

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT

**A Dissertation Submitted to the College of Graduate Studies of
Addis Ababa University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in Educational
Policy and Leadership**

**Faculty Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges of the Community
Service Mission: The Case of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**

By: Denekew Zewdie Negassa

AAU, 2025

**Faculty Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges of the Community
Service Mission: The Case of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**

By

Denekew Zewdie Negassa

Supervisor: Abebaw Yirga Adamu (Professor)

AAU, 2025

Dedication

To my beloved mother, Lakech/Diribi Gurmu Buli (1947 – 1989), whose love still surrounds me, though she is no longer by my side. Every step of this journey was made possible because of your dreams for your children and me. I hope this achievement makes you proud, as you will always be in my heart.

Statement of the author/ declaration

This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Denekew Zewdie Negassa entitled **Faculty Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges of the Community Service Mission: The Case of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**, is submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy and Leadership, complies with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards to originality and quality.

Approved by the Board of Examiners

_____	_____	_____
Department Head	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Advisor	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Internal Examiner	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
External Examiner	Signature	Date

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank the Almighty God for his care. Next, I am grateful to my advisor, Abebaw Yirga Adamu (Professor of Higher Education and Director of Quality Assurance and Risk Management at Addis Ababa University), for his guidance, support, advice, and valuable comments on this research work.

My thanks also go to Addis Ababa University, particularly the Department of Educational Planning and Management, for supporting me throughout my academic journey - from my diploma to my bachelor's degree, master's degree, and current PhD studies - which has shaped me into who I am today. I would also like to express my gratitude to the department staff for their encouragement and moral support during my studies.

I would also like to express my profound appreciation to my sister, Genet Zewdie, and her family, Ato Assefa Degefa, Bati Asefa, and Obsen Asefa, for their moral support throughout my studies. I also extend my gratitude to my younger sister, Yeshareg Zewdie, and her family for their love and concern.

I am also profoundly grateful to my God-given lovely children: my beautiful and brilliant daughter, Kiyya Denekew; the strong and calm son, Bekan Denekew; and the blooming child Ebba Denekew, whose sincere love towards their Baba helped me stand firm during the highly challenging times I faced throughout my years of study.

I would also like to thank Ambo University for granting me the opportunity to pursue my PhD study.

Finally, I would like to thank the faculty respondents from Addis Ababa University who provided the necessary information and data for this study.

Denekew Zewdie Negassa

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

May 2025

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Abbreviations/ acronyms.....	vi
List of Tables	vii
Abstract.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
Introduction	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem	8
1.3. Purpose of the Study	12
1.4. Research Questions	13
1.5. Context of the Study	13
1.6. Significance of the study	14
1.7. Scope of the Study	14
1.8. Definition of Key Terms	15
1.9. Organization of the Study	15
CHAPTER TWO	17
Review of Related Literature	17
2.1. Development of University Missions	17
2.2. Conceptualizing Community Service Mission in Universities	20
2.2.1. Conceptual analysis in understanding the community service mission of universities 27	
2.2.2. Conceptual models for community engagement	30
2.3. Why Community Service	31
2.4. University- Community Service Initiatives	34
2.5. The African Experience	38
2.6. Community Service in Ethiopian Universities.	43
2.7. Philosophical Foundation of the Study	46
CHAPTER THREE	49
Methodology	49
3.1. Research Design	49
3.2. Case Selection	50

3.3. Sources of Data.....	51
3.4. Data Collection Methods	52
3.5. Data Analysis	54
3.6. Ethical Considerations.....	56
CHAPTER FOUR.....	57
Data Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation.....	57
4.1. Faculty perception of the community service mission of a university.....	57
4.1.1. Perception of the Community Service Mission	58
4.1.2. Factors influencing faculty perception of community service	67
4.2. Practices of Community Service.....	73
4.2.1. Institutional support for a community service mission	75
4.2.2. Strategies Used for Engaging in Community Services	81
4.3. Challenges towards Community Service	92
4.3.1. Challenges Constraining Faculty from Engaging in Community Service Mission.....	92
4.3.2. The Teaching-Research-Service Balance Impact on Faculty Engagement in Community Service.....	97
CHAPTER FIVE	100
Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations.....	100
5.1. Summary.....	100
5.2. Conclusions.....	101
5.3. Recommendations	105
References.....	107
Appendices.....	126

Abbreviations/ acronyms

AAU - Addis Ababa University

ASG-QA - African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

AUC - African Union Commission

CS - Community Service

EPRDF - Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

ESDP - Education Sector Development Program

ETP - Education and Training Policy

EUS - Ethiopian University Service

FDRE - Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

HEFCE - Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEI - Higher Education Institutions

MoE - Ministry of Education

MoSHE - Ministry of Science and Higher Education

OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

UIL - University-Industry Linkage

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

List of Tables

Table 1: Selected Definitions of the Third Mission of Universities	23
Table 2: Dimensions of Third Mission Activities.....	25
Table 3: The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.....	29
Table 4: Approaches towards implementing community service by universities.	36

Abstract

This study aimed to examine faculty perceptions of community service and identify factors that influence them. It also intends to explore community service practices and the methods through which the community service mission is implemented at Addis Ababa University. Additionally, the challenges faculty face in fulfilling their community service mission are addressed.

The study was conducted at Addis Ababa University, and the necessary data were collected from faculty members, vice deans, department heads, community service professionals, and official documents through in-depth interviews and document review.

The results show that faculty perceptions of community service depend on whether it is viewed as independent or integrated, voluntary or mandatory, professional or non-professional, and whether the university or the individual initiates it. These perceptions significantly affect faculty engagement. Key influencing factors include unclear policies, low institutional priority, inconsistent promotion practices, and lack of accountability. Faculty also face challenges due to limited institutional support, weak leadership commitment, and inadequate structures. Despite limited implementation, some strategies include externally funded projects, university-led initiatives, service-learning, and volunteer or staff-initiated activities.

The findings reveal too that faculty face different hindrances in implementing the community service mission. The difficulties are grouped into four categories: challenges related to communication, engagement, and awareness; barriers involving organizational, policy, and structural issues; financial and resource constraints; and setbacks in reporting and measuring community service activities. The study also highlights the impact of the teaching-research-service balance on faculty engagement in community service.

Therefore, there is a pressing need to make community service a more central part of faculty roles and implement more explicit accountability measures to ensure that faculty members participate in community service activities. The results of the study imply the necessity of creating clear guideline that facilitates the engagement of academic staff in community service initiatives, awareness-raising sessions for the faculty on community service, promoting a culture of engagement and empathy, and establishing partnerships within different units of the university can lead to the successful accomplishment of the mission's objectives. It is recommended that the university revise its community service guidelines, conduct a needs assessment before planning activities, encourage collaboration between faculties, and identify and address gaps in the organizational structure to ensure all faculty members can participate. The study underlines the importance of addressing faculty attitudes and institutional limitations in the community service mission. It emphasizes the need for collaborative action, informed strategies, and ongoing research to enhance community service initiatives in higher education institutions.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This chapter states and explains the introductory part of the research problem under consideration. It is divided into nine subheadings: background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. Each of the subheadings is treated in detail in the following section.

1.1. Background

Universities play a key role in educating the population and generating knowledge. As Maassen (1997) states, universities symbolize organizations with a long-standing history of seeking truth to maintain knowledge. While accomplishing their tasks, they encounter various scenarios and face unprecedented challenges due to changing circumstances and roles.

Although universities' roles have evolved, they were primarily established for teaching purposes. Concerning the changing role of universities over time, Keerberg, Kiisla, and Maeltsemees (2013) state that initially and historically, teaching has been the primary role of universities worldwide. The 11th-century (or medieval) university had a single mission of conserving and transmitting knowledge through teaching (Nabaho et al., 2022). The Land Ordinance of 1785, which was approved by the Confederation Congress and the ratification of the Morrill Act of 1862 in the United States of America (USA), redefined the public role of the university and expanded the role of higher education from its traditional emphasis on educating the elite to provide mass education (Duderstadt, 1999).

In the early 19th century, in Germany, reforms in Humboldtian higher education led to the “first academic revolution” (Etzkowitz et al., 2000, p. 315), introducing research as a new role for universities (Nabaho et al., 2022). The model of Humboldtian University represented a new momentum within the higher education realm, emerging in the early 20th century in response to the growing number of students, the shift to knowledge-based societies, the increasing importance of science within such societies, and other pertinent issues (Paletschek, 2002).

Influenced by his elder brother Alexander Von Humboldt (1769–1859), an innovative scientist, traveler, and ecologist, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), the Philosopher, Linguist, and Educational Reformer is recognized with founding the Humboldtian education model, which became the basis for modern research universities (Östling, 2018). His ideas transformed the German educational system and established the research university paradigm, which has had a profound impact on universities worldwide. The phrase “Humboldtian university” refers to the concept that the contemporary German university emerged with a new humanistic university idea, founded around 1800 by idealistic thinkers such as Wilhelm von Humboldt, Johann Fichte, and Friedrich Schleiermacher (Paletschek, 2002). The Humboldtian university concept, as it is used in today's scholarly discussion, consists of three components: the unity of research and teaching, the university's function as a research institution, and the freedom of research and teaching, which enables the university to be effective in furthering pure science (that is, science free of vested interests). “The Humboldtian model has often been used as a synonym for the modern research university” (Östling, 2020, p. 78).

According to Rospigliosi and Bourner (2019), in universities, engaging in research has developed along with the three main stages of development of the Western university: the medieval

university/ during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Renaissance and early modern university/ in the fifteenth century, and the modern university which emerged in the nineteenth century.

As a result, new ways of thinking have emerged in universities, leading to mutual interaction between universities and societal organizations, which has ultimately given rise to the concept of a third mission of universities, known as community service. In addition to their core missions of teaching theoretical and practical knowledge and making valuable contributions to the field, universities must also face the changing and increasing demands of society regarding what they are expected to achieve (Deimel, 2017).

It could be said that based on their missions, the history of universities spans three generations (Schelkunov, 2018). The first-generation universities originated in medieval Europe to impart to people the cultural experiences of the past. The second-generation universities emerged in the early nineteenth century, expanding the mission of universities to focus on the production of scientific knowledge. The third-generation universities gained recognition in the West at the end of the 20th century and represent a new generation of universities that effectively combine the functions of teaching and research with a third mission of addressing the existing needs of societies and states (Oztel, 2020; Schelkunov, 2018).

Community service, often referred to as the third core mission of universities in its broadest sense, is a developing concept frequently associated with the third core mission of universities. It is a broad and multifaceted phenomenon linked to the social and economic mission of universities (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Community service is a broad concept that encompasses various university activities outside academic environments (Molas-Gallart & Castro-Martínez, 2007; Karlsen & Larrea, 2019).

Due to the role ascribed to universities, community service was previously regarded as less important and given less credence within universities. Currently, there is a growing demand for universities to consider community service as a contribution to society (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Different authors refer to this contribution of universities to the community under various terms, including university-community engagement, community partnership, community service, community development, community outreach, the third mission, or service to society.

Over time, the perception of the third mission evolved. According to Rubens et al. (2017), three important issues facilitate the community service mission given due concern (2017), three important issues facilitate the community service mission, given due consideration, unlike those previous times. First, university faculty and departments recognized that their responsibilities extended beyond service to the university and that they were part of the communities in which they resided; thus, they were committed to serving the local community. Second, members of the communities began to recognize the human capital and assets within the university and requested their support and assistance. Third, businesses started to partner with universities, faculty, and departments on varied economic development projects.

The concern of businesses dealing with universities is partly triggered by the development of expertise, such as communication technologies. The revolution in information communication technology, globalization, the existence of the knowledge economy, the political turbulence, the worldwide financial crisis, and its impacts on university funding have all thrown new light and new demands on universities across the world to revisit their missions (Hadidi & Kirby, 2016): which brought community service into the attention and discussion of the higher education community.

Through community service missions, universities strengthen their relationship with the public by transferring knowledge and demonstrating their contributions to the community. Over the years, the third mission has evolved into a multidimensional concept, encompassing political, economic, cultural, and social dimensions. As a result, for all university activities that are directed toward society, the third mission can be seen as an umbrella term (Roessler, Duong, & Hachmeister, 2015).

Community service is an additional component to the first two traditional missions of universities, organized separately from teaching and research (Karlsen & Larrea, 2019). In this study, the phrase “community service” is used as a term to emphasize the concept related to all the activities of universities that benefit the community.

Community service in universities is a mutually beneficial process that strengthens both the university and the community. The success of universities cannot be enhanced without proper engagement with the locality. Stressing the importance of community service, Jadhav and Suhalka (2016) emphasized the need for deeper societal engagement to endorse new types of teaching and research in universities. The authors also acknowledged that the Western world had accepted community engagement as a means of aligning research with societal needs. Community service is perceived as the social and economic benefits that result from the impact of research and teaching activities on the populations involved, including other researchers, students, and various members of society.

In addition to teaching and research, the level of discussion about community service has recently increased, reflecting the growing interconnection and linkage between universities and society. For example, in India, though there have been many best academic practices for a long time, the

issue of community service in universities has been getting recognition recently (Jadhav & Suhalka, 2016).

Nowadays, teaching, research, and the “third mission” are perceived as the key roles of universities (Švec et al., 2015). In most cases, these major roles of universities are closely intertwined. While explaining the link between the three pillars of higher education institutions (HEIs), research, teaching, and service, Waghid (2002) proposes an idea in which it is possible to combine a university's duty to protect the free search for knowledge and its implementation (through teaching), with active participation to put research results into practical use (through service).

According to Abreu et al. (2016), the contribution to society is the core of universities' third mission. Some community-related activities of universities include regional development through support to community activities, e.g., skills development among the marginalized population; determining community's needs through research and designing appropriate solutions to meet such needs, e.g., devising alternative education methods for the uneducated elderly population; developing new technical or organizational solutions to solve community problems by involving the community (inclusive innovation), e.g. observing the practices of small farmers and devising new practices to improve productivity by taking their feedback and educating them on new practices (Mohamedbhai et al., 2014).

In explaining the importance of community service in universities, Hall (2009) wrote that in communities where institutions of higher education exist, universities comprise the largest accessible resources (academic staff, students, facilities, knowledge, research funding, skills, and capacities to facilitate learning) that are available and unutilized assets for community development. According to Hirsu et al. (2018), universities in Asia and Africa accomplish their

third mission by being involved more in their neighboring vicinities, tackling local-level issues such as responding to (un)expected realities like effects of climate change, environmental degradation, war and migration, and accelerated urbanization.

Universities are working with their communities primarily through their community service missions to address local challenges that the community may encounter. Literature also highlights this. Universities as organizations can engage in community service missions tailored to the specific context of their communities (Kitagawa et al., 2016; Pinheiro et al., 2012a; Sánchez-Barrioluengo, 2014). Studies also indicate that universities' reactions to their community vary significantly based on their specific situation (Hewitt-Dundas, 2012; Huggins et al., 2012; Sanchez-Barrioluengo et al., 2014). This shows the heterogeneous nature of universities as they tend to respond differently to external opportunities and challenges. Each university develops its approach to the third mission by targeting different areas of activities (Kitagawa et al., 2016).

