategies. The formal incorporation of such learning experiences would be an extension of an existing practice. Secondly, the CBLEs could be viewed as an extension of the improved multicultural learning experiences recommended in Recommendation 9 for pre-university education.

7.5.7 Alignment of service and teaching and learning management strategies

In the context of this study, the primary purpose of assigning students to dormitories by teaching department and ID number sequence was to bring students from different backgrounds to get to know each other better and to collaboratively carry out group learning activities (see section 6.2.1.1.1). The alignment of the group learning process of course programmes with the dorm arrangement would facilitate conditions of students for collaboration and interaction during which they develop supportive relationships.

Recommendation 11: CBLEs in the service and teaching and learning areas should be aligned to augment the cross-cultural development of students.

The rationale for implementing the recommendation is that although most lecturers used name list and ID sequence to group students for outside classroom group learning activities, the findings indicated that the provision of group learning activities for courses were limited to the discretion of the lecturers (see sections 6.2.3.1.3 and 6.2.3.1.4) without collaborating with the lodging service. The alignment of group learning activities with diversity management in the lodging service would provide more interactive and collaborative opportunities for students from different backgrounds. The complementary relationship between the lodging service and lecturer would contribute towards the cross-cultural development of students.

7.5.8 Constructive alignment between exclusive and inclusive services in furthering CBLEs

The literature review and findings of the study showed that students who benefitted from inclusive provisions as well as exclusive catering services and identity based cultural clubs could mix comfortably with out-groups students (see sections 3.6.2 and 6.2.1.4.2). With regard to exclusive services and activities (see sections 3.6.2 and 6.2.1.4.2), it was shown that students who obtained warmth, emotional attachment and social support from fellow students of similar backgrounds were empowered to mix with out-groups in terms of collaborative learning more than those who lacked such social attachment and support.

Recommendation 12: Both the exclusive and inclusive service provisions and co-curricular activities should be equally and fairly implemented.

The data obtained from the study sites showed that participants differed in their attitudes towards the implementation of identity based services and activities since they believed that such practices would keep students from different backgrounds apart. However, students also recognised that diversity constitutes humanity and that it should not imply

enmity (see section 6.2.1.4.2). Since social differences are unavoidable in a multicultural social context, an essential diversity management strategy is enabling students to equally value commonalities as well as differences. Students should learn that giving due respect to otherness is a means for earning reciprocal respect. Since inclusiveness does not mean sameness, both the exclusive and inclusive service provisions should be equally and fairly implemented.

7.5.9 A design and evaluation scheme for cross-border learning

The findings showed that although the service provisions and teaching and learning processes constitute components that further CBLEs, the outcomes of these experiences are to a large degree left unmeasured. For instance, lodging arrangements, inclusive co-curricular activities and student initiated socio-cultural practices were measured mainly in terms of service satisfaction or absence of inter-group conflict, whereas group learning activities were measured only in terms of task accomplishment (see section 6.2.4). However, the impact of the CBLEs should also be assessed in terms of the extent to which the universities provided experiences that promote a general sense of campus pride and feelings of belonging to the multicultural university community by using questionnaires at the end of an academic year and at the end of a course programme. The results would provide input for further improvement and refinement of the implementation process of diversity management strategies.

Recommendation 13: Universities should design institutional cross-border learning assessment survey instruments to gauge inter-group development of students' across cultural boundaries.

The assessment of on-campus service satisfaction amongst students could be augmented by using contextualised survey instruments measuring the on-campus cross-cultural development of students. The CBLEs assessment need not necessarily be measured by a component which forms part of a campus service satisfaction survey. It could be measured separately by a survey designed to measure the level of inter-group

development. Similarly, CBLEs in the teaching and learning areas could be measured in terms of interactive cross-cultural group development and supportive cross-border relationships.

7.6 FINAL REMARKS

In this study the relationship between institutional management practices and CBLEs which contributes towards the cross-border development of multicultural students was placed within the management strategies relating to service and teaching and learning areas. Cross-border learning, which relates to social learning theory, was shown to be a product of diversity management processes and inter-group activity across identity boundaries.

The study findings attested that in the multicultural tertiary educational environment at selected Ethiopian universities, cross-border learning transcends the official multicultural education approach of tolerance to differences. It promotes the development of the self and the reciprocal process of understanding between different socio-cultural groups which leads to a sustainable mutual peaceful co-existence of socio-culturally diverse students. It upholds the view that the management duties at these multicultural institutions should go beyond the mere delivery of service provision and the facilitation of teaching and learning processes and should comprise educational intervention geared towards the cross-cultural development of students, thereby preparing them for a multicultural work environment. This argument could be extended by recommending that at the study site universities the quality measurement of education should not only focus on academic excellence but also on social skills and inter-cultural competencies. This would not only enable academically qualified graduates to work in a multicultural environment, but also to embrace and emulate the acceptance of social diversity as a fact of life. This study emphasises the view that people who receive fair, unprejudiced and unbiased treatment would most probably offer reciprocal respect and affection. Good relations do not emerge from being adjacent to each other but from having a considerate, empathetic and

supportive relationship with one another based on the premise that people are equal irrespective of their cultural backgrounds.