A comparative case study of universities in Austria, the United Kingdom, and Sweden shows that policies in these countries emphasize different models of university-community engagement (Tripl, Sinozic, & Lawton Smith, 2015). Several studies have also demonstrated that universities are heterogeneous institutions in terms of their third mission activities (Hewitt-Dundas, 2012; Huggins et al., 2012; Charles et al., 2014; Kitagawa et al., 2016).

The higher education sector in Ethiopia also had experience in community service activities. The notable one in the history of the Ethiopian higher education sector, according to Tamrat (2022), is the 1970s campaign in which all university students were expected to participate in a mandatory year-long national service, serving in rural areas of the country. The opening of an extension division at the Haile Selassie I University (now Addis Ababa University), which mainly focused

on adult education programs conducted in the evenings, was also one of the earlier forms of community service engagement at the institutional level.

The Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1152/2019) states that every institution shall “undertake and encourage relevant study, research, and community services in national and local priority areas and disseminate the findings as may be appropriate; undertake as may be necessary, joint academic and research projects with national and foreign institutions or research centers” (FDRE, 2019 p.11451).

This necessitates that universities adapt to the changing circumstances in society, aligning their activities with societal demands. Besides, the community needs to benefit from the community service projects, and the service needs to be sustainable. Sustainable engagements lead to valued capacity building for the community (Clifford & Petrescu, 2012). Ensuring the efficiency and sustainability of the universities’ community service requires enhancing good practices and addressing challenges.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Rapid changes are occurring in all aspects of society, and universities must adapt to this evolving environment and meet the expectations of society. To carry out their missions well, universities must be linked to society and the local community. This is likely achieved primarily through the community service programs in which universities are involved.

Currently, worldwide, universities, research institutions, and numerous organizations are emphasizing the importance of research on university community service missions to address the growing complexities of social, political, environmental, and economic issues. The concept of university-community engagement has garnered increased attention in academic debates and

policy circles, primarily to pursue sustainable solutions to pressing societal challenges (Hall et al., 2015; Thomson et al., 2011). In fulfilling their institutional roles, the issue of how universities approach community service as one of their core missions, alongside teaching and research, is a concern (Goddard et al., 1994; Kellogg Commission, 1999).

One might expect that harmony between universities and communities would strengthen community engagement as a framework for addressing the developmental needs of communities. More recently, Goddard et al. (2016) have addressed this issue, advocating for stronger societal-university engagement to renew the civic spirit within higher education.

This necessitates that universities adapt to the changing circumstances in society, aligning their activities with societal demands. Additionally, the community should benefit from the community service projects, and the services must be sustainable. Sustainable engagements lead to valued capacity building for the community (Clifford & Petrescu, 2012). Ensuring the efficiency and sustainability of the universities' community service requires enhancing good practices and addressing challenges.

Universities in southern, central, and eastern Africa have significantly altered their mandates, shifting from traditional teaching and research to encompass the 'third mission' of actively engaging in their countries' development agendas (Kimani, 2017). Muriisa (2014) also noted that "the 'African University' today, like any other university, has clear mandates and roles: research, teaching, and community service" (p.70). Universities can play a significant role in nation-building by accomplishing their missions. Several studies have been conducted regarding the mission of universities. Existing studies on universities are more heavily dominated by the two traditional missions (teaching and research) than the third mission (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020).

Additionally, several researchers (e.g., Buys and Bursnall, 2007; Kezar, 2005; Hart, Northmore, Gerhardt, & Rodriguez, 2009) have noted a lack of research on the processes by which universities establish community partnerships and how these initiatives are sustained. Preece (2013) also indicated that there are few empirical studies on university community service practices, particularly in Africa. According to Mugabi (2014), except for a few case studies, there is a lack of research at African universities that scrutinize the status and character of the community service mission.

As universities strive to address community problems through their community service missions, they encounter a range of challenges. According to Adekalu et al. (2018), four factors: shortage of funds to carry out community development projects, reluctance to change from the community members' side, the educational gap between academic staff and community members, and time limitation because of manifold engagements were found as a barrier hindering academic staff's participation in community service activities and outreaches. Additionally, due to the contradictory placement of community service within university structures, university professionals face a major challenge in community service activities: the lack of clear conceptualization (Johnson, 2020).

According to Boucher et al. (2003), two factors — namely, the type of university and the type of region or community — influence the process of universities' engagement with the community. Of these two major issues, the type of community has a considerable impact on universities' ability to promote economic development. If the capacity of key players in the community to value knowledge is limited, it is not easy for universities to become central drivers of regional development on their own (Breznitz & Feldman, 2012). This necessitates that Universities carefully assess local needs so they can respond effectively.

Though there are many factors affecting the implementation of the community service mission in universities, according to Toan (2020), the challenges faced by universities in the implementation of the mission are categorized into three areas: institution- universities are not synchronized and not nurtured community service activities; inadequate resources and structure of scientific research and technology transfer; and limited university organization and administration towards community service.

In Ethiopia, universities acknowledge community service as a vital component of their mission. A review of the mission statements of most institutions indicates that, alongside teaching and research, they are committed to serving communities in ways that address national priorities, promote socio-economic development, and support the country's sustainable growth. As noted by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MOSHE, 2020), "Regardless of their differences in resources and capacities, public and private universities have also been required to deliver quality teaching, research, and community service" (p.9).

In Ethiopia, higher education research has mainly focused on teaching and research functions, while attention to universities' third mission—community service—has been relatively limited. Nevertheless, recent studies are beginning to investigate this area, providing essential insights into its historical development, institutional challenges, and gaps in implementation. Wole (1999) analyzed Ethiopia's pioneering higher education reforms, particularly the Ethiopian University Service. This year-long mandatory community engagement program, initiated in 1964 at Haile Selassie I University, marked a significant advancement in academic-community relationships. Recent research (Adamu & Balsvik, 2017) suggests that this initiative effectively fostered strong student involvement, leading to important questions about the faculty's lack of similar engagement today. Concurrent historical studies by Abebe (2019) examined student participation in national

service programs during the Derg and Haile Selassie governments, consistently revealing a fundamental disconnect between institutional community service goals and the actual needs of the community.

Bekele (2020) also conducted a comparative institutional study of AAU and Jimma University, revealing a systemic weakness: the lack of formalized structures to integrate community service as a core university function. Mengist's (2022) empirical work at Debre Markos University further highlighted operational barriers, including chronic underfunding, weak university-industry partnerships, low faculty motivation, and insufficient institutional oversight, all of which hindered the effective implementation of community service. Similarly, Desta and Belay (2018) examined the dynamics of university-community partnerships at the University of Gondar, identifying the transformative potential and recurring obstacles in such collaborations.

While prior studies have examined student engagement, institutional policies, and operational challenges, there is a notable lack of research on faculty perceptions of community service. Since faculty play a crucial role in sustaining community service missions, understanding their perceptions is essential for enhancing engagement strategies and their practical implementation. Moreover, there is a lack of critical studies that examine the practice and challenges of community service, with a specific focus on Addis Ababa University, the country's flagship institution.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

As noted earlier, in comparison to the teaching and research missions of universities, which have been extensively studied, including Addis Ababa University, the community service mission remains relatively underexplored. This research, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by offering a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the community service mission at Addis Ababa University. Specifically, the study aims to examine faculty members' perceptions of community

service initiatives, assess the current practices in place, and identify the key challenges hindering effective implementation. By doing so, the research intends to contribute to the broader discourse on the third mission of universities and inform future policy and strategic planning efforts related to community engagement in Ethiopian higher education institutions.

1.4. Research Questions

To examine perceptions, practices, and challenges regarding the university community service mission at Addis Ababa University, this study was guided by the following three key research questions:

1. How do the AAU faculty perceive the university community service mission?
2. How is the community service mission practiced in AAU?
3. What challenges are faced in implementing community service missions in AAU?

1.5. Context of the Study

Addis Ababa University (AAU) is one of the pioneer public universities in Ethiopia. It is the nation's first and oldest university located in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. It commenced as the University College of Addis Ababa in 1950, initially consisting of the Faculties of Arts and Science, and ultimately became a fully-fledged college after it received a charter status in 1954. Following the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution, the university was briefly renamed the University of Ethiopia (National University), assuming its present name, Addis Ababa University, in 1975.

AAU was re-established as an autonomous university in 2024 following the issuance of Autonomous University Proclamation No. 1294/2023 and Council of Ministers Regulation No. 537/2023. Hence, as the country's premier flagship university, AAU is the only and first autonomous university in the country. Since its establishment, AAU has graduated about 281,000

students with Certificates, Diplomas, Bachelor's, Postgraduate, and PhD degrees, making it the pioneer university in the country. Currently, AAU has seven colleges, one school, and six research institutes.

1.6. Significance of the study

Activities undertaken in universities are intended to contribute to the university community and the broader society. This research examined the perceptions, practices, and challenges AAU faces toward accomplishing its community service mission.

The study identified policy-related practices and challenges that can inform community service policies and directives in AAU and other similar higher education institutions. It also informs AAU and other universities to have the opportunity to review their missions in general and community service in particular. Specifically, the study can provide new insights into how AAU is experiencing its third mission and the challenges it is facing. This helps the University make evidence-based decisions that contribute to improving the practices regarding community services.

Academic staff members can also benefit from increased awareness of the third mission. The study also contributes to the existing body of knowledge related to the university's third mission, highlighting issues that require further research.

1.7. Scope of the Study

Although community service is a fundamental mission of all universities in Ethiopia, community service at AAU was selected as a specific case study. AAU, being the country's first and largest Flagship University, has inspired other public universities. The lessons and experiences gained from AAU have influenced the design of academic programs and the development and

implementation of institutional policies and strategies in other public universities in the country. Therefore, the findings of this study are valuable insights and guidance.

This study was conducted during a period of significant university reform, which led to the development of various policies, strategies, and directives. Therefore, it was limited to community service prior to the reform's introduction.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

Community service- a service provided by the university to the external community as one of the three core missions of the university.

Community service engagement office- an office established under the vice president for research and technology transfer and is responsible for managing and coordinating the community service mission of the university.

Community service officials/ professionals- individuals/professionals who are responsible for coordinating the community service mission of the university and are assigned to the community service engagement office of the university.

Faculty- staff members who are academicians (teachers, department heads, and college deans).

University mission- the three core missions of the university (teaching, research, and community service mission)

1.9. Organization of the Study

This paper has five chapters. Chapter one discusses the introductory chapter, and chapter two provides a review of related literature. This section reviews related topics. The third chapter presents the research methodology, where the design and methods employed are discussed.

Chapter four presents a general discussion of the core findings of the study, including the perceptions and practices of the community service mission, as well as the challenges that faculties face while implementing the mission, which are discussed and analyzed in detail in this chapter. Finally, in chapter five, the summary of major findings, conclusion, and recommendations of the study are discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

This chapter reviews related literature on the third mission of higher education institutions. The community service mission experiences and practices of universities in various countries are explored and discussed in this section. Six subheadings are put under here. Development of university missions, conceptualizing community service initiatives in universities, the rationale behind community service, university-community service partnerships, the African experience, and community service in Ethiopian universities.

2.1. Development of University Missions

Beginning with the University of Bologna in Europe in 1088, the functions of cultural conservation, preservation, and the transmission of knowledge through education were among the primary responsibilities of first-generation universities (Etzkowitz, 1998). In response to the changing needs of society at the time, and in part to revive classical learning, ‘second-generation universities’ emerged in the 1800s, assuming a second mission of research (Etzkowitz, 2001). The Industrial Revolution in Europe and the US created a need to develop specific skills and knowledge, and consequently, universities became significant contributors to social and economic capital (Breznitz & Feldman, 2012).

In Europe, John Henry Newman, who wrote "The Idea of a University" in 1852, and Wilhelm von Humboldt are two thought leaders who still greatly influence discussions about the university's role. Newman views universities as independent institutions, separate from governments, religions, and the business world, and advocates for them as a community of thinkers engaging in

intellectual pursuits for their own sake (Sam & Van der Sijde, 2014). Despite the need for such independence, there is evidence that collaboration between businesses and universities began in Europe in the mid-to-late 1800s, marking the first sign of the third mission of regional outreach or engagement (Davey, 2017; Etzkowitz, 2001).

As Boulton and Lucas (2011) put it, Wilhelm von Humboldt promoted universities as advocates of pure knowledge generation with a more focus on research and the creation of new knowledge, sometimes called the 'Humboldt' Model' which was dedicated to the principles of 'freiheit' or freedom and unity in teaching and research despite most universities still being state funded. Meanwhile, these staunch Newman and Humboldtian values continue to influence the present-day endeavors of policymakers and academic leaders regarding external collaboration (Davey, 2017).

The history of universities spans three generations based on their missions (Schelkunov, 2018). The first-generation universities originated in medieval Europe to teach people about the cultural experiences of the past. At that time, their sole mission was to conserve and transmit knowledge through teaching (Nabaho et al., 2022). Second-generation universities emerged in the early nineteenth century in the production of scientific knowledge. The third-generation universities gained recognition in the West at the end of the 20th century and represent a new generation of universities that effectively integrate teaching and research functions with a third mission of addressing the existing needs of societies and states (Schelkunov, 2018).

According to Rospigliosi and Bourner (2019), apart from teaching, in universities, engaging in research has developed along with the three main stages of development of the Western university - the medieval university during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the renaissance and early

modern university in the fifteenth century, and the modern university which emerged in the nineteenth century.

As a result, new ways of thinking have emerged in universities, which allows mutual interaction between universities and societal organizations to eventually lead to the emergence of the third mission of universities - community service. In light of these changes, community service has become a central focus and topic of discussion within the higher education community. Although teaching and research are still considered the primary tasks of universities, other activities, such as technology transfer and social engagement, have expanded the scope of their responsibilities. These activities, referred to as the third mission or community service, aim to enhance the impact of science in society and reflect the evolving role of universities (Berghäuser & Hoelscher, 2020). Universities now face shifting and increasing societal pressures for their expected outcomes (Deimel, 2017).

This indicates that universities' goals have evolved from a single core concentration (learning) to three, including research and community involvement. The "academic revolutions" triggered by interconnections between human civilizations in various kinds of exchange among regions, globalization, the learning economy, and shifts in the economic situations in which universities operate have led to the development of university missions (Pinheiro et al., 2015; Rubens et al., 2017).

A university's progress is a result of how it determines its priorities and its relationship with its communities. In their integration into the economic and social environment of the regions, universities are currently becoming key in regional modernization (Balmasova & Zinevich 2019).

The outcome of the stakeholder engagement process has important implications for the university's development and chances of survival.

An essential change in the social tie between science and higher education institutions and the government is characterized by economic expectations resulting in the demand for educated and skilled workers in the modern economy, the importance of pertinent research, and the creation of knowledge that underlies the successful development of these economies and, social expectations (Neave, 2006).

Universities worldwide are currently examining their responsibilities and interactions with local, regional, national, and international communities to navigate the rapidly changing environment and secure their place in the modern knowledge-based society (Balmasova & Zinevich, 2019). According to Rubens et al. (2017), the modern university can be likened to a three-legged stool, with each leg representing teaching, research, and community service, also known as the third mission.

2.2. Conceptualizing Community Service Mission in Universities

For a long time, apart from serving public needs, universities were the primary places for research and the discovery of knowledge. It is not a matter of doubt that the societal course of development is shaped by the production of knowledge by universities. However, the changing environments, particularly those that have occurred over the last 20 years of the 20th century, have challenged this long-established view (Soeiro, 2006). Nowadays, universities are expected and obliged to broaden their perspectives and activities to respond to community needs.

Although the range of stakeholders to whom universities should open, serve, or engage varies, several standard definitions exist for the third mission of universities as a core function. According

to Molas-Gallart, Salter, Patel, Scott, and Duran (2002), engaging in non-academic activities is considered a way for universities to open themselves to their surrounding community, serving as a means to improve the benefits of both universities and society (Krčmářová, 2011; Driscoll, 2008). The OECD policy documents identify the third goal as service to society (OECD, 2007, p. 37).

Historical influences shape the community and social groupings that universities should serve. The industry is the first genuine partner of contemporary universities, aside from the government, and several current definitions of third missions emphasize this collaboration between industry and the government (Nelles & Vorley, 2010; Molas-Gallart et al., 2002). Aside from this, focusing on a broader range of stakeholders and purposes, more comprehensive conceptions of universities' third mission are emerging (Molas-Gallart & Castro-Martinez, 2007; Montesinos et al., 2008; Krčmářová, 2011). As Lisman (1998) tried to put it, there are at least two historically embedded paradigmatic conceptualizations that characterize the purpose of the university's third mission in various ways. The first is market competitiveness and labor force training; the second is the maintenance and development of a worldwide democratic society and its ideals.

According to the economic vision of the third mission presented by the OECD (2007), universities' primary goal is to contribute to economic growth and enhanced competitiveness. Here, Universities are viewed as critical economic institutions in the knowledge economy since they employ a highly educated and specialized workforce and are believed to establish profitable economic domains. Universities are opening and operating under economic pressure, and their primary new external partners are stakeholders who can afford services such as contractual research or education, including industry and business partners, as well as students and employees who benefit from universities' increased focus on the labor market. Universities are encouraged to

engage in economic activities by commercializing their intellectual assets, facilities, research, teaching, and existing connections with social institutions (Molas-Gallart et al., 2002). Others also characterize it as universities' entrepreneurial behavior (Nelles & Vorley, 2008).

Other notions envision a more sophisticated third mission. Wedgwood (2006) emphasizes that, aside from economic aims, third mission activities should be focused on quality of life and societal development. Society and the economy are viewed as mutually dependent and need equivalent attention. Other conceptions too emphasize the third mission's social dimension. In addition to commercialization operations, Molas-Gallart and Castro-Martinez (2007) and Montesinos et al. (2008) describe the third goal as social outreach, encompassing pro bono research, teaching, and material support to society. According to Montesinos et al. (2008), the third mission of universities is to bring innovation to society.

Globally, the approaches to the third mission vary. In Germany, universities often emphasize the economic and technical aspects of their third mission, with less focus on civic engagement (Berghäuser & Hoelscher, 2020). In contrast, American universities emphasize "service" as a core institutional value, demonstrating their commitment to society at local, national, and international levels (O'Banion & Wilson, 2010). Similarly, universities in Vietnam prioritize community service activities such as technology transfer and entrepreneurship to address societal needs (Dinh, 2021). European and OECD countries also leverage knowledge to drive economic and social gains (Bonaccorsi et al., 2010).

Other third mission notions (e.g., OECD, 2007) include innovation, which is sometimes referred to as applying knowledge developed at universities to the market. The OECD's definition includes either technological or social breakthroughs in marketing and customer care.

The engagement of universities in research activities has also brought additional thoughts. Universities also faced growing pressure to contribute to the economic development of their localities due to changes in social and economic outlooks (Pugh, Hamilton, Jack, & Gibbons, 2016). It is expected of universities to contribute to their community through community service missions that are going beyond the traditional academic core functions: teaching and research (Salomaa, 2019). Typically, this third mission is defined as a nebulous concept that encompasses all activities distinct from teaching and research outside academic environments (Vorley & Nelles, 2008; Görason et al., 2009). It is often considered a mission implemented as part of university-community cooperation that is intended to produce benefits for the community, and it is primarily characterized by the relationship between universities and society at large or non-academic partners. Different authors define the concept of a third mission in varying ways. The following table shows definitions of the third mission.

Table 1: Selected Definitions of the Third Mission of Universities

Author(s)	Definition
Asplund & Nordman (1999)	A formal obligation to interact with surrounding society and economic life
Ca (2009)	Activities of the university (beyond teaching and research) that aim to engage with society at large through the provision of research, technology transfer services, and other forms of outreach.
Dan (2012)	The economic use of research, knowledge, intellectual property rights, patents, spin-offs, technology transfer, and, in a broader sense, everything in the direction of society
Gleeson (2010)	The mission is to engage communities beyond the campus gates
Gunasekara (2006)	The contribution of universities to regional development

Göransson et al. (2009)	The relationship between higher education and society beyond the first and second missions
Martin & Etzkowitz (2000)	The function of contributing to the economy and society
Montesinos et al. (2008)	Services to society
Predazzi (2012)	The mission of fostering dialogue between science and society
Raditloaneng (2013)	Community service and engagement
Schoen et al. (2006)	A university's relationship with the non-academic outside world—industry, public authorities, and society
Shore & McLauchlan (2012)	Activities geared towards knowledge transfer, forging links with industry and commercializing university research and teaching
Thorn & Soo (2006)	Contribution to economic development and the well-being of society

Adapted from Mugabi (2014, P.15)

The varied definitions given to the community service mission of universities demonstrate the fluid nature of the concept, which is shaped by the specific context and region in which the university is embedded. Therefore, when referring to other missions of universities beyond teaching and research, which are conducted for or in collaboration with the community outside the university, it can be categorized under the service mission of the university, despite the specific meaning ascribed to it.

Community service is primarily characterized by the relationship between universities and society at large, or non-academic partners. It is a debatable term that primarily addresses the university's role in society. Teaching and academic research have traditionally been recognized as the two primary missions and responsibilities of universities. Recently, a third mission, community service, which is often underdeveloped by universities, has emerged as an activity that facilitates their engagement with society and industry. Although the first two missions of universities have

been widely studied and frequently measured, the third mission remains to be thoroughly examined (Carrión et al., 2012).

The concept of community service is comprehensive and involves providing services to students with disabilities, promoting lifelong education, fostering connections with local communities, and expanding access to higher education for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. Additionally, it entails developing specialized services and model practices for addressing the challenges faced by marginalized and disadvantaged groups within the general public. Soeiro (2006) examines whether this broad conception of the relations between universities and the public is within their missions and what it entails for their functioning is an issue for universities.

The modern economy emphasizes that the role of universities has expanded from their first mission of teaching and the second mission of research to a third mission of community service. Although universities have different ways to accomplish their community service activities, the literature has, to date, focused on a rather idealistic ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to university engagement. A particular context, partly shaped by geographic factors, can influence universities’ institutional responses to their community service initiatives (Salomaa, 2019).

Table 2: Dimensions of Third Mission Activities

The following table shows the dimensions in which universities can be engaged.

Dimensions of engagement	Aspects of specific dimension	Example activities
Knowledge and technology transfer	(i) Co-operative knowledge creation	Research co-operation. Strategic partnerships and networks. Joint scientific quarters or laboratories. Joint professorship.
	(ii) Knowledge and technology communication	Contract research. Scientific consulting.

	(iii) Knowledge and technology commercialization	Spin-offs. Patenting and licensing.
	(iv) Personal transfer	Internships. Dual studies. Cooperative career service. Alumni networks. Parallel employment within and outside higher education institutions.
Further education	(i) Advanced study programs	Advanced degree studies for working professionals (B.Sc. or M.Sc.).
	(ii) Certificate studies	The short-term qualifications offer opportunities for specific professional groups.
	(iii) Informal education	Guest studies. Open seminars or lectures (series).
Societal engagement	(i) Widening participation	Expansion of open admission procedures. Access to higher education for underprivileged groups.
	(ii) Citizen science and public engagement	Integration of the public into the research process.
	(iii) Science literacy, science education, and open science	Popular scientific publication. Laboratories for children and high school students. Science festivals / “nights of sciences”. Open access, Open review, Open metrics, Open access to software and research data.
	(iv) Service learning	Integration of service and outreach activities into student curricula.
	(v) Community outreach, Community service	Provision of infrastructures (libraries, etc.). Outreach activities by members of higher education institutions.
	(vi) Civic engagement	Support activities at elections. Participation in campaigning.
	(vii) Social entrepreneurship	Social Entrepreneurship as part of student curriculum. Social entrepreneurship by staff of higher education institutions.

Adapted from Berghaeuser & Hoelscher (2020, P.61)

As Montesinos et al. (2008) state, the third mission is a complex notion that denotes services to society with three dimensions: social, innovative, and entrepreneurial. In the social dimension, it is expected of the university to provide non-monetary benefits that contribute to society and also enhance the university's image. The entrepreneurial dimension enables universities to engage in income-generating activities. The third, the innovative dimension, allows universities to devote considerable time to searching for venture capital and consulting for governments.

As shown in the table above, universities employ a range of approaches within their communities. This is essential since community service generally focuses on the neighboring community in which the institution is located, allowing for the development of community-specific needs and interests, as well as existing difficulties.

Regardless of the dimensions of community service engagement, universities must contribute practically to their community service initiatives by addressing the issues of the community they are working with. From my review of the literature in this research, I note the importance of promoting the social engagement dimension of universities in the Ethiopian context, including AAU.

2.2.1. Conceptual analysis in understanding the community service mission of universities

Despite rising literature on the service mission of universities, it is not pertinent to discuss the theory of community service missions here. Most literature emphasizes the third mission of universities is conceptualized within the specific context in which the institutions are. Stressing this idea, the same concept is often differently interpreted and applied in various institutional contexts (Bender, 2008b; Mouton & Wilschut, 2007). According to Smith-Tolken (2010), the concept of community engagement is also referred to by different terms, such as community service (University of the Free State, 2006), community interaction (Stellenbosch University, 2009a), and community responsiveness (University of Cape Town, 2008).

Meanwhile, the AAU uses the terms "community engagement" and "community service" interchangeably in its documents. In its 2024 senate legislation, the university defines Community service as “a service rendered by the University community to communities, government institutions, businesses, non-profit organizations, and society at large with the objective of

addressing challenges through capacity building, awareness creation and whenever possible, to improving the quality of lives” (AAU, 2024b, P.9). without leaving a remarkable difference in between these two concepts, the same legislation defines Community engagement as “mutually beneficial scholarly collaborations and partnerships of the university community with local, regional and international communities to address their specific needs centered on social, economic and cultural developments and challenges” (2024b, P.9).

However, according to the Community Engagement Office at AAU, the Carnegie Foundation’s Classification for Community Engagement (2005) is the preferred model at the university. While many universities claimed to engage with their communities, there was no uniform system for evaluating these efforts. Traditional rankings community's interests. These rankings often overlooked the institutions' efforts to support the community's interests, instead emphasizing research productivity and enrollment numbers. In response to this, the Community Engagement Classification was created to establish clear criteria for what constitutes honest engagement, recognize institutions that excel in this area, and inspire others to enhance their community service commitments.

The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification requires institutions to voluntarily apply and submit thorough documentation of their community involvement, rather than relying on automatically collected data. This requirement remains significant today. In addition to holding universities accountable for their community service missions, it continues to encourage the development of meaningful and impactful partnerships rather than surface-level actions that clearly define community engagement, influence staffing and budgetary decisions, support students through opportunities for civic education and service learning, and recognizes institutions that place a higher priority on community impact than academic standing.

As it pushes higher education institutions to behave like faithful supporters, integrating kindly into the fabric of society rather than remaining separate. The classification evaluates universities based on several key areas, including foundational commitment (e.g., whether community engagement is highlighted in the mission statement and strategic plans), curricular engagement (how community work is embedded in university courses), faculty and staff involvement (if community engagement efforts contribute to promotions and receive institutional support), community partnerships (ensuring relationships are mutually beneficial), and institutions. The fundamental purpose is to determine whether participation is deep and long-lasting, ingrained in the institution's culture and structure, and whether the community and the university prosper together. , The table below shows the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement.

Table 3: The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification

Dimension	Selection of illustrative examples of engaged activities
Curricular engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Variations of curricular, co-curricular, or extracurricular teaching & learning activities •Credit-bearing community-based/engaged teaching courses for students (e.g. service-learning) •Faculty scholarship - research studies, conference presentations, pedagogy workshops, and publications related to the scholarship of engagement
Outreach and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Outreach programs developed for the community (non-credit courses, tutoring, training programs, learning centers, professional development centers, evaluation support) •Institutional resources provided as outreach to the community (co-curricular student service, work/ study student placement, cultural offerings, athletic offerings, library services, consultation by academic staff, technology)

	•Teaching and research activities by academic staff: curriculum, community-based research, research reports, policy reports, technical reports, publications
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Adapted from Culum (2018, p. 63)

2.2.2. Conceptual models for community engagement

Though many authors define and conceptualize the third mission of higher education institutions differently basing the exact situation of that specific context, Bender (2008) puts three models in conceptualizing community engagement as the third mission of higher education institutions; the Silo model, the Intersecting model, and the Infusion (cross-cutting) model of community engagement.

The Silo model pursues each of the core missions of universities relatively independently of each other. This approach to community engagement views community engagement as separate and independent of the teaching and research missions, and predominantly as a voluntary activity for academics. The intersecting model acknowledges a connection between the three core missions and posits that universities are always and already engaging with communities in numerous ways, to the extent that “education is a fundamentally social and relational practice, which is embedded in communities.” The Infusion (cross-cutting) model is best known as the "community-engaged university.” This approach regards community participation and service as the principal overriding goal of higher education, arguing that it should be embedded within all teaching, learning, and research functions. This vision of community engagement requires complete infusion across all structures, policies, and priorities (Bender, 2008).

In summary, though the Infusion Model promotes complete integration of community engagement at the institutional level, it requires considerable changes and ongoing commitment. The Intersecting Model encourages cooperation but depends on individual faculty initiatives, whereas

the Silo Model offers clarity and focus but risks isolating engagement from the university's core mission.

2.3. Why Community Service

Community service represents the intersection of community interest and organizational self-interest, promoting the benefits of both. This approach benefits universities and external communities alike. On emphasizing the mutual benefits of the community and the university regarding community engagement, the Carnegie Foundation defines community–university engagement as “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39).

Fundamentally, community service enables the utilization of universities' knowledge, human capital, intellectual property, and infrastructure resources to meet the needs of government, industry, and society. In many cases, universities are not fair suppliers; they are too advantageous for community service (Mugabi, 2014). Both direct and indirect benefits are felt at different levels within the institution and by various actors, including students, staff, departments, and centers. As external communities embrace knowledge, universities can benefit from it. Community service activities provide universities with opportunities for new insights and knowledge discovery. Stressing the value of a community service mission, Fitzgerald et al. (2012) explained that, in addition to their mainstream research and teaching, universities must give attention to community service practices to succeed in the twenty-first century.