It is the wish of this researcher that this research would provide policy-makers and policy-implementers with information that would improve their strategies for organising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating CBLEs embedded within management processes at their multicultural tertiary educational environments, thereby contributing towards building a multicultural cohesive student community and Ethiopian society which respects its citizens irrespective of their cultural backgrounds.

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ጦማር: 1993 ከታሰሩት የአሮሞ ተማሪዎች 18 ቱፍርድ ቤት ቀረቡ 8ኛ አመት ቁ.20 መጋቢት. [Tomar. 2001. From the imprisoned Oromo students 18 of them appeared at court' 8th year 8, 20 April].

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Documents of consent

The documents in this appendix relate to the process of securing consent for the study.

UNISA-Ethiopian Centre

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

January 10, 2012.

Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena

(Doctoral study student)

Student no, 45535116

Department of Education Management

Faculty of Education, UNISA

Dear Mrs. Tsigie G/Meskel Abera

I am a doctoral student at UNISA (University of South Africa) in the field of Education Management.

It is to be recalled that during the training and workshop, April 17-23, 2011, my research proposal under the title, ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs of selected Ethiopian Universities*** was accepted and I was advised to submit the proposal to UNISA for ethical clearance certificate. I have sent the proposal to the Faculty of Education, UNISA, and applied for ethical clearance certificate; however, the issuance of the certificate took time and I have not yet got the certificate.

This is to kindly request your good office to write me a cooperation letter to concerned offices of the study site universities so that in the mean time I could access study sites and start the data collection process.

Sincerely

Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena

January 26, 2012

UNISA-ET/KA/ST/29/26-01-12

TO WHOM IT CONCERN

The University of South Africa (UNISA) extends her warm greetings to you and the staff of your esteemed University. Mr. HaileMariam Kekeba Gobena (student number 45535116) is studying in the Department of Education Management at UNISA, and writing his Doctoral (PhD) thesis under the title "Diversity Management and Students' Cross-border Learning Experience in Selected Ethiopian Universities."

As he has now reached the stage of data collection, we are writing this letter to certify the above facts. This is, therefore, to kindly request your support in allowing the student get access to relevant resources from your University.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.



Tsige GebreMeskel Aberra

UNISA REGIONAL LEARNING CENTRE
PO BOX 13836 ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA
TEL +251-114-350141
+251-114-350078
FAX +251-114-351243
MOBILE +251-912-191483

Deputy Director – Facilitation of Learning and ICT Support



February 10, 2012

To: Chairman, Department of English
Faculty of Language Studies, A.A.U

From: Mr. Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena (Lecturer, staff)
Department of English, Faculty of Language Studies, A.A.U

Subject: Request for letter of cooperation for collecting data for PhD study

I am a doctoral student at UNISA (University of South Africa) in the field of Education Management. At present I have completed my research proposal to conduct my PhD thesis on ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs of selected Ethiopian Universities***. The Addis Ababa, Adama Science and Technology and Debretrehan universities have been selected as study sites for the research project. In recognition to the completion of the proposal I have got an approval letter from UNISA-Ethiopian Centre to conduct the study.

This is, therefore, to kindly request you to write me a cooperation letter to concerned offices of the study site universities to permit me to collect data from the universities. I, herewith, attach the letter of the approval I have been given from the UNISA-Ethiopian Centre and the research instruments I designed to collect data. .

Sincerely

Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena

Addis Ababa University
Faculty of Language Studies
Department of English
☎ (251) 1 239728 Fax N° (00251) 1 239729
Email: info@dfll.aau.edu.et



አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
የቋንቋዎች ጥናት ፋክልቲ
የእንግሊዝኛ ትምህርት ክፍል
☒ 1176

Date: _____

To: _____

Ato Hailemariam Kekeba a PhD student at UNISA student no. 45535116 is the staff in the Department of English, Addis Ababa University. He is currently doing his PhD Thesis entitled “*Diversity Management and Students’ Cross-border Learning Experiences: A case study of selected Ethiopian Universities*”.

Hence, he would like to make use of the resources in your organization. I am therefore writing this to kindly ask you to allow him to have access to the sources your organization.

With regards

Alemu Hailu (Dr.)
Chairman, Department of English





Research Ethics Clearance Certificate

This is to certify that the application for ethical clearance submitted by

HK GOBENA (45535116)

for a D Ed study entitled

Diversity management and students' cross-border learning experiences of selected Ethiopian Universities

has met the ethical requirements as specified by the University of South Africa
College of Education Research Ethics Committee. This certificate is valid for two
years from the date of issue.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CS le Roux".