Community service can also enhance practical teaching and learning practices in universities. The active involvement of faculty in community service initiatives benefits teaching by allowing

academic professionals to connect their teaching to contemporary societal challenges, keep course materials current, and enrich and deepen their instruction. The benefits of community service activities for academic research include the ability for academics to access new research targets, research places, and research data that would not otherwise be easily accessible, to conduct multidisciplinary research, and, as a result, to expand the knowledge bases of academic fields (Beere, Votruba, & Wells, 2011; Lynton, 1995). It also themselves enhance students' motivation by allowing them to become familiar with real-world employment situations. Integrating community service activities into students' learning activities benefits the students by increasing self-confidence and enriching career readiness, raising awareness about societal issues and cultural diversities, and developing better networking skills (Beere et al., 2011).

A mission implemented as part of university-community cooperation ought to produce some benefit for the community. Community service enables universities to maintain significant and ongoing interactions with their community, thereby reinforcing staff and students' learning and understanding of their society. The alliance between universities and communities would strengthen community service as a mechanism through which universities can address the developmental needs of communities. The most important resources a university can provide for community service-learning programs are physical, financial, and human resources. In addition, benefits that communities can derive from partnering with a university include access to academic expertise and knowledge (Beere et al., 2011). Community service is increasingly recognized as an essential component of university efforts to improve educational outcomes, prevent disease, expand healthcare, and achieve stronger local, regional, and global economic systems (Sandmann et al., 2009). Community service practices serve as a means for connecting and strengthening the resources from the community and universities (Beere et al., 2011). Therefore, Community service

as a university's mission offers an ethical, reflexive, and socially responsive approach to university-community relationships with practices that aspire to understand and be responsive to community needs, views, and expectations.

Sustainable community development comes true when there are networks of resources that might not otherwise exist among university faculty, community members, and students. Community service lets universities have significant and continued interactions with the community, and reinforce staff and students' learning and their awareness of their society. Community service practices serve as a means for connecting and strengthening the resources from the community and universities (Smith et al., 2020).

Participating in community service activities enables universities to create and/or strengthen relationships with groups including local communities, regions, businesses, and governmental organizations, ultimately gaining more credibility and support. The community service functions of universities, together with teaching and research, help in promoting the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural development of communities (Adekalu, et al., 2018).

According to Mugabi (2014), the major empirical justifications for community service missions include the need for knowledge and integration of existing knowledge, contemporary views about knowledge, cost concerns and calls for accountability, and the need for political and financial support. Participating in community service activities can, therefore, help universities advance society's objectives while also bringing in assistance and funding to advance knowledge discovery, dissemination, and application (Magrath, 1999).

2.4. University- Community Service Initiatives

Universities throughout the world are becoming recognized not just as educational institutions but also as community engagement centers where local people connect with them. Community service, as one of their key goals, is crucial in enhancing the relationship between external communities and universities, benefiting both parties. This community service mission has evolved significantly across various international contexts, with universities in many nations adopting it to address both local concerns and global issues.

Due to trends such as increasing social demands, funding pressures, and growing student numbers, university systems are undergoing considerable changes in all aspects. Although teaching and research are still considered the primary tasks of universities, other activities, such as technology transfer and social engagement, have broadened the scope of their responsibilities. These activities, named as the third mission, are supposed to strengthen the impact of science in society and characterize the changing role of universities (Berghaeuser & Hoelscher, 2020). Universities' worldwide experiences reveal a variety of third-mission activities and interactions that occur globally.

The analysis of the third mission of universities within Scandinavia, including Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and other Nordic countries, shows that most studies on the community service mission have focused on commercial aspects and neglected social components, as well as less visible activities such as popular science publications or participation in policymaking. Additionally, little research has been conducted in the humanities or social sciences regarding community service (Schnurbus & Edvardsson, 2022).

One of the most notable effects of the third mission has been the establishment of university-business collaborations as a strategy to enhance technical innovation processes while facilitating institutions' access to financial resources for expanding research operations. Consequently, much of the research on the university's third mission has focused on analyzing the nature of university-industry relations and their impact on both academic productivity and business performance (Manjarrés et al., 2009; Meyer-Krahmar & Schmoch, 1998). While this perspective is important, it fails to consider the broadness and distinctive features of the social aspect of the mission.

In the United States, universities have achieved universal recognition in their pursuit of three key missions: research, teaching, and service. In the USA, as an expression of their core values, all levels of institutions ascribe to “service” as they work to advance society at the local, state, national, and international levels (O’Banion & Wilson, 2010). The Vietnamese experience shows that technology transfer, research commercialization, and entrepreneurship are the major community service activities to focus on (Dinh, 2021).

While most German universities refer to the third mission in their mission statements, the focus is mostly on economic effect and (technical) knowledge transfer, with little emphasis on civic involvement or further education difficulties (Berghaeuser & Hoelscher, 2020). According to these authors, in Germany, to promote community service activities, the federal government and the states announced different programs, e.g., the Innovative Hochschule or Real-world Laboratories.

Following their profound transformation in the last decades of the twentieth century, universities in Europe and OECD countries have evolved from mainly elite institutions for teaching and research to large (public and private) organizations responsible for mass higher education and the

production and distribution of new knowledge. Besides knowledge production, universities are also making use of knowledge for potential economic gains (Bonaccorsi, Daraio & Geuna, 2010).

To ensure the sustainability of community service activities, they must be linked to the two other key functions of the university, that is, teaching and research. To contribute to the community, universities can employ various approaches. The university experience demonstrates that community service activities are integrated into the university's functions and are typically coordinated by an entity established for this purpose. At Addis Ababa University, community service activities are coordinated by the Office of Community Engagement under the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer. The international approaches to implementing university community engagement in selected universities are listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Approaches towards implementing community service by universities.

No.	University	Implementation approach /The office in charge
1	University of Oxford	Public Affairs Directorate
2	University of Cambridge	Office of Community Affairs
3	University of Pennsylvania	Center for Community Partnership
4	Pennsylvania state university	Office of Vice-president for Outreach
5	MIT	MIT Public Service Center
6	University of Melbourne	Dedicated web page UCE
7	RMIT	RMIT Learning Community Partnership Unit
8	National University of Singapore	NUS Extension Centers

9	Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Office of Development and Public Affairs
---	------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------

Extracted from (Ph'ng et al., 2008, p. 70)

The international experience of universities shows, that the results of their specific context mainly influence third mission activities and engagements of universities. Geographical factors like a rural context have an impact on the way universities develop their functions. In rural regions, unlike a formal collaboration method, universities' engagement with external stakeholders is primarily based on an individual basis. As the structures and strategic choices are oriented towards serving the local job market and regional priority sectors, awareness of other local knowledge institutions is mandatory (Salomaa, 2019).

Thus, a much broader approach is required when analyzing community service - the third mission. Universities need to consider not only their role in economic development through their articulation with productive actors but also their impact on social development through their relationships with government and social actors (Göransson, Maharajh & Schmoch, 2009). Furthermore, while research has demonstrated the advantages of the community service mission, it also acknowledges that establishing such initiatives is a complex process, with several obstacles potentially hindering their integration into the academic setting and implementation (Bruneel, d'Este & Salter, 2010; D'Este & Patel, 2007) Rapid changes are taking place in all aspects of human civilization, and universities need to create ways that let themselves engage with the changing environment and meet the expectations of society. To carry out their missions well, universities must be linked to society and the local community.

In recent times, there has been a change in university missions in response to evolving global circumstances. These changes necessitate a new relationship between universities and society

(Martin, 2003). As a result, universities have begun to prioritize community service, community engagement, or the third mission, alongside their traditional teaching and research objectives. This expanding social connection requires support from a research program that better addresses societal needs and a greater institutional commitment to knowledge transfer and the socioeconomic utilization of resources.

2.5. The African Experience

In Africa, too, the university-community service mission emphasizes the interaction between higher education and external stakeholders. University-community ties are an evolving interactive process that promotes contact, involvement, engagement, and trade between a university and its surrounding community to achieve various social and organizational objectives (Adusei, 2020). The relationship between universities and their local communities (host or surrounding communities) has a long history. As Kemp (2013) puts it, these interactions are often referred to as town-and-gown relations.

Comparatively speaking, in the African context, there are many studies on universities' teaching and research missions, but few on the third mission (Mugabi, 2014; Nabaho et al., 2022; Preece, 2013). In contrast to Western countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, University-community engagement is a relatively new concept in regions such as Continental Europe and Africa (Koekkoek, Van Ham & Kleinhans, 2021).

Regarding the start of community service missions in African universities, different authorities claim different starting times. According to some researchers (e.g., Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson, 1996; Mugabi, 2014), in African universities, the concept of the third mission of universities, which includes community service, began to gain attention in the 1960s. Emphasizing the function

of universities as a primary mechanism for national development, Ajayi et al. (1996) further noted the contribution of universities to the continent's development. Post-independence African leaders envisioned a developmental university, which gained traction after several African countries gained independence. Meanwhile, Nabaho et al. (2022) claim that the third mission in African universities has been receiving renewed attention since 2000.

The 1992 UNESCO conference on the development of higher education in Africa emphasized the need for universities to engage with society, underscoring that higher education institutions must collaborate closely and continuously with society.

African higher education institutions must be closely involved in the general economic, social, and cultural development of African society. This involvement is intended to further the service which they render to society. In their activities, higher education institutions should seek to engender confidence between themselves and the public. Far from becoming ivory towers detached from the society in which they are situated, higher education institutions in Africa must be in close and constant touch with society, both through their extra-mural departments and through all those activities that can contribute towards preserving the African heritage. (UNESCO, 1963, p. 12).

One of the most prevalent allegations levelled against most African universities is the disconnection between management and intellectuals on the one hand, and the real-world challenges and difficulties that confront the universities on the other. This disconnect is often referred to as the Ivory Tower syndrome (Peretomode, 2021). One of the known leaders in Africa condemning this issue was Julius Nyerere (the former president of Tanzania). Major and Mulvihill

(2009) stress the idea that, while promoting traditional African values and criticizing the imposition of Western culture on his own country, Tanzania, Julius Nyerere advocated self-reliance on one's own culture and indigenous knowledge, which is possible through catering the curriculum for the needs of the society rather than personal life (Yalley & Acquah, 2021). This can positively influence the practice of community service mission—the social responsibility of higher education institutions (Kibona & Woldegiorgis, 2023).

In the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA), university missions have their own standards, one of which is the community service mission. The standard highlights service mission as one role of universities in its guidelines. According to African Union Commission (AUC, 2018a):

A higher education institution is not only responsible for teaching, learning, and research but also for serving society. The institution ensures that community engagement activities are conducted in accordance with institutional policies and strategies that facilitate collaboration between the institution and its broader communities (local, national, regional, continental, and global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources within a context of partnership and reciprocity. (P.24)

Community service as a mission of a university, therefore, offers an ethical, reflexive, and socially responsive approach to university-community relationships with practices that aspire to both understand and be responsive to community needs, views, and expectations. The result of community service practices in universities is ultimately social capital and stronger relational partnerships among all the university's public (Adusei, 2020).

Like all other organizations, universities have an environment in which they operate, which is the local community and its stakeholders. To ensure peaceful coexistence and mutual benefit for the communities in which they are located, universities need to address questions related to their social responsibility. Unlike earlier times, when the primary missions of universities were teaching and research, modern universities now have the additional responsibility of serving their host communities, considering the interests of local stakeholders (Bridges et al., 2006; Jongbloed, Enders & Salerno, 2008).

Most universities currently set their direction on the assumption that the ivory tower fever of universities is outdated (Cross & Ndofirepi, 2016; Weinberg & Kistner, 2007). Some universities, in line with the new direction, have established well-built social and business collaboration with the surrounding communities, whereas others have extended community partnerships through different support activities. With the expectation of improving their economy and engagement with universities, local communities in Ghana willingly provided their land (Kwarteng, Boadi, Siaw, and Dwarko, 2012); however, the universities are serving the interests of only the privileged few (Agbodeka, 1998). At the time of the establishment of public universities in Ghana, the local communities where the universities are located had high expectations that the proximity of the universities would provide them with opportunities for socioeconomic development through access to higher education and increased job opportunities; however, their benefits were insignificant, unlike those of a few privileged individuals. Although community service and development are embedded in the establishment of universities in Ghana, a notable tension exists between Ghanaian universities and their host communities, as the host communities have accused universities of renegeing on, excluding, and neglecting their social responsibilities (Agyeman, Tamanja & Bingab, 2021). In a study conducted at three universities in South Africa, Mohale

(2023) noted that there is still considerable resistance to accepting community service as a major role for universities.

Universities are meant to provide education that guides the production of high-level manpower and the development of national consciousness. Besides teaching and research, according to Adekalu et al. (2018), universities in Nigeria also serve as a community resource, disseminate existing and new information, and act as a storehouse of knowledge. In Nigeria, the policy to strengthen community missions at universities does not provide a satisfactory framework for creating a viable university-community engagement. In addition, the remunerative frameworks of the universities do not encourage community service as an important form of scholarship. Most community service activities in Nigerian universities are formal engagements with little to no connection to the immediate local communities (Onwuemele, 2018).

Despite the importance of universities to the external community and vice versa, there seems to be a lack of enthusiasm from both parties to utilize their full capacity. Stressing the reluctance attitude in Nigerian society towards university services and the university community's approaches to the larger society, Awwalu and Najeemah (2014) noted that the two parties (universities and the community) fail to significantly associate their services and issues of development and research with community service. Although Nigeria has the largest universities in Sub-Saharan Africa, the documentary evidence of university and academic staff involvement in community service activities remains deficient (Ifedili & Ifedili, 2015).

Although the establishment of universities aims to contribute to the socio-cultural, human resource, and community development of nations, unfortunately, the series of academic activities, such as teaching, research, and community service, being performed in Nigerian universities, falls

short of public expectations (Ahmed, Umar & Paul, 2015). However, if favorable conditions are created for faculty members' involvement in university community service initiatives, as Ifedili and Ifedili (2015) claim, they have the potential to bridge the gap that might be created between universities and external communities.

Teaching and sharing research output through university community service missions has been widely recognized as a means for national advancement, and Nigeria is among the developing nations that share this view. Unfortunately, faculty member participation in community engagement initiatives in Nigeria is lagging due to insufficient access to research grants and funds (Akpan, Archibong, & Undie, 2016; Egwunyenga, 2008).

Currently, due to globalization and related issues, universities are being seen as agents of change, working with their immediate surroundings. Universities are no longer viewed as isolated “ivory towers syndrome” but rather seen as agents of change, starting within their immediate surroundings (Adekalu et al., 2018). Meanwhile, this is lagging in universities in Africa and developing countries.

2.6. Community Service in Ethiopian Universities.

To contribute to the nation's development, universities are given elevated responsibility. These responsibilities can be achieved through their missions, which include teaching, research, and community service. The Ethiopian higher education system has undergone a long and multifaceted evolution since the establishment of the country's first higher education institution in 1950.

From the time higher education institutions were established in the country to advance their contribution to society, community service has been incorporated into the function of the country's higher education system. Since 1950, when the University College of Addis Ababa, the first higher

education institution, began, community service has been recognized as one of the three functions that universities are expected to engage in (Tamirat, 2022; Sellamna & Gebremedhin, 2015).

As Wole (1999) claimed, in 1964, Addis Ababa University (AAU), then known as Haileselassie I University, announced a program—the Ethiopia University Service. This year-long national service initiative requires university students to serve mainly in rural areas of the nation. This possibly marks the first university initiative under the nation's service mission category. The program was intended to benefit both the students, who can gain valuable experience during the program period, and the rural community, which can improve its quality of life through the support provided by the students. In this year-long program, students are deployed to teach at various rural schools, while also undertaking non-teaching responsibilities such as agriculture, public health education, ethics, national community development, and addressing a range of social issues.