Prof CS le Roux
CEDU REC (Chairperson)
lrouxcs@unisa.ac.za

5 February 2013

Reference number: 2013 FEB/ 45535116/CSLR

Addis Ababa University
Faculty of Language Studies
Department of English
☎ (251) 1 239728 Fax N° (00251) 1 239729
Email: info@dfll.aau.edu.et



አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
የቋንቋዎች ጥናት ፋክልቲ
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☒ 1176

Date: _____

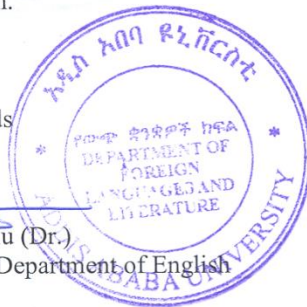
To: _____

Ato Hailemariam Kekeba a PhD student at UNISA student no. 45535116 is the staff in the Department of English, Addis Ababa University. He is currently doing his PhD Thesis entitled “*Diversity Management and Students’ Cross-border Learning Experiences: A case study of selected Ethiopian Universities*”.

Hence, he would like to make use of the resources in your organization. I am therefore writing this to kindly ask you to allow him to have access to the sources your organization.

With regards

Alemu Hailu (Dr.)
Chairman, Department of English





አዳማ ሃይንሰና ቴክኖሎጂ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
ADAMA SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

☒ 1888 Fon:+251-221-100059 Fax:+251-221-110038 email: wgebc-07@yahoo.com
አዳማ - ኢትዮጵያ
Adama, Ethiopia

Adama Science & Technology University
P.O. Box 1888, Adama - Ethiopia

Date April 8, 2012
Ref. DSA/250/05/12

Dean of Students Affairs

To: School Student Affairs Associate Deans
School Academic Affairs Associate Deans

Dean
Chanyalew W/Gebrieal

Subject: Research data collection permission

Dear all;

Student Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena from UNISA has applied to collect data for a research entitled 'Diversity Management & Students' Cross-border Learning Experience in Selected Ethiopian Universities'.

This is to inform you that we have checked ethical issues of his instrument and permitted him to collect his data and that you could cooperate with him.

Sincerely

ታችኛው ግብርታ ገ/ገብረ
Chanyalew W/Gebrieal G/Selassie

የተማሪዎች ጉዳይ ጊዜ
Dean of Students Affairs



Cc.

- Hailemariam Kekba
Addis Ababa



ደብረ ብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ
 የጥናትና ምርምር እና የህብረተሰብ አገልግሎት ም/ፕሬዚዳንት ጽ/ቤት
Debre Berhan University
Research and Community Service Vice President Office

ቁጥር/Ref.No 1230/1-01/21
 ቀን/Date 27.10.2012

To: Concerned Members of Debre Berhan University
Debre Berhan

Subject: Permission for Data Collection

Mr. Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena a staff of Addis Ababa Univesisty and doctorat student at UNISA has requested for permission to collect data for his doctoral study on “Diverstiy Management and Students’ Cross-border Learning Experiences in Selected Ethiopian Universities” form our university.

This is, therefore, to inform you to cooperate with the researcher in providing him with appropriate data.

With the best regards.

For Research and Community
 Service Vice President Office



F.H

445

E-mail: dbu@ethionet.et

መልስ ሲጻፉልን የኛን ደብዳቤ ቁጥር ይጥቀሱ።

In replying, please quote our ref. no.

+251-116812034

Fax +251-116812065

Participant consent form
(Individual interview)

I read and understood the consent document of the researcher of the study entitled ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs at selected Ethiopian Universities*** and agreed to participate in the study as an informant. I show my consent by filling my name and signing in this form.

Date:

Venue

Name: _____ position: _____

Signature: _____

PCF03-1
 Participant consent form
 Focus group interview (FGI)
 (Students' service)

I read and understood the consent document of the research entitled ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs at selected Ethiopian Universities*** and agreed to participate in the study as an informant. I show my consent by filling my name and signing in the table below.

Date:

Venue

No	Name	University	Department/section	Position	Service year	Signature
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
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7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

CF03-2
Participant consent form
Focus group interview (FGI)
(Lecturers)

I read and understood the consent document of the researcher of the study entitled ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs at selected Ethiopian Universities*** and agreed to participate in the study as an informant. I show my consent by filling my name and signing in the table below.

Date:

Venue

No	Name	University	Department	Academic rank	Service in year	Signature
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
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PCF03-3
Participant consent form
Focus group interview (FGI)
(Students)

I read and understood the consent document of the researcher of the study entitled ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs at selected Ethiopian Universities*** and agreed to participate in the study as an informant. I show my consent by filling my name and signing in the table below.

Date:

Venue

No	Name	University	Department	Academic year level	Signature
1					
2					
3					
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Appendix II: Code of conduct and research instruments

Introduction

This document comprises data collection code of conduct and research instruments to be used to collect data at your university.

The research instruments part includes three different types of data tools, namely individual interview questions, focus group interview guiding questions and observation guidelines. Three different semi-structured focus group interview guiding questions will be used to collect data from the *Student Service* officer and clerk, lectures and student focus group interview participants. The focus group discussion for the *Students' Service* officers will focus on participants' observations, experiences and opinions of students' relationship across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences along with management practices they use to address student differences. The questions for the lecturer participants focus on their perception of student socio-cultural diversity and their day-to-day learning management practices across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences. The discussion topics for student participants are divided into student backgrounds, perception of social diversity, opinions on diversity management implementation and their views regarding inter-group experiences across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences. The individual interview consists of semi-structured interview questions to be used to collect data from qualitatively selected key informants (*Student Dean Office and Student Service* Deans, Directors and their Assistants) for their expertise knowledge and authority on student service management processes. A non-participant field-note observation guideline which comprises three points of focus will be used to collect data by observing student participants in terms of campus diversity atmosphere, identity assertion strategies and outside class group learning practices and that data will be supplemented with additional notes to be collected through informal discussions with concerned observation participants.

Before the commencement of any data collection process the research code of conduct will be briefed to all participants. Data will be collected from participants who have agreed with the consent. (See Appendix I)

A: Data collection Code of conduct with study participants

Dear study participants,

I am a staff of Addis Ababa University and a doctoral student of Education Leadership and Management at UNISA (University of South Africa). Currently I am conducting a study for my doctoral thesis. Therefore,

The purpose of this Focus Group Interview is to collect data for the fulfilment of my thesis entitled: ***Diversity Management and Students' CBLEs at selected Ethiopian Universities***. Your university has been selected as a study site for the research. The concerned management body of your University has been informed about the study through the request letter from AAU dated _____ with a copy of the guide questions. They were also clearly informed by the researcher about the aim of the study and its contribution to the institution in developing co-existence strategies that promote cross-border learning opportunities among diverse student population. Based on this, the management body has also given the researcher a permit letter dated ----- (They will be shown a copy of the letter of permit).

The information and response you provide in the discussion will be vital for the success of the study. Your response to the discussion will be used strictly for the study only; your anonymity and privacy will be kept confidential indefinitely. Therefore, feel free and give your genuine information for the discussion points. Because I do not want to miss any of your information, I will digitally record your response, transcribe and translate it into English and show it to you for verification before I use the data for the research purpose. You are free not to respond to any question you don't feel comfortable to talk about; and

you are also free to refrain and withdraw from the study anytime when you do not feel comfortable during the research process.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and time!

Hailemariam Kekeba Gobena

B: Research instruments

In this study data from documents, focus group interviews, individual, interviews and observations were used to verify the study questions. This section consists of data collection instruments prepared for focus group interviews, individual interviews and observation protocol.

1. Focus group interview guiding questions

This section comprises focus group interview questions prepared for collecting data from focus group interview lecturer, *Student Services*, and student focus group participants.

1.1 Focus group interview guiding questions for lecturers

The guiding questions for lecturer study participants include personal data, campus diversity experiences and teaching and learning processes

1.1.1 Bio-data of lecturers

- Name
- Department.....
- Position.....
- Rank.....
- Ethnic background (optional).....
- First language (optional):
- Religious affiliation (optional).....
- Teaching experience in HE in years.....
- Other work experiences.....

1.1.2 Guiding questions

- a. Experiences on campus student diversity
 - 1. Please tell me about your educational backgrounds and your teaching experiences?

2. How do you explain student social diversity in your institution in terms of ethnicity, language and religion?
3. What diversity policies and regulations of the university are you aware of and apply in your attempt to respond to student diversity needs? How do you implement them?
4. Which of the institutional activities and practices do you think aim at addressing student diversity at your university?
 - a. Student diversity, and teaching and learning
5. How do you view student diversity in terms of ethnicity, language and religion in your class? Is it a threat, an opportunity or a normal occurrence? Explain your position using your classroom experiences.
6. How do you explain diversity sensitivity of lecturers towards students in terms of teaching and learning activities?
7. In terms of the courses you teach, which learning activities do you think are engaging and calling for knowledge of diverse students and their backgrounds? Why?
8. How do you think equality of students could be ascertained in the classroom and outside learning processes such as in terms of teaching materials and teaching learning process in the institution?
9. How do students tend to organise themselves for group learning activities and how do you like to organise students for classroom discussions and for accomplishing outside classroom learning tasks and projects?
10. How do you feel about the fairness of your colleague lecturers concerning assessments across ethnic, linguistic and religious lines?
11. From the diversity variables such as ethnicity, language and religion, which one do you consider to be a serious threat to teaching and learning on the campus? Why is it so?
12. What do you advise the institution and your colleagues to make the institution a supportive learning environment for the diverse student population?

1.2 Focus group interview guide questions: for *Student Service* officers, *Campus Police*, *Student Union* study participants

1.2.1 *Bio-data of officers*

Name:

Gender:

Ethnic background (optional).....

First language (optional):

Religious affiliation (optional).....

Work experience in HE (in years).....

Work experience in the position (in years)

Other experiences.....