Because of pressure from other duties in the university, challenges related to administration, the program's deviance from the intended objectives, the change in the new government in 1974, and a related “anachronistic” view of the agenda, the program was suspended nearly unexpectedly after 10 years in 1974 (Wole,1999). The Provisional Military Administrative Council (the Dergue), established as a new government after the 1974 revolution, terminated the Ethiopia University Service program because students deployed to the rural areas engaged in political activism that conflicted with the mission's aim.

The military regime established a new program/service called ‘Development through Cooperation Campaign’ (Tamrat, 2022). During the campaign (1974-1976), schools from grade eleven and above were closed as students and staff members were deployed throughout the country (Amare, 1988).

In terms of its general objectives, the Ethiopian ETP/ Education and Training Policy emphasizes the importance of developing citizens' potential by effectively linking education to environmental and social needs.

An assessment of the mission statements of most universities in Ethiopia reveals that, in addition to their teaching and research missions, they typically aim to provide community service in response to national needs, socio-economic transformation, and the country's sustainable development. Currently, despite the differences between universities, all the universities in Ethiopia are expected to have a community service mission as one of their core functions. Highlighting the importance of community service in education, the Ministry of Education has stated in its higher education proclamations that community service is one of the core missions of universities. This applies to all universities regardless of their differences in ownership (i.e., public and private), resources, capacities, and types (i.e., comprehensive, research, applied science, etc.) (Ministry of Science & Higher Education, 2020). “Regardless of their differences in resources and capacities, public and private universities have also been required to deliver quality teaching, research, and community service” (MOSHE, 2020, p.9).

In implementing their community service mission effectively, universities face difficulties. According to Sellamna & Gebremedhin (2015), universities in Ethiopia face challenges such as the allocation of a meager budget accompanied by constrained procedures to access the budget, lack of experienced staff who can design community service programs, conditions of work and career advancement: in that career prospects are dominated mainly by teaching and research activities, problems related to logistics to visit and work with communities.

University students and academic staff can enhance their contributions to the country's economic, social, and political structure through community service missions. To advance the universities' contribution to society, however, according to Sellamna & Gebremedhin (2015), three conditions are essential: human, physical, and administrative capacity; funding; and effective collaboration.

2.7. Philosophical Foundation of the Study

This research is grounded in a coherent set of philosophical principles that inform its approach, design, and interpretation of results. These principles encompass the research paradigm, ontological and epistemological perspectives, and rationale for selecting a qualitative case study method. Together, they represent the researcher's perspective and guide the exploration of perceptions, practices, and challenges related to the community service mission at Addis Ababa University.

A. Research Paradigm: Interpretivism

The study is rooted in the interpretivist paradigm, which asserts that reality is not fixed or universally measurable; instead, it is socially constructed and can take multiple forms. Interpretivism focuses on understanding the subjective meanings that individuals attach to their experiences. In this context, the research seeks to understand how faculty members, department heads, and university leaders perceive and interpret the community service mission within their institution. This paradigm enables the researcher to capture the nuanced, context-specific, and varied understandings of community service expressed by different stakeholders within the university, aligning to reveal lived experiences and meanings rather than search for universal truths. Stressing the importance of this model, Alharahsheh & Pius (2020) claim that the

interpretivist paradigm allows researchers to explore deeper insights by understanding the experiences and perspectives of individuals within a specific social setting.

B. Ontological Assumption: Reality is Socially Constructed

This study's ontological stance is that reality is shaped by social construction. This viewpoint suggests that there is no singular, objective reality existing independently of human perception. Instead, reality emerges from social interactions, cultural practices, and institutional contexts. Regarding this study, the community service mission at AAU is not considered a fixed or universally acknowledged concept but is instead influenced by the lived experiences, institutional culture, policy frameworks, and individual interpretations of various stakeholders. This ontological view aligns with the study's objective to capture the diverse perspectives and meanings that participants express in their own words and contexts regarding community engagement.

C. Epistemological Assumption: Knowledge is Subjective and Co-constructed

From an epistemological standpoint, the study posits that knowledge is subjective and collaboratively constructed between the researcher and the participants. This perspective means that knowledge is not simply discovered as an objective reality but is created through dialogue, reflection, and mutual understanding. The researcher interacts with participants not merely as an unbiased observer, but as a co-creator of meaning. Through methods such as in-depth interviews, document analysis, and narrative interpretation, the study generates in-depth and context-specific knowledge that reflects the experiences of participants alongside the researcher's interpretive insights. This epistemological view justifies the use of qualitative methods that emphasize depth, empathy, and relational comprehension. As stated by Saunders et al. (2007), subjectivism states

the idea that social phenomena are shaped by the perceptions and subsequent actions of the individuals who are involved in and influenced by their existence. Adding on this, Bahari (2010) suggests that social phenomena are constantly evolving through ongoing social interactions, making them subject to continuous revision and improvement.

D. Justification for the Case Study Design

The qualitative case study approach is well-supported by the aforementioned philosophical framework. This design is particularly effective for investigating complex and context-dependent phenomena, such as community service within a specific institution. It allows the researcher to deeply engage with participants and gather data from various sources, including interviews, institutional documents, and policy guidelines. The design facilitates a holistic investigation into the perceptions, practices, and challenges associated with the university's community service mission. Additionally, the case study approach aligns with the interpretivist paradigm and constructivist ontology by enabling the exploration of personal experiences, institutional dynamics, and the processes of meaning-making within the real-life context of Addis Ababa University.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

In this third chapter, the methodology used in the study was discussed. Research design, case selection, data sources, data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations are the subsections presented under this methodology section of the study. Each of the subheadings is discussed in detail in the following section.

3.1. Research Design

This research aims to examine the perceptions, practices, and challenges of community service missions at Addis Ababa University. To better understand the issue, a qualitative research methodology was employed in this study. This method facilitates the development of a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study. A qualitative approach was deemed applicable because this method enables researchers to collect data in the field or natural setting through face-to-face interaction at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Hence, qualitative research was employed to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and challenges regarding the community service mission of AAU. This method was used to generate data in natural settings through face-to-face interactions, and the findings are presumed to have significant implications for other public universities as well.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research can be classified into five types: narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, case study, and grounded theory. Hence, as this study focuses on exploring the community service mission of the university in detail, a case study approach was implemented, focusing on a single case at Addis Ababa University. To provide an

in-depth understanding of an issue, a case study is an appropriate approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Case studies help uncover large datasets that are important in exploring, understanding, implementing, and evaluating programs and policies through the careful description, documentation, and interpretation of events as they emerge.

due to a lack of research on issues concerning community service. Furthermore, the community service mission of universities in Ethiopia is not well understood because of a lack of research on issues related to community service in higher education in Ethiopia. In such a context, according to Strauss & Corbin (1990), using qualitative research is preferable as it helps to understand a phenomenon about which little is yet documented.

3.2. Case Selection

A researcher needs to consider where and what to study before starting the whole process. For this study, therefore, a single case was selected for focus. In qualitative analysis, the case can be a program, a group, an organization, or a community. Qualitative case studies, according to Patton (2002), provide an in-depth description accompanied by any necessary context to facilitate understanding of the given case. As the findings from this case can help understand community service mission issues in other similar contexts, too, an instrumental case study design was used. The instrumental case study approach focuses on using a specific case as a means to investigate a broader issue (Stake, 2003). Moreover, the case is chosen because it is believed to be representative or informative of the broader research question, not because of its uniqueness or typicality. Accordingly, in this study, as the country's first, largest, and most prominent university, Addis Ababa University is chosen as a case. As a pioneering institution that produces impactful research and innovation, AAU has served as an inspiration to other universities in the country. As a result, the study's findings are expected to have far-reaching implications for other similar universities,

providing invaluable insights and direction. Although community service is one of the core missions of all public universities in Ethiopia, the community service mission at Addis Ababa University was purposefully selected as a case. Additionally, due to my familiarity with the university, both as an undergraduate and postgraduate student, I am also more familiar with the faculty at Addis Ababa University than with any other university in the country, which was an advantage in communicating with participants and facilitating easy access to data.

Although pragmatic consideration of such case selection may not provide a strong methodological justification in these studies, it can be viewed as one aspect of selecting a case to understand the issue under study effectively (Seawright & Gerring, 2008).

3.3. Sources of Data

Qualitative case study research involves providing detailed descriptions of the situation under study and utilizing multiple sources of evidence, which necessitates the use of diverse data sources. The data for this study were collected from the university community, including academic staff, department heads, college research, and community service vice deans, the University Community Service Directorate, and community service focal persons in the university, as well as official documents, university strategic documents, senate legislations, directives, and community engagement guidelines. The university communities served as primary data sources, while official documents were used as secondary data sources.

AAU has seven colleges & one school: and four colleges & one school where the community service program is presumed to have better implementation were purposefully selected. Data sources included twenty faculty members, five department heads, five college research and community service associate deans, and three university-level community service professionals.

Purposive and snowball sampling were employed to select data sources with better knowledge and practice about community service.

Official institutional and national documents were also used as sources of data. The first category of official documents was institutional documents (i.e., documents that are internal to the university), such as the senate legislation, the research and community service directive, guidelines for field attachment and guiding community service, community service frameworks and fact sheet of community service office, intellectual property management policy, and annual reports. The second category of official documents consisted of government documents (i.e., documents external to the university).

3.4. Data Collection Methods

The data for this study was gathered through face-to-face semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The necessary data from individuals (i.e., associate deans, department heads, faculty, and community service professionals) was collected through interviews and a document review. Interviews were the primary data collection technique, and therefore, more weight was given to the interview data than to the document review in the data analysis phase. The conceptual orientation, research problem, study purpose, and desire to generate detailed data influenced the choice of methods.

Interview: In qualitative research, the interview, especially the face-to-face happenstance, is one of the crucial tools used to generate data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with academic staff and teachers, department heads, college research and community service vice deans, the university community service directorate, and community service focal persons. The implementation practices, processes, and challenges of the community service mission are key

issues in the interview guide. The interview helps to collect data that enable us to obtain more detailed information about the community service issues under study. As a research instrument, interviewing is typically applicable in circumstances in which researchers aspire to access “people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations, and constructions of reality” (Punch, 2005, p. 168).

Out of the eight colleges, five colleges were included in the study. Accordingly, the Education and Language Studies, School of Law, Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Natural and Computational Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture colleges were chosen mainly based on the activities and achievements each college has in its respective community service initiatives. The interview guide was structured to allow respondents to reflect on their perception of the community service mission based on their experience. The interviews lasted between thirty to eighty minutes and were fully transcribed, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the respondents' perspectives and experiences.

Face-to-face interviews, which lasted between thirty and eighty minutes, were conducted in quiet settings to ensure comfort and confidentiality. Accordingly, with three community service professionals, a total of thirty-three individual interviews were led and audio-recorded thirty-three individual interviews were conducted, comprising five college associate deans, five department heads, twenty academic staff members, and three community service professionals. These interviews were led and audio-recorded, with note-taking. During the interview, to get more detailed information from the research participants, probing queries were used. While interviewing, probing questions help promote clarifications and deeper understanding by allowing respondents to reflect more (Gillham, 2005).

Document review: Document review was employed to collect data from official institutional and national documents. Policy documents/ public records and all official papers written or produced about community service were consulted. Document reviews of official documents, such as university strategic documents, senate legislation, directives, etc., were primarily used to gather information about community service policies and directives. Accordingly, the documents that were used in this study can be, first, Internal documents of the case institution/ Addis Ababa University, such as the current and past strategic plans, the recruitment and promotion policy for the academic staff, guidelines for field attachment, statutes, intellectual property management policy, and annual reports. Secondly, government documents—for instance, education and training policies, higher education legislations, ESDPs (Education Sector Development Programs), and the like. Thirdly, any other external documents regarding the essence of the community service mission of universities that are pertinent to the study.

Important internal and external documents related to the community service mission were also assessed to have further information on the issue and substantiate the data from the interview. Documents such as senate legislation, community service frameworks, guidelines for community engagement, the Higher Education Proclamation, education policy, and other official documents were consulted.

3.5. Data Analysis

To better understand the case under study, qualitative case study research involves an extensive and in-depth description of the phenomenon. In this study, a rigorous thematic data analysis technique was employed to analyze the data, aiming for in-depth and rich descriptions of the case under investigation. Direct quotes from participants were used to back up the study's findings. This comprehensive approach ensured a solid understanding of the analysis's focus. To analyze the data

generated from the interviews and document review, a thematic analysis technique provides a rich and detailed description of the data set used (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

After the interviews and document review took place, first, all the generated data was transcribed. Reading the transcription thoroughly and grouping similar codes, the codes generated were clustered into categories, yielding different themes and sub-themes. Having the transcriptions, summarizing, and sorting the data into themes follows. The identified themes were then organized for discussion and analysis. The themes were then categorized according to the data collected. Finally, the results from the qualitative data were analyzed and presented using the thematic analysis method.

Here, document analysis was used as a supplementary form of inquiry. In addition to the imported data from interviews and document analysis, memos, the researcher's hunches, field observations, and assumptions were used to comment on the data during the coding process. The accuracy and trustworthiness of the collected data were verified by re-listening to the audio recordings of the interviews and comparing them with the transcripts to identify any discrepancies. This process involved emphasizing overlapping or ambiguous words and clarifying them, as well as verifying and cross-checking the data collected through document review and interview. Peer debriefing was utilized throughout all research stages to establish validity and trustworthiness. This analysis process ensures the validity and reliability of the study's findings, providing reassurance about the study's results.

Braun and Clarke (2006) note that the process of thematic data analysis involves six phases: familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing a report.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the community service mission engagement concerns at AAU, underscoring the significance of community service in Ethiopian universities.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

In terms of ethical considerations, the research participants were well-informed about the study's objectives. This, therefore, lets them participate in the research voluntarily. Before conducting the research, the researcher must provide all the necessary information regarding the intention behind the research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

In the meantime, to obtain the gatekeeper's consent, a letter from Addis Ababa University's Educational Planning & Management (EdPM) department was written to all the sampled colleges. Following that, academic staff members were consulted to participate in the study. In the meantime, during the data analysis and classification of the respondents' reactions, to maintain confidentiality and the study's ethical integrity, participants were assigned unique identification numbers (Research Participants, RP1, RP2, RP3, etc.).

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation

This section is intended to present the study's major findings. The themes developed from the interview data and document review are presented in accordance with the research questions raised. A detailed analysis of the data and its interpretation are presented in this chapter.

4.1. Faculty perception of the community service mission of a university

Community service is recognized as a core mission of universities and is positively emphasized in national and institutional policy documents. The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy states that universities prioritize research, technology transfer, and community service within the development corridors and areas where they are located. Additionally, the policy mandates that at least 5% of an institution's budget be allocated to support research and community service projects, depending on the institution's mission (i.e., research, comprehensive, applied science, science and technology, and specialized) (MoE, 2023). The Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation also stipulates that universities participate in community service initiatives. The AAU Senate Legislation also clearly indicates that as a premier research university in Ethiopia, providing need-based community service is one of its responsibilities.