1.2.2 *Focus group guiding questions*

- a. Issues for discussion of participants' experiences
 1. Tell me about any ethnic, religious and linguistic related episodes you have ever encountered during your services. It could be something surprising, amazing, unique/anything, that relates to ethnic, linguistic or religious differences.
 2. How do you explain student diversity in the campus?
 3. Can we assert that all ethnic, language and religious groups feel that they are equally treated in the campus? Why?
 4. What diversity policies and regulations of the university do you apply when you attempt to respond to student diversity needs? How do you see their effectiveness in your contexts?
 5. How do feel about the religious based dining services set by the university? What if a Christian dines the Muslim foods and the vice versa if one wishes?
 6. How do students show their diversity satisfaction/dissatisfactions in campus services?

7. To what extent do you think you pay attention to student identity (in terms of ethnicity, language and religion) when you render services? Why?
8. How do you treat students who may not speak the language which you speak?
9. Which of your services do you consider to be diversity sensitive? Why?
10. When do you sense that a student feels discriminated against? How do you try to address such things?
11. In your work experiences so far, have you ever encountered student conflicts related to ethnicity, religion, etc. How was it resolved?
12. How do you rank ethnicity, language and religious issues in the campus in terms of their threat against building mutual trust among diverse students? Why?

1.3 Focus group interview questions for students

1.3.1 Bio-data of students

Name:

Ethnic background

First language:

Religious affiliation.....

Department:

Year:

2.3.2 Focus group interview guiding questions

a. Students' background knowledge and attitudes of social diversity

(The following questions were asked to collect relevant data diversity experiences).

1. Would you tell us about your own and family and ethnic, linguistic and religious background?
2. How do you explain the views on diversity of the community where you have grown up in terms of ethnicity, language and religion?
3. How does your community treat an outsider? What cultural rules do they apply to accommodate or exclude others?

4. What things are considered good or bad when one wants to establish connection with others (ethnic group, and religious group) in your society?
- b. Campus life
 - i. First perception
 1. How do you describe your first week in the university campus? What did you find the most challenging for you during that week?
 2. What social activities/issues did you find impressive/discouraging during your first week?
 3. How did you perceive student relationships then?
 - ii. Changes in perception
 1. How do you feel about student diversity now?
 2. What does the institution do to bring students from different backgrounds to live together cohesively?
 3. How do you explain staff diversity (academic & support staff) in the university?
 4. How did you feel about the religious based dining style in the university?
 5. How do you describe love affairs within or outside ethnic, religious backgrounds in the university?
 6. How do you explain campus life around cafes, group studies outside class in the campus, etc. from a diversity perspective?
 - iii. Dormitory life
 1. How do you describe life in the dorm in your campus?
 2. How do you feel about student diversity in your dorm in terms of ethnicity, language and religion? What examples do you find that best explain students' relationship from your observation?
 3. How do you help a student who encounters a problem, for example death of a relative, during illness?
 4. How do you help each other academically in dorm areas across, linguistic, religious and ethnic differences?

5. How do you use foods and other resources that you come with from your homes?
6. You know jocks are common with dorm mates. How do students make jocks with their dorm mates during spare time?
7. To what extent are ethnicity, language, and religion diversities challenges to students in the dorm from your point of view?

c. CBLEs

i. In-classroom CBLEs

1. How do you like working groups in the classroom learning? Why?
2. Who are often your partners in class group activities? Why?
3. How do you describe the learning activities you have done with students from outside your social groups?
4. How do students feel about working with other students across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences in class? How do you explain the benefits you got and/or challenges you encountered?
5. How do you characterise students' comment on differences in opinion in class presentations across identity boundaries?
6. Which one do you think contributes to your learning much, a homogeneous or heterogeneous classroom? Why?
7. From your observation, how do students feel when a student from outside their social backgrounds is successful in academic works? Why?
8. What type of course works in class give opportunity to work cooperatively with students from different backgrounds?
9. In what ways do ethnicity, linguistic and religious diversity and differences manifest in the classrooms? Why?

ii. Outside classroom CBLEs

1. How often do your instructors give you group projects? Which ones did you find very useful to work with students from different background? Why?
2. How do you choose group partner for projects for outside class? Why?

3. How do you support each other, for example in sharing resources, giving constructive feedbacks?
 4. What did you do to academically support students outside your social group? Why? Or what have students from other social background done for you to support you academically outside class?
 5. How do you explain students' views on academic success of others in academic performances?
- d. Students' perception of diversity management approaches and provisions and learning benefits of the approaches
1. Can we assert that all religious, ethnic and language groups feel that they are equally treated in the campus? Why?
 2. In which co-curricular activities in the university do students from different background participate collectively I?
 3. What co-curricular activities on the campus, do you think, do not open opportunities for diversity mix? Why?
 4. Which co-curricular activities, do you think, promote student relationships across ethnic, linguistic and religious boundaries?
 5. Ever since you joined the university how much, do you think have you learnt cultural values of other students so far? Can you cite examples?
 6. How do you relate the diversity management approach of the university to students' learning experiences in class as well as out of class?
 7. How are you satisfied with the multicultural policy implemented at your university? Why?
 8. How often do you take part in events prepared by other ethnic, religious and linguistic groups in the campus? Why?
 9. In this university which of the three diversity issues such as ethnicity, language and religion is the most challenging for students? Why?
 10. In general, how do you evaluate the diversity sensitivity of the classrooms, teaching materials, instructors, campus environment, and services?

C. Individual interview guide questions for *Dean of Students, Directors or delegated personnel*

i. Bio-data of officers

Name

Ethnic background (optional).....

First language (optional)

Religious affiliation (optional)

Ethnic background (optional).....

Position:

Teaching experience in HE, if applicable.....

Other experiences.....

ii. Interview guiding questions

1. How do you view student diversity in campus?
2. What diversity policies and regulations of the university do you apply when you attempt to respond to student diversity needs?
3. Can you claim that all religious, ethnic and language groups feel that they are equally treated in the campus? How?
4. What diversity provisions your institution provides, do you think, enhance student mutual trust and harmony in the teaching learning process? Which ones, do you feel contribute less in building mutual trust among diverse students? Why?
5. What platforms are there for different student groups to have their voices heard?
6. What diversity issues (ethnicity, language, religion) do you find easy to respond to on the campus?
7. Which ones are more challenging to address? Why?
8. How successful, do you think is your institution in addressing student social diversity needs?

9. How do you evaluate the diversity sensitivity of the co-curricular and curricular activities your institute provides in the campus?
10. How is the implementation of diversity management policy of the institution connected to the teaching learning process?
11. How do you measure students' satisfaction in your diversity management?
12. How do you rank ethnicity, language and religion in terms of their threat against building mutual trust among diverse students?

D. Observation guide points on diversity practices of students in terms of learning activities

Observations were made and notes are recorded on the spot in diary form.

1. Campus diversity atmosphere
 - a. Diversity expression mechanisms: clothing styles, languages, office features, etc.
 - b. Playgrounds, cafes, lodgings, recreation areas, etc.
2. Identity assertion strategies
 - a. group identity reflections: linguistic, religious homogeneity
 - b. grouping behaviours during informal talks and breaks
3. Group learning activities
 - a. Medium of communication during group learning activities outside classes
 - b. group features for outside class discussions on study projects in the campus
 - c. Other relevant observation points will be recorded at spot.
4. Field notes on informal discussions with campus members on in-campus diversity issues.

E. Observation guide points on diversity sensitivity and management practices of *Student Service* personnel

(Observations are made during office visits and notes are recorded on the spot in diary form).

- i. Diversity sensitivity of staff absence/presence of identity indicators at the offices (such as religious related clothing styles, pictures of saints, verses from holy scriptures (on walls/tables) and sacred songs)
- ii. Diversity sensitive service delivery in terms of language of communication

Appendix III: List of institutionalised co-curricular activities collected from study site universities

Introduction

The following letters which show tentative lists of co-curricular activities were collected from two study site universities. The list is tentative because the universities informed that since the establishment and running of co-curricular activities depend on student participation it was difficult to have exact list.



አዳማ ሣይንስና ቴክኖሎጂ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

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email:

አዳማ - አ.ት.ዮ.ጽ.ያ

Adama, Ethiopia

Adama Science & Technology University
P.O. Box 1888, Adama - Ethiopia

Date 06/05/2005

Ref. ተ.አ/001/39/05

Student Union

ለተማሪዎች ጉዳይ ዲን ጽ/ቤት

አ.ሣ.ቴ.ያ
አዳማ

ጉዳይ:- ክበባትን እና ማህበራትን ስለማሳወቅ ::

እንደሚታወቀው በዩኒቨርሲቲያችን ውስጥ የተለያዩ ክበባት እና ማህበራት ይገኛሉ። ሆኖም ግን ተጠሪነታቸው ሙሉ በሙሉ ለተ/ህብረት ባለመሆናቸው ለስራ አስቸጋሪ ሆኖ ቆይቷል። ይሁን እንጂ በቀን 22/04/2005 ከተ/ጉዳይ ዲን በተጻፈለን ደብዳቤ መሰረት ሁሉም ክበባት እና ማህበራት በህብረቱ ስር መሆናቸውን እና ዝርዝራቸውንም እንድናሳውቅ የተጠየቅን በመሆኑ እንደሚከተለው እናሳውቃለን።

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| 1. ጋሶ | 10. የአካል ጉዳተኛ ተሪዎች ማህበር |
| 2. ህብር | 11. የበጎ አድራጎች ክበብ |
| 3. ጣምራ ውበት | 12. IT ክበብ |
| 4. ጥግሞት | 13. Space Science |
| 5. ፀረ ኤድስ እና ስነ ፅሁፍ | 14. Society of Black Engineers |
| 6. ፀረ ሙስና | 15. Science & Technology |
| 7. ሰላም ክበብ | 16. የአካባቢ ዕዳት እና ጥበቃ |
| 8. ሰብዓዊ መብት | 17. የሀገር ገዕታ ግንባታ |
| 9. የሴቶች ክበብ እና ማህበር | 18. Au Bridge |