While including community service as one of the core missions of public universities is crucial, it is not sufficient for achieving this mission. The implementation and success of this mission significantly depend on the perception of faculty who engage in community service activities. Studies have shown that faculty perceptions play a central role in their decision to participate in community service (O'Meara, 2008; Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). This underscores the influence and

responsibility of faculty in the success of community service initiatives. Research participants perceive community service in various ways, with several factors influencing their perceptions of it.

Faculty members who participated in this study viewed community service as an integral part of the university's mission. Meanwhile, due to institutional and individual factors, there is a divergence and lack of clarity in what the community service mission entails and how it is perceived by faculty. This ambiguity leads to diverse interpretations of the mission, ultimately resulting in ineffective implementation. Competing voices and arguments have arisen due to the fluid nature of the concept, particularly concerning which university activities can be categorized within the community service mission (Nabaho et al., 2022; Papadimitriou, 2020).

4.1.1. Perception of the Community Service Mission

Based on the findings of this research, faculty perceptions of community service could be understood as (i) an independent versus integrated activity, (ii) a compulsory versus voluntary activity, (iii) a professional versus nonprofessional activity, and (iv) initiated by the university versus individual staff.

4.1.1.1. Community service as an independent versus integrated activity

Community service can be viewed as an independent mission and an integrated part of other university missions. Some respondents believe that, although there are other core functions, community service can stand alone and function independently of them. However, other respondents emphasize that it is difficult to view or function community service in isolation, highlighting the interrelatedness of the university's missions and functions.

While examining how community service relates to the university's other two core missions—teaching and research, respondents connect the essence of community service with teaching and research, emphasizing that these three missions are like the legs of a stool. They argue that just as a stool cannot stand or function correctly with one leg missing, the university cannot achieve its goals unless all three core missions are prioritized and operate together as a system. They noted that activities undertaken as part of the teaching mission can enhance research and community service initiatives. This is also the case in other universities. For example, at the University of Vienna, “the Third Mission is strongly connected with research and teaching, while simultaneously expanding these missions to engagement with society and economy” (Brandt et al., 2018, p.24).

Stressing the relationship between the community service mission and the other two core missions, a respondent claimed, “Community service mission and activities should be conducted based on research work that focuses on the community's interests” (RP8). Studies also indicate that community service is a fundamental feature of universities, strongly related to faculty teaching and research responsibilities (Ogunsanya & Govender, 2019; Van der Sijde Popma & Tushune, 2012).

On the other hand, as a fundamental function of a university, there are times when the community service mission stands alone and directly serves the community. One participant noted that community service is essential and sometimes expected to provide an immediate response to community needs, unlike the teaching and research missions, which may have more long-term impacts.

Some faculty who perceives community service as an integrated core function of the university believe they are engaged in community services because they teach and conduct research relevant

to the broader community. On the other hand, faculty who perceive community service as an independent function often look for projects and opportunities to engage in community service activities outside the university. This implies that how the faculty perceive community service significantly affects their way of engagement.

4.1.1.2. Community service as compulsory versus voluntary activity

Some faculty perceive community service as a compulsory activity that they are expected to engage in. This is mainly based on the argument that the university has three core missions, and faculty are hired to contribute to achieving these missions. Although the Senate Legislation does not list community engagement under the article on the duties and responsibilities of faculty, it states that “every faculty is required to engage in an approved and registered community engagement” while referring to the workload of faculty (AAU, 2023, p. 59). Participants who considered community service as a compulsory activity noted that although it does not have equal weight compared to teaching and research and there is not that much accountability attached to it, they are expected to allocate some of their working time to community engagement. The Senate Legislation also supports this argument, indicating the community engagement workload of teaching and research staff. These participants do not directly associate community service with payment. If the request comes from their university, they often ask for compensation in the form of payment. Regarding this, one participant noted that,

By definition, community service is a free service. It must be done freely, and staff should not incur any costs while engaging in it. However, some staff members try to link community service with incentives despite the absence of any guidelines connecting the service with incentives. (RP1)

Another participant said that he considers community service his duty and prefers to do it for free, but if it requires a significant amount of his time, he may ask for compensation.

...for example, a government office in Addis Ababa approached me, asking, 'You are an expert in this area; can you help us?' I agreed but mentioned that it would require a significant amount of my time. Initially, our engagement in community service activities was driven by our expertise. However, due to the extensive nature of the work, the issue of a professional fee would become a point of discussion. Such situations also occur. If I were in a better financial position, I might have done it entirely for free, which would be considered pure community service. (RP14)

The finding indicated that faculty who perceive community services as one of their compulsory duties did not disassociate it from payment, mainly because they consider such engagement as an opportunity for additional income. However, none of the national and institutional policies promote community service as a means of income generation for staff.

Some research participants perceive community service as a voluntary activity they engage in if and when they want. These participants also value the importance of community service to the community, the university, and the country at large. However, since they consider it as a voluntary service, they often expect monetary rewards for their community engagement. This is often when their community and government offices ask them because they consider it as an opportunity to give back to their society and country. They indicated that there are cases where they do not expect payment or any financial reward, mainly when the request to engage in community service activities comes from the university. This contradicts national and institutional policies that consider any community service activity undertaken by faculty as a mandatory duty that should be

performed without monetary compensation. The study also indicated that intrinsic and extrinsic incentives are the primary drivers of university-community engagement, and both can coexist within universities (Koekkoek et al., 2021).

4.1.1.3. Community service as a professional versus nonprofessional service

Participants' perceptions of community service differ regarding engaging in activities requiring professional expertise. Some participants argued that what should be counted as community engagement from a university perspective should be those community service activities they provided as university members and require their expertise and experience as a faculty or researcher. A proponent of this perception of community service said:

All faculty must contribute to community service initiatives aligned with their expertise. This alignment ensures that they can effectively address pertinent issues within their profession. For example, a medical doctor provides community services that require medical expertise. Someone from the agriculture department would provide agriculture-related services, and faculty with law expertise would provide voluntary legal services.

(RP2)

The advocates of this concept also emphasized the rationale for providing community service within one's specific area of expertise. They argued that faculty are experts in their fields and can effectively address and explain the issues or questions that arise within their area of expertise. Onyx (2008) stated that the academic or research fellow assumes the role of an expert, and in this capacity, they are expected to provide professional advice to the targeted community group. While academics engage in community service, they often perform better or are more productive in their respective fields of study (Ćulum, Turk & Ledić, 2015; O'Meara, 2002).

Respondents further noted that although they often provide community service as residents and citizens, those services may not require their academic and research knowledge and have nothing to do with being a university member. Therefore, they argued that such services should not be counted as community service from the university's perspective because, first, those activities are not known and registered by the university; second, faculty are engaged in those activities as individuals, not as experts, because it does not require their academic expertise.

Contrary to what is stated above, some participants perceive community service as activities that require faculty's engagement both in and outside their specific area of expertise. Proponents of this view claim that if one successfully executes a project outside his specific area of expertise for the betterment of the community anywhere, it exemplifies the essence of community service, even if it is undertaken without formal affiliation with the university. (RP15, RP21) The main argument raised by these participants is that what makes community service is not the expertise required but rather the essence of providing the service. As long as the engagement benefits the community, it should be considered a form of community service.

4.1.1.4. Community service initiated by the university versus individual staff

University community service activities can be initiated by various parties, including the university's community service office or team, colleges, staff members, government offices, or local communities. This is also the case in other universities. For instance, in South African universities, community service programs are initiated within institutions either by the institution as a whole or by the stakeholders within the institutions (Perold & Omar, 1997, p. 70). Some participants asserted that the university (the community service office) is responsible for initiating and overseeing community service activities. A research participant said, "Besides supervising and monitoring community service activities at the university, the Office of Community

Engagement is primarily responsible for initiating all activities under the university's community service mission. (RP5)

However, because of the small budget allocated for community service, the university could fund a limited number of community engagement projects and offices. For example, over the past four years, the university has awarded 73 community engagement projects (19 per year on average) through a competitive process (Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer, 2024). The university often expects community service projects to be carried out by a group of faculties. However, because of the small number of projects, involving all faculty in university-funded community service activities remains challenging. Participants noted that community services initiated and funded by the university are fair in terms of staff representation, as all faculty members are eligible to apply and compete. The main limitations of this approach are related to the lack of strong monitoring and evaluation of project implementation. Concerning this, a respondent said:

...for example, the department closely monitors teaching and learning activities and class schedules through timetables, attendance tracking, feedback systems, and follow-up procedures. However, similar mechanisms are absent for community service activities; there is no monitoring or oversight in place for these activities. (RP29)

Building on a similar idea, a participant stated: “Let alone follow up, I see nothing more than a yearly report on the issue” (RP9). Another respondent added, “Once the university or the Community Service office provides funding annually to the selected recipients, there is no further engagement. They do not conduct follow-up visits, only requesting a report on the activities”. (RP4)

Meanwhile, other participants argued that the idea of community service often originates from individual staff members. These participants felt the university did not give enough attention to community service. Therefore, they use other opportunities, such as professional networks and membership in different associations, to engage in community service.

From my observations, individual staff members often initiate community service activities based on their own experiences. These encounters can arise through involvement in professional societies, membership in ethics review committees, or managing various tasks, all of which are recognized as community service. (RP16)

Due to the university's limited attention, most community service activities are typically initiated and implemented by individual staff members. (RP11)

The finding implies that faculty who perceive initiating community service as the primary responsibility of community service often expect the university to provide them with opportunities to engage in community service activities. On the other hand, faculty who perceive initiating community service as one of their responsibilities often engage in community service activities by using opportunities that come through different networks.

Staff engagement in community services through their network enhances access to community services in diverse areas where the community requires support from the experience and expertise of faculty. The problem with this type of community service is that, in most cases, it is not recognized by the university and is not registered as a service provided by the university. The university also lacks the opportunity to follow up and provide leadership support if needed. Moreover, in such cases, if a staff member leaves that position, the community service activities may fail to be accomplished. A study by Bidandi, Ambe and Mukong (2021) also indicated that

the established trust and rapport with the community might be weakened or lost, affecting ongoing engagement efforts when the community service activities are based on fragile relationships between individuals within universities and specific communities outside the university and key staff members leave the university.

Sometimes, community activities are also initiated directly by the community itself. They seek expertise within the university and approach individual staff members they know in different capacities and engagements. The AAU Senate legislation also states, “Community Engagement can be initiated at various levels of the AAU or by the community” (AAU, 2023, p. 88).

The way the community service mission of a university is perceived within a specific higher education context highly influences the activities implemented as part of that mission (Nabaho et al., 2022). Brandt, Schober, Schultes, Somoza, and Spiel (2018) emphasize the importance of a nuanced understanding of community service, taking into account the unique contextual elements specific to each university. While discussing the community service mission in universities, Perold and Omar (1997) delineated the concept of service into three different ways: An activity that is unpaid mainly and done voluntarily, actions performed in support of a higher cause or ideal, like national service programs; and a professional, organized arrangement where specialized services are offered for payment. At AAU, community service is defined as “a service rendered by the university community to communities, government institutions, businesses, non-profit organizations, and society at large, to address challenges through capacity building, awareness creation, and, whenever possible, improving the quality of lives” (AAU, 2023, p. 14). This contextual understanding is crucial for effective and impactful community service.

Bosanac, Milutinović and Lungulov (2023) stress that as the higher education system is currently transitioning towards a more socially responsible entity, universities' community service is becoming increasingly valued as a third mission. Hence, university faculty have the most significant degree of control and influence in implementing the community service mission. Their perception of community service practice (positive and negative) affects the implementation. However, less attention is paid to research on university faculty's perceptions of community service practice (Hall, 2022), and this is also the case in Ethiopia.

4.1.2. Factors influencing faculty perception of community service

Community service is a relatively recent trend or concept that is gaining attention and discussion within universities. It is well addressed in policy documents, such as the Higher Education Proclamation and University Senate Legislation. Although it is viewed positively among staff (i.e., faculty and community service professionals), it did not receive sufficient attention. The study's findings reveal several factors that influence staff perceptions of community service, including institutional and national policies, the emphasis on community service, academic promotion practices, and accountability.

4.1.2.1. Institutional and national policies

National and institutional policies do not provide sufficient detail and clearly describe whether community services are integrated into the other two missions of the university, should be provided as a stand-alone service, or both. Those who perceive community services as integral to their research and teaching endeavors often do not engage in other forms of community service, assuming they are fulfilling their expected responsibilities. These participants argue that conducting research addresses a community's problems. However, this is not the purpose of all research engagement.

The policies also do not clearly define what constitutes community services. For example, participants noted that in some colleges, participation in departmental or college-level committee memberships and co-curricular activities is also regarded as a form of community service. In contrast, in most other colleges, these activities are viewed as participation in university affairs rather than community service. As a result, some participants perceive community service as engagements that require their professional experience and expertise. In contrast, others consider all the services they provide to their community, regardless of the expertise required for each engagement. Such inconsistencies also influenced the faculty's perception of community service and engagement. The lack of awareness could significantly hinder the success of a university's community service efforts. A well-developed community engagement policy, coupled with a university population that is both aware of and supportive of these efforts, is crucial to ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of community service initiatives (Hall, 2022).

A community service expert acknowledged the challenges and indicated that efforts are underway to address these challenges. He further noted, "The community service office is organizing awareness sessions for the university community and has also prepared documents such as community service frameworks and factsheets on community service." (R13). This aligns with the approach taken by other universities in addressing the mixed sentiments surrounding the concept of community service. As Mohale (2023) noted, universities are developing policy frameworks to enhance the understanding of internal stakeholders regarding the concept and to establish procedures for managing community engagement activities.

4.1.2.2. Emphasis on community service

Community service is often underprioritized in higher education because it is not seen as equally valuable as teaching and research (O'Meara, 2002), which is why it is sometimes referred to as the

third mission of universities. Nevertheless, institutional support and prioritization are crucial in shaping faculty perceptions of community service. When management prioritizes other activities over community service, faculty tend to interpret this as a signal that community service is less important within the institution, potentially impacting their engagement and participation.

At the university level, community service is structured and guided by the Community Service Directorate, which falls under the auspices of the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer. A community engagement office also coordinates all community service activities within the university. At the college level, the associate deans are responsible for research and technology transfer but not community service per se. There is also no budget allocated for community service at the college level. Accordingly, the vice deans are not leading, coordinating, and supervising community service activities. No unit or focal person exists for community service at the department level. A participant indicated, “Community service is not structured at the college and lower levels like other functions such as teaching and research.” (RP18). Emphasizing this, another participant remarked that:

The organizational structure appears effective at the top management level but narrows at the lower levels, where a greater emphasis on community service engagement is expected. This inappropriate imbalance affects staff perception and hinders their participation in community service activities. (RP13)

The absence of a dedicated unit or focal person responsible for community service-related activities implies less emphasis on community service, potentially influencing faculty perception and engagement.

As participants noted, community service initiatives are not receiving the necessary management attention, resources, or encouragement to thrive. This impacts the allocation of resources, the level of institutional support, and the overall culture surrounding community service within the university. Regarding this, one participant noted that:

Lack of resources is a major challenge; even the per diem allocated for community service activities is insufficient. Even if you are interested as a staff member, a lack of resources limits your interest in community service activities. (RP18)

AAU allocates less than five percent of its budget to community service. Participants indicated that the budget is insufficient for many impactful community service projects. Participants commented that it would have been beneficial to focus on and fund only a limited number of highly impactful projects rather than distributing the budget to less impactful but comparatively more community service-oriented projects. Regarding this, a participant said

Some [community service] projects require substantial budgets to be effectively implemented. Instead of allocating minimal funds annually to numerous small projects, allocating larger budgets to selected important activities that provide long-term benefits to the community would be more beneficial. (RP26)

Participants indicated that an institutional culture common to all public universities tends to give less attention to community service and more attention to teaching and research missions. A study indicated that “institutional cultures may either promote or stand in the way of implementing community engagement” (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p.82). In the case of AAU, the institutional culture does not favor promoting community service.

4.1.2.3. Practices related to academic promotion

Community service engagement is one of the academic promotion criteria that accounts for 15% of the total points. Participants stated that within the same department, staff members may have different views regarding what accounts as community service activities for academic promotion. (RP3, RP7). In some colleges and institutes, only community services provided by faculty related to their expertise are counted as community engagement. The AAU Senate Legislation also defines community engagement as “mutually beneficial scholarly collaborations and partnerships of the university community with local, regional and international communities to address their specific needs centered on social, economic and cultural developments and challenges” (AAU, 2023, p.14).

In contrast, at other colleges and institutes, faculty community service is considered qualified community engagement, regardless of whether the service requires faculty expertise or not. As participants pointed out, in this case, some faculty bring letters or certificates from different organizations, associations, or government offices to testify to their community service engagement. Regarding this, a participant said that “any staff member can obtain a certificate from anywhere showing their participation in community service and be promoted based on that” (RP27). Participants argued that this is not a good practice and has nothing to do with the academic promotion for which the faculty is applying. Moreover, this influenced faculty to perceive any service they provide outside the university as community service.

4.1.2.4. Accountability

Article 73.2 of the Senate Legislation states that, unless otherwise specified in an employment contract, the workload for faculty shall be divided into 62.5 percent for teaching, 25 percent for research, and 12.5 percent for community engagement (AAU, 2023). This implies that community service is a duty of the faculty. It is not a voluntary engagement. However, as some participants pointed out, there is no accountability for staff members not engaged in community services. They noted that faculty cannot continue without engaging in teaching activities. However, nothing happens when a faculty does not engage in community service.

Participants also indicated that, in most cases, faculty members considering academic promotion often engage in community services because it is one of the criteria for promotion. Emphasizing the same ideas, a participant stated:

The university does not enforce engagement in community service, and faculty are not actively participating. It is not considered mandatory work by the faculty and gets attention when it is needed for promotion. During promotions, everyone looks for opportunities to obtain a certificate to be counted as community service. (RP30)

The above discussion implies that lack of accountability is one reason to consider community service a voluntary activity. Although a study indicated that faculty perceptions of how community service is valued in promotion significantly affect their motivation (O'Meara, 2008), this was not found to be the case based on the current study's findings.

Several perspectives have influenced our understanding of the university's community service mission. Some claim that universities directly contribute to socio-economic development by transferring knowledge to productive sectors (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000; Jongbloed et al.,

2008). Molas-Gallart and Castro-Martinez (2007) and Tuunainen (2005) suggest a broader perspective on the university's role in knowledge development, application, and usage, as well as non-academic activities.

While including community service as one of the core missions of public universities is crucial, it is not sufficient for achieving this mission. The implementation and success of this mission significantly depend on the perception of faculty who engage in community service activities. Studies have shown that faculty perceptions play a central role in their decision to participate in community service (O'Meara, 2008; Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). This underscores the influence and responsibility of faculty in the success of community service initiatives.

Generally, concerning faculty perceptions of the community service mission, the findings show that several institutional and personal factors influence faculty perceptions of the mission. The study reveals a diversified view among faculty members toward the mission. As perception is a basis for implementation, it is necessary to clarify precisely what community service activities mean to the university community.

4.2. Practices of Community Service

Universities are traditionally institutions of higher education established with specific missions and objectives. They play a vital role in educating society and advancing knowledge. Over the years, universities have embraced evolving perspectives that encourage deeper and more dynamic engagement with societal organizations. This shift has strengthened the mutual exchange of knowledge and resources, allowing universities to move beyond their traditional teaching and research roles. This transformation has given rise to the "third mission" of universities: community

service. This mission highlights the importance of addressing societal challenges proactively, promoting economic development, and enhancing the social well-being of communities.

Unlike teaching and research, community service involves universities directly engaging with society through activities aimed at addressing societal needs, fostering mutual benefits, and promoting social development. Defined broadly, "community service" encompasses all university efforts to benefit the community. This mission fosters a symbiotic relationship between universities and their surrounding communities, strengthening both (Karlsen & Larrea, 2019). As Jadhav and Suhalka (2016) argue, effective community service enhances universities' societal relevance and enriches teaching and research by introducing new dimensions of engagement and collaboration.

The importance of community service has grown significantly over time. Rubens et al. (2017) attribute this to three factors: the recognition by university faculty of their broader responsibilities to their local communities, increased community awareness of universities' resources and potential contributions, and heightened collaboration between universities and businesses in addressing economic development challenges.

Regarding the practice of community service at AAU, the findings are organized into two main themes: institutional support for the community service mission, including policies and guidelines, organizational structure and leadership commitment; and the strategies employed to engage in community services, such as project-based, university-initiated, service learning, and voluntary engagement.

4.2.1. Institutional support for a community service mission

The Ethiopian government has mandated community service as a core mission for all public and private universities. This directive is embedded in the 2019 Higher Education Proclamation, emphasizing the role of universities in national development and poverty reduction. As a result, Ethiopian universities actively engage in community service activities, aligning their efforts with national priorities and local needs (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2019). This commitment to community service is evident in the mission statements of most universities, which highlight the importance of contributing to socio-economic transformation and sustainable development.

As the country's oldest and largest university, AAU is expected to adhere to the proclamation and support its community service mission. The university's dedication to community service can be assessed by examining several factors, including its official policies and strategies for community engagement, the level of commitment shown by its leadership, and the specific organizational structures established to fulfill its community service goals.

4.2.1.1. Policies and guidelines

University policies are crucial in ensuring the successful implementation of institutional missions and goals, including community service. As Sayamol et al. (2022) highlighted, institutional policies significantly shape the collaborations between higher education institutions and local communities. Similarly, Spânu, Ulmeanu and Doicin (2024) emphasize the vital role of policy documents in effectively executing community service activities within higher education institutions. The study participants highlighted that the lack of clear policies and guidelines is one of the major factors that deter the effective implementation of community service at AAU. In their words:

Regarding the university's community service guidelines, several areas require improvement. At present, our approach to community service activities lacks structure and consistency. There are no clear, written guidelines that define what is expected or prohibited. Instead, instructions are occasionally issued by someone in a position of authority, directing us to take specific actions as needed. (RP17)

To date, no formal policy documents for community service have been developed. Similar to the evaluation forms used to assess faculty teaching performance each semester, a dedicated evaluation form for community service activities should be created and completed every semester to ensure faculty participation in community service. (RP1)

Incorporating teacher performance evaluations related to community engagement could be an important consideration for the university as part of its faculty appraisal process. While this is not yet a standard practice, the significance of community service is acknowledged within the university's policies and strategic planning documents. For example, the AAU Senate Legislation recognizes community service as one of its core missions aimed at addressing the nation's needs, aspirations, and priorities. This policy document provides an operational definition of community service as "mutually beneficial scholarly collaborations and partnerships between the university community and local, regional, and international communities, focused on addressing specific social, economic, and cultural challenges and developments" (AAU, 2024a, p. 8). The Senate Legislation also states that community engagement is a duty and responsibility for all academic staff, outlining clear principles and general provisions for community service at AAU. Community service is also well-identified in the university's five-year strategic plan, which includes outreach, services, and engagement as one of its nine strategic themes (AAU, 2024b).

Contrary to the views expressed by study participants, there is, in fact, a guideline for community engagement. This guideline was developed to address key challenges hindering the effective implementation of community service, such as the limited attention given to it, primarily due to the lack of a functional governance structure and unclear roles and responsibilities for academic staff concerning community engagement. These issues have impacted the university's ability to equally prioritize and execute its three core missions (AAU, 2019). The guideline outlines strategic approaches, governance structures, and other relevant aspects of the university's planned involvement in community services.

The university has recognized several challenges in implementing the community engagement guideline effectively. To overcome these obstacles and ensure the institutionalization of community service, AAU developed rubrics to guide community engagement activities (AAU, 2021). These rubrics are designed to provide a clear framework for evaluating and enhancing the quality and impact of community engagement initiatives. By developing the rubrics to guide community engagement, AAU aims to streamline the integration of community service into its academic and administrative processes, ensuring that it becomes a more consistent and impactful part of the university's mission. Moreover, these rubrics are intended to support faculty in aligning their community service efforts with the university's broader strategic goals, fostering deeper connections between the institution and the communities it serves. Study participants highlighted that the absence of clear policies and guidelines is one factor that discourages them from participating in community service activities. Research findings also indicated that when universities lack clear policies that support or encourage community service engagement, faculty may be discouraged from participating in such activities (O'Meara, 2016). Despite the existence of key policies, strategies, and guidelines that provide clear direction for implementing community

service, as revealed in the document review, this finding suggests that faculty members may not be fully aware of these resources. It indicates a potential gap in the university's efforts to effectively communicate and disseminate important documents to its stakeholders through the most efficient channels. Studies indicate that a gap in dissemination affects practical policy implementations (Ashcraft, Quinn, & Brownson, 2020; Mthethwa, 2012)

4.2.1.2. Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of a university is pivotal in ensuring the successful execution of its core missions, especially those related to community service. Within higher education institutions, this mission is uniquely shaped by the institution's priorities, culture, and relationship with its stakeholders. For community service to be impactful, the structure must not only exist at the central administrative level but also extend seamlessly to the university's grassroots—such as colleges, departments, and individual academic units. At AAU, the Office of Community Services operates under the office of the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer and is led by a director. The document review revealed that, in addition to the director, the community service office has three experts, each responsible for community relations, program integration, and grant support. While establishing the community service office, staffed with experts, is a positive step, challenges persist. The central office's human resources are insufficient for a university as big as AAU, which accommodates community engagement as one of its core missions. The situation is even worse because community service has no structure at colleges and departments. One study participant noted, “There is an increasing expectation for community service work at the department and college levels, yet almost no community service structure exists” (RP19).

Study participants identified the organizational structure as a key factor affecting the implementation of community service.

Due to weak institutional structures, academic and administrative staff often lack a comprehensive understanding of the scope and purpose of community service. This has led to a diminished sense of engagement, overshadowing most activities in the teaching and learning processes. Respondents advocated establishing community service structures at the departmental level could address these challenges and increase visibility. (RP14; RP22)

Decentralizing the community service framework ensures that it becomes a shared institutional endeavor, fostering collaboration across disciplines and aligning the university's resources with the needs of the communities it serves (Helling et al., 2005). In addition to decentralization, the effectiveness of organizational structure depends on its ability to provide clear guidelines, support mechanisms, and channels for communication and awareness creation. At AAU, the faculty's lack of awareness about the university's community service plan is also linked to a poor organizational structure. One participant said, "The primary focus should be raising awareness among staff members through an organizational structure that reaches the grassroots level, but we do not have that structure" (RP7). Another participant further highlighted the inadequacy of the current structure, stating, "Particularly in the last two years, there has been no community service at all, and I have not heard anything regarding community engagement. Nothing is being talked about." (RP13)

An effective and well-integrated organizational structure is crucial for ensuring that faculty and staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in community service engagement (Wade & Demb, 2009). Such a structure also promotes active participation, empowering academic staff to make significant contributions to addressing societal challenges. However, as highlighted by the document review and participant insights, community service—despite being one of the university's three core missions—lacks an adequate organizational framework to support its

activities effectively or achieve its intended goals. As a result, this mission has been comparatively under-prioritized.

4.2.1.3. Leadership Commitment

Leadership commitment is a cornerstone for effectively implementing a university's organizational missions, including community service endeavors. Strong leadership provides strategic direction, allocates resources effectively, and fosters an environment that enables community engagement initiatives. Without active support and commitment from leadership, the success of such programs may be compromised, as their guidance is crucial for aligning these efforts with the institution's overarching goals. Studies also emphasized that leadership is vital in fostering faculty involvement in community service (Holland, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009). At AAU, concerns have been raised regarding the limited prioritization of community service mandates and activities within the university's organizational framework. Community service initiatives often receive less attention than the university's teaching and research missions. Study participants emphasized that these traditional academic functions are given precedence, overshadowing the importance of the community service mission. For example, one participant noted that while teaching and research are fundamental, their dominance frequently sidelines community service, reflecting a gap in institutional prioritization of core missions. (RP9) The study finding further highlighted that community service is often seen as a secondary concern, if not entirely overlooked, due to the primary focus on teaching and research.

The management's main focus is on teaching and learning, with research as a secondary priority, often addressed if time permits. Community service, however, seems to be regarded as an afterthought, with a somewhat dismissive attitude. This neglect suggests that they may not fully appreciate the importance of community engagement. (RP12)

Another participant echoed this sentiment, suggesting that not only is community service neglected, but even the core mission of teaching can be compromised to accommodate governmental priorities. (RP4) Highlighting concerns about the leadership's lack of commitment to community service, one respondent observed that the Community Service Office only seems to capture the leadership's attention sporadically, stating, "I question whether the management genuinely prioritizes this mission as a fundamental objective of the university." (RP2)

The trend of placing greater emphasis on teaching and research missions at the expense of community service is not unique to AAU. Research shows that universities in various countries also prioritize teaching and research over community engagement (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Málovics et al., 2024). However, as the above excerpts indicated, AAU's pronounced lack of leadership commitment further exacerbates the challenges in advancing community service as a core mission. Without strong leadership backing, the implementation of community engagement initiatives risks being inconsistent and underfunded, undermining the broader objectives of the third mission of higher education. On the other hand, when there is leadership support and commitment, it is possible to have impactful community services. Kaplan (2015) highlights that Northern Illinois University owes much of its success in community engagement to the consistent support and strategic leadership of its top administration. Their active involvement and guidance have been instrumental in fostering and sustaining effective community involvement initiatives.

4.2.2. Strategies Used for Engaging in Community Services

Universities employ various strategies to engage with their communities in pursuit of their community service mission. Common community engagement strategies comprise civic engagement, outreach and partnership, service learning, and community-based research, each with a unique focus (Muwanguzi, Serunjogi & Edward, 2023). For example, Philippine University has

four key community engagement programs (Bernardo, Butcher, and Howard, 2012), including curriculum integration, institutional advocacy, community development, and volunteer formation. These strategies offer opportunities for faculty, staff, students, and alumni to become more actively involved in community participation by living and working in a community for a specific period. At Addis Ababa University, the Senate Legislation (AAU, 2024a) and the Guideline for Community Engagement (2024b) stipulate that each academic staff member must engage in community service activities, requiring a minimum of three credit hours per year. This mandatory participation potentially fosters communication and collaboration between the university and local communities. The document review results of the current study show that various strategies are promoted at AAU to foster university-community interactions. The major community service engagement strategies include project-based community engagement activities funded by external bodies, university-initiated and funded engagements, community service-learning, and volunteerism/individual staff-initiated engagements. Such diversification of community service participation allows faculty to address a broader range of concerns and reach a wider community.