መሆናቸውን እናሳውቃለን።

ከሰላምታ ጋር

ገ.ታ.ቸ.ወ. ተላኪ ገዳማ
Getachew Tilahun Bazezew
የተማሪዎች ህብረት ምክርቤት ጸ/ቤት
V/President of Student's Union



ለደብዳቤ
አገልግሎት ቅጽ ውጭ ለመላክ
21/05/05



ቁጥር/Ref.No_ትጥአ 54/08/05
ቀን/Date 26/08/2013

ጉዳዩ፡- በደብረ ብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ የተቋቋሙ በተማሪዎች ክብባትና ማህበራት ዝርዝር ስለመሰጠት

አቶ ኃይለማርያም ቀቀባ በደቡብ አፍሪካ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የPhD ተማሪ እንደሆኑ በመግልፅ በዩኒቨርሲቲው በተማሪዎች የተቋቋሙና እና ተማሪዎች እየተሳተፉባቸው የሚገኙ ክብባትና ማህበራትን እንድንሠጣቸው በጠየቁን መሰረት የሚከተለውን ለጥተናቸዋል።

- | | |
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| 1. አካባቢ ጥበቃና ማሰዋብ ክብብ | 15. የአማራ ክልል ወጣት ጥምረት ማህበር |
| 2. አዊ ልማት ማህበር | 16. አካውንቲንግ ማህበር |
| 3. ፀረ እፅ ክብብ | 17. የታሪክና ቅርስ ባላደራ ማህበር |
| 4. ሠላም ክብብ | 18. የጎበዝ ተማሪዎች ማህበር |
| 5. አገርህን እወቅ ክብብ | 19. ሐሳብ ማህበር |
| 6. ፀረ ኤድስ ክብብ | 20. የኢኮኖሚክስ ማህበር |
| 7. ህብርና ሥነ ፅሁፍ ክብብ | 21. የሳይኮሎጂ ማህበር |
| 8. የባህል ቡድን ክብብ | 22. የኬሚስትሪ ማህበር |
| 9. ፀረ ሙስና ክብብ | 23. ሴቶች ማህበር |
| 10. የሥርዓተ ሃይማኖት ክብብ | 24. የቻራቲ ማህበር |
| 11. ማኔጂመንት ማህበር | 25. የሥነ-ሰው ማህበር |
| 12. የኤሌክትሮኒክስ አንጂነሪንግ ማህበር | 26. የህግ ማህበር |
| 13. ባዮሎጂ ማህበር | 27. የኬሚስትሪ አንጂነሪንግ ማህበር |
| 14. አማራኛ ቋንቋና ሥነ ፅሁፍ ማህበር | 28. የሲብክስ ማህበር |
| 30. ቤተመገባዎች ክብብ | 29. ሶሻሎጂ ማህበር |
| 31. የጌዲኦ ማህበር | |



አሠላምታ ጋር
[Signature]
ዶ/ር ተስፋዬ ደምሴ ኃ/ገብርኤል
የትምህርት ጥራትና አግባብነት ዳይሬክቶሬት ዳይሬክተር

ምላሽ ሰዕሩ የኛን ደብዳቤ ቁጥር መጥቀስ አይርሱ ስልክ 251 118966121
4-ክስ 251 116812065

Appendix IV: In-campus service satisfaction assessment questionnaire

ደብረ ብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ

በደጋፊ የሥራ ሂደቶችና የተሰደዩ የሥራ ክፍሎች በሚሰጡ አገልግሎቶች የደንበኞችና ባለድርሻ አካላት

የአርካታ ማረጋገጫ መስፈርት/ነጥቦች/

የሂደቱ/ክፍሉ ስም

የደብረ ብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ ስድንበኞችና ባለድርሻ አካላት ዘርፈ ብዙ አገልግሎቶችን በመስጠት ላይ ይገኛል። ተቋማችን በበደት ዓመቱ የደንበኞቻችንና ባለድርሻ አካላት አርካታ 64 በመቶ ለማድረስ እየተንቀሳቀሰ ነው።

ስለሆነም በተሰደዩ የሥራ ክፍሎች የሚሰጡ ልዩ ልዩ አገልግሎት ላይ የሚሰጡን አስተያየቶች ወደፊት ሥራችንን ለማሻሻል እጅግ ጠቃሚ በመሆኑ በአገልግሎት አሰጣጥ እና ደንበኛ አቀባበል ማስትም በአምስቱ የደንበኞች አርካታ ማረጋገጫ መስፈርቶች (Timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, available information) ያለዎትን አስተያየት በሠንጠረዥ ውስጥ ምልክት በማድረግ አስተያየትዎን እንዲሰጡን እየጠየቅን ስለሰጡን አስተያየት በቅድሚያ ለማመልከት እንወደዳለን።

ተ. ቁ.	መመዘኛ መስፈርቶች	የሰነድ ደረጃ					ምርመራ
		1	2	3	4	5	
1.	በሂደታችን/ በሚከናወኑ ተግባራት አገልግሎት በወቅቱ ከመስጠት አንፃር (Timeliness)						
2.	ጥራት የለው መረጃ እና አገልግሎት ከመስጠት አንፃር (Accuracy) የአገልግሎት ተገቢነት						
3.	የሂደቱ/ክፍሉ/ ሠራተኞች ደንበኛ አቀባበል እንዲሁም ለመርዳት የላቸው ተነሳሽነት (Willingness and Helpfulness)						
4.	አገልግሎቱን ለመስጠት የሠራተኞች/ ባለሙያዎች/ ሙያዊ እውቀት Expertise)						
5.	አገልግሎቱን ለመስጠት የሚያስችሉ መረጃዎችን አደራጅቶ በያዘ ለአገልግሎት ዝግጁ ከማድረግ አንፃር (Available information)						
6.	በክፍላችን አጠቃላይ የሚሰጡት ተጨማሪ አስተያየት ካለ፡ _____ _____						

ማሳሰቢያ፡- ይህንን ቅጽ መሙላት የሚችሉው ከሂደቱ/ክፍሉ/ ማንኛውንም አገልግሎት አገኝተው የሚያውቁ መሆን አለበት።

Appendix V: Some local news papers and magazines which reported student inter-group hostilities in the Ethiopian higher institutions

Introduction

The following documents are some of the local news papers in which student inter-group conflicts have been reported.

የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

Wegagen Bank, s.c
ወጋገን ባንክ (አ.ማ)
የብልፅገናዎ አጋር!
 የፍጥነት ባንክ
 ስልክ- 011 552 38 00
 ስልክ- 011 552 35 20
 ፖ.ቆ- 1018
 E-mail: wegagen@ethionet.et
 Website: www.wegagenbank.com.et
 ADDRESS: WEGAGEN

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.

ፎቶ ለገደ
የሩሃን ስለገደ
ጊ.ሊ.ዩን ደላር
ሳ ስፍ መቶ ሺህ
በገለጸን ሲን
ፍፃሜ.



ውሎ አና ኑር

12

14

... አልወማሁም
ከመቀመጫ አያድንም
"አወርሻ ላይ መጥፎ ገንጠሎች" እንደ
ሆኑ ተብሎ በሰጠው ቃል ላይ ገንጠሎች ላይ
አይደሉም የምንገጥም ...

ተስፋ ስለሚረካ ከአፍሪካ

ባራክ ኦባማ

21



አዲስ ነገር

የኢትዮጵያ የፖለቲካ ፓርቲዎች ለምን ይሰነጣጠቃሉ?

ገርዘኔን
በገጽ 3 ላይ ያገኙታል



ንጅት በዚህ ሳምንት

ይህ አመር፣ መካከል የተፈጠረው
ወይን ለማንኛውም ወይን መሻሻል
የሚችል ወይን ለማንኛውም ወይን
... (text continues with details about wine and politics)

ከተከለሙ አመር ጋር የሚኖረውን ንጅት
በተመለከተ ተወያይተው በመጨረሻም በደም
ሰውያን በተሰጡት ወሳኔ ወይን ጥርጣሬ
... (text continues with political commentary)

የሚያስተካክር ከተለየም ይደርገዋል የተወሰነ
ኮሚቴ በቅርብ እንደጠየቀው ታውቋል።
... (text continues with news about a committee)

የውስጥ ዜናዎች

ተፋፍሎ በቀጠለው
የኢንዱስትሪ ህዝብ
ኢትዮጵያውያን
ሰደተኞች እየተገዱ
ነው።
... (text continues with industrial news)

ኢትዮጵያ በ276 ሚልዮን ብር ከአሜሪካ የጦር መሣሪያ ገዛች

ኢትዮጵያ ኢ.አ.አ. በ1999 ሰኔ 2006
በሁለት ሰዎች ገንዘብ 276 ሚልዮን
ብር የሚያዘው የጦር መሣሪያዎችን እንደ
የግድያዎች መክላዊ ተያይዞ ያገኘች
... (text continues with details about military equipment purchase)

በትምህርት ተቋማት ማንኛውም ሃይማኖታዊ ተገባር ለከለከለ ነው

... (text continues with news about religious freedom in schools)

ተክለሃይማኖት ከፍተኛ ከሊኒክ Teklehaimanot Higher Clinic

ሰመሎ የህርሰትና እምነት ተከታዮች
ግን ለብርሀን ልደቱ በሰላም አደረግኩሁ።

ቤተ ክርስቲያን ስለ ስት ጠራ
በሉ ስለተሰጡ ስም ስም
... (text continues with clinic contact information)