4.2.2.1. Project-based community engagement activities funded by external bodies

Not all community service mission activities at AAU are financed by its community engagement office. External organizations and funders support some. Various colleges and departments within the university undertake externally funded community service projects. While some projects employ dedicated staff explicitly recruited for their implementation, faculty from the respective colleges or institutes also contribute to these efforts. Community engagement in these cases is primarily carried out by project staff, who manage the operational aspects of the project. Faculty members, however, are actively involved, particularly in delivering training programs focused on capacity building. Beyond training, faculty members also contribute to policy development,

offering insights derived from their research, which may be thematic or project-based. From the project's inception, collaboration with the university plays a key role, beginning with the design phase, which allows faculty to engage meaningfully. Students also participate in some of these initiatives as volunteers, receiving minimal compensation, such as transportation allowances, for their contributions.

Respondents highlighted that the community service activities embedded within such projects align closely with the university's teaching, research, and community engagement missions. Study participants highlighted that a key benefit of this approach to community service engagement is the frequent use of research findings as the basis for these interventions. Collaboration with external stakeholders, particularly government sectors, was also noted as a crucial aspect of these projects. However, a respondent (RP32) stressed the need for the university to institutionalize such collaborations to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. Interdisciplinary collaboration across departments was cited as essential for addressing complex societal issues, and this approach is actively encouraged by the university's community engagement office.

Participants indicated that financial constraints are a significant challenge to realizing the university's community service mission. External funding for projects was viewed as critical to overcoming these limitations and achieving mission objectives that the university's limited budget could not support. A respondent claims, "...given the ongoing budget constraint towards the community service mission at the university level, such project-based and externally funded community service mechanisms help address the challenges related to the implementation of activities under community service mission" (RP3).

Though respondents expressed a positive attitude toward this engagement method, reliance on inconsistent project funding poses a challenge, necessitating alignment with funder priorities and

raising concerns about long-term sustainability. As noted by the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (2006, p. 3), reliance on project-based funding may lead to “episodic support,” which hinders the development of structures necessary to sustain community engagement in the long term. Additionally, participants emphasized that if such funded community service approaches were implemented consistently, the mission could become more practical and effective. They agreed that this approach can make a meaningful contribution to the mission's success.

4.2.2.2. University-initiated and Funded Community Engagements

One of the primary methods for attaining AAU's community service mission is an initiative generated and funded by the university itself. This technique involves planning community service activities for the university over a specified period and within a budget assigned by the university's community service office. Utilizing internal finance, this technique allocates available resources among academic institutions by integrating service activities with pressing community needs, thereby enhancing the mission's practical impact and relevance. However, this approach requires careful analysis to align institutional goals with available budgets and ensure the long-term sustainability of community service activities.

As per the respondents, although the university's funding for community services is insufficient, a certain amount of money is allocated each year for academic staff members to participate in community service activities on a competitive basis. In partnership with academic institutions, the Office for Community Service identifies themes and objectives and prepares calls for project proposals to facilitate this. Projects funded by the community service program can run from one to three years, mobilizing the target community around a shared purpose and making them the primary beneficiaries.

The university's Office of Community Service organizes activities financed by the university. Academic staff members, ideally as a team, and academic units (such as departments, colleges, and institutes) can respond to the office's call for proposals. These proposals are initially reviewed by their respective colleges or institutes before being forwarded to the Office for Community Service for final evaluation. The relevance of proposals is assessed using a format designed to analyze initiatives, taking into account available funds and priority areas. A review team appointed by the office examines the proposals. After the final screening, the office and the project team leader or the academic department sign a project agreement to ensure appropriate funding for the chosen applications.

According to the respondents, university-funded community service activities are considerably limited in both their quantity and scope. Consequently, these initiatives do not effectively engage all faculties, despite the university's regulations stipulating that faculty members should allocate 12.5% of their time to community service. Nonetheless, as stated by the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer Office (2024), in the last four years, only 73 community service projects were initiated and financed by the university, which means, on average, 19 projects per year, which is insignificant to the number of university faculty, though the community service projects expected to be carried out by a group of faculty. Regarding this, a respondent claimed:

Although we are expected to participate in the university's community service mission, due to the limited number of projects awarded each year by the university's community service office, it is challenging to engage all faculty in university-funded community service activities. (RP26)

Any staff who engages in university-initiated community service projects is eligible to receive a certification or letter of participation, which can be used for promotion and a three-credit-hour exemption of workload per semester (AAU, 2021).

Universities play a vital role in promoting community development through various service engagements, often initiated and supported by the institution. These engagements often utilize the expertise of academic staff to address local or national concerns, enhance social well-being, and contribute to long-term development. However, due to economic limits, university-initiated and supported community service initiatives cannot always accommodate all academic staff members. Due to limited financial resources, the university prioritizes specific projects, limiting the number of participating staff members. As a result, many academics may overlook opportunities to serve their communities through institutional channels. This constraint has led to the emergence of new modes of involvement. Many academic staff members seek additional/further ways to contribute to community service and professional development.

4.2.2.3. Community Service Learning/ Field Education

While discussing the major forms of university-community engagement, Schuetze (2012) puts “service learning” as one of the known and recent forms of university partnership with their community. Service learning differs from field trips because it allows students to apply what they have learned in the classroom. While explaining service learning, Furco (1996) suggests that service learning is a form of practical education that benefits the service provider and the recipient by emphasizing both the service provided and the learning gained from the experience.

Academic fields use service-learning as a teaching strategy to enhance students' engagement in the curriculum and the community. This approach links classroom theory with real-world community needs by integrating community service with instruction. Bringle and Hatcher (2009) define

service-learning as a credit-bearing educational experience where students engage in organized activities that address identified community needs. As a pedagogical technique, service-learning fosters relationships between universities and community groups through integrating students with communities to achieve shared educational and social goals.

By integrating academic study with community service, service-learning helps students develop social responsibility and renews staff members' interest in their work. This approach strengthens the connection between theory and practice, provides students with real-world experience, fosters a sense of university community and social responsibility, and improves the mobilization of community resources and resource persons (O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). One interviewee indicated that:

Classroom learning alone is often insufficient for students to fully grasp the content they have covered in class. Thus, students are taken into the field (community) to apply and better comprehend their theoretical knowledge through a program we call Field Education.

(RP15)

Field education is crucial to the social work curriculum for training effective, competent, and ethical clinical social workers. Students and alumni recognize its importance, and accrediting bodies worldwide acknowledge its vital role in improving the quality of social work services offered to the public (Bogo, 2015; Omorogiuwa, 2023). It offers students co-curricular service opportunities that complement but are not entirely integrated into their formal academic studies. These opportunities are part of a program primarily aimed at deepening students' understanding of a particular field of study while also placing significant importance on the service they provide (Furco, 1996, p. 5).

According to respondents, the nature of the courses or disciplines can impact the level of engagement in community service (RP25, RP10, and RP31). While some courses are more academic and disciplinary, others are centered on community service (RP24). For example, the Social Work department in universities is inherently focused on community service, as its name suggests.

Students participating in service-learning programs, such as Field Education, encounter a variety of learning experiences, including critical observation, report writing, seminars, reflective discussions, educational tours, workshops, training sessions, research, and hands-on practical interventions.

Students' participation in service-learning programs enhances their understanding of community problems and needs, which can significantly contribute to addressing these issues. However, for service-learning initiatives to foster sustainable community development, Fourie (2003) highlighted the importance of integrating and iterating learning processes that engage with and draw from local knowledge systems and worldviews. This approach positions the community as beneficiaries and active contributors to their development, enabling a genuine and lasting impact.

4.2.2.4. Volunteer engagements / Individual staff-initiated engagements

According to the university's regulations; all staff members are required to participate in community service activities as part of the criteria for the promotion. When staff members require a community service participation certificate—a critical component for promotion—they frequently opt to partake in activities they have independently initiated. Respondents have indicated that this preference stems from the fact that university-funded and initiated community engagement projects do not adequately accommodate all staff members. (RP27, RP30)

Volunteering is a vital mechanism for fostering relationships within the community and helping universities achieve their institutional objectives. This practice involves the direct and voluntary service provided by academic staff and students, either individually or in groups, to benefit the broader community (Harnish & Bridges, 2015). The Office of Community Service should actively engage volunteers from the university's academic staff and student body to advance its community service mission. As per Islary and Phungshok (2015), volunteerism is a method by which university volunteers (faculty and students) engage with the community outside the university for mutual benefits. They contend that the community members benefit from the volunteers' academic backgrounds and enjoy the capability to examine pertinent issues in the community critically. In contrast, volunteers can understand the community's dynamics, traditions, cultures, practices, and meaning systems that interplay within that community.

Participants in the current study report that volunteerism is one of the ways academic staff at the university engage in community service activities (RP4, RP5, and RP20). For example, (R20) states, "Many of our activities are done on a volunteer basis." She mentions various freely given services, such as training community rights promoters, advising vulnerable community groups on their rights, and educating them on human rights issues. As stated by a respondent, volunteerism is the major category that lets academic staff engage in community service missions (RP29). Hence, the university needs to establish a culture of volunteering within its community. Buyakova and Malkova (2021) highlight volunteering and service-learning programs as crucial components in implementing the third mission of universities. This supports the idea that volunteerism is an integral part of the community service mission, making it an acceptable dimension of the university's third mission.

Given the various ways in which community service activities are practiced, AAU should evaluate and identify the approaches that can be used to excel based on its capacities and preferred interaction modalities. Undertaking this task presents both an opportunity and a responsibility for the university. Many respondents in this study indicate that engaging in community service can also benefit the university in multiple ways. For instance, R19 states: "Having capable and engaged staff members can greatly benefit the university." He asserts that the university is defined by the collective efforts of its individuals, teams, and faculties. Another respondent (RP11) mentions, "Knowledge is inherently a two-way street," elaborating that university communities (staff, students, etc.) learn from the community they engage with. This respondent also notes that significant research topics can emerge from such community interactions.

Although literature indicates that volunteering provides individualized benefits for students and staff members, the benefits are even more extensive. The HEACF states: "Volunteering helps to promote a fairer, more cohesive society in which individuals feel they have a stake. It also helps to build bridges between communities and local organizations such as higher education institutions" (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2005, p.1).

Further emphasizing the benefits, a participant (RP18) asserts that community service cultivates a sense of ownership and connection from the community's perspective. Additionally, one participant (RP8) noted that community service significantly enhances the university's reputation through active promotion. Several respondents also associate community service initiatives with direct financial returns for the university. They suggest that specific communities or organizations may possess the financial capacity to seek the university's expertise for various research projects, thereby establishing mutual benefits through financial support and access to specialized knowledge (RP10, RP16). Stressing the importance of volunteer service in universities to engage with their

community, Zhang and Liu (2023) noted that through volunteering, the resources of universities, including the professional expertise of faculty, can be matched with societal needs to contribute to various community services.

Despite the engagement models on the service mission, each academic staff member is expected to engage in issues related to their expertise. For instance, physicians should engage in medical topics, agriculture academic staff should promote agricultural initiatives and law academic staff should address legal service matters. Additionally, academic staff members must participate in awareness-raising sessions by providing training on the community service mission and engaging in the services. Most respondents indicated that individual staff members' participation in various initiatives is considered community service. Participants noted that academic staff may engage in volunteer activities both individually and as part of teams, including involvement in professional societies, ethical review committees, board memberships, and other diverse enterprises. One interviewee remarked, "Consider the time they dedicate to such activities without remuneration; it is undoubtedly recognized as community service." (RP17)

Zhang and Liu (2024), in their study on Shenzhen, the pioneer city in China to establish a "City of Volunteers," mentioned that by impacting young minds and contributing to the cultivation of a culture of volunteerism and character development, universities have integrated volunteer service into their campus culture through effective institutional oversight, infrastructure enhancement, and brand development.

Commonly, universities are increasingly viewed as catalysts for societal change, innovation, and development in the contemporary era. As a result, they face mounting and diverse expectations to deliver tangible outcomes that address pressing societal needs. These include solving complex global problems, enhancing social equity, and collaborating with local and international

stakeholders to create sustainable solutions. Gorski and Mehta (2016) and Kuttner, Byrne, Schmit, and Munro (2019) revealed that, as the core of the university's workforce, faculty involvement, dedication, and experience play a critical role in the successful practice of universities' service missions.

4.3. Challenges towards Community Service

Community service in universities is a mutually beneficial process that strengthens both the university and the community. Through community service missions, universities strengthen their relationship with the public by transferring knowledge and demonstrating their contributions to the community. The success of universities cannot be enhanced without proper engagement with the locality. The university community service is a service rendered freely to the community without payment, and it is expected of all faculty members to engage in it. However, the results of the data analysis show that AAU faculty members failed to fulfill the community service mission as a core expectation of them.

Here, the challenges that compel AAU faculties from engaging in community service missions, the teaching-research-service workload assigned to each mission, and its impact on the faculty to take part in community service mission activities are examined.

4.3.1. Challenges Constraining Faculty from Engaging in Community Service Mission

Drawing on the interview data from the research participants, the challenges facing AAU faculties in fulfilling their community service mission are numerous. These challenges are categorized into four major themes. These are: i) challenges related to communication, engagement, and awareness; ii) barriers involving organizational, policy, and structural issues; iii) financial and resource constraints; and iv) setbacks in reporting and measurement of the community service activities.

4.3.1.1. Challenges Related to Communication, Awareness, and Engagement

To achieve its mission objectives, any organization must have proper communication channels between its various units, and universities are no exception. According to respondents, while the university's teaching and research missions are well communicated, the community service mission is not well organized and communicated to the staff (RP14, RP9, RP6, and RP20). This lack of communication and awareness among faculty members is a significant challenge to the implementation of this practice.

According to one respondent (RP11), the lack of effective information flow and communication results in minimal attention being given to community service activities. Another research participant also added:

Community service is a form of service provided to the community outside the university. Meanwhile, due to the lack of awareness that can arise from inadequate communication channels within and outside the university, there is limited demand from the community side. They are not aware of the community service provided by the university. (RP21)

University activities are to be communicated to internal and external stakeholders by incorporating them to gather more detailed information from research participants into plans ahead of time. On this idea, another respondent (RP22) mentioned that tasks need to be planned to be completed. However, this is not the case for community service activities. Other respondents further explained that the absence of community service activities in the department and faculty's annual plans poses a challenge to engaging in the mission (RP23, RP16, and RP28).

Staff members often lack a clear understanding of the schedules, goals, and expected outcomes for community service activities due to communication gaps. Therefore, mission implementation seems to be slow and less focused (RP18). Due to reduced communication incidences regarding

community service activities, the level of cooperation among staff is also limited. Hence, the limited engagement and communication among staff lead to a diversified conception of the mission, hindering its accomplishment. According to Johnson (2020), the differing conceptualizations of faculties towards community service activities pose a challenge to its practice.

Respondents emphasized that communication gaps between different levels of the university hierarchy discourage faculty from participating in the institution's community service mission and are the primary obstacles to realizing this mission. To solve such issues, it is essential to strengthen communication channels, promote a collaborative culture, and ensure that the faculty understands and supports the university's community service mission. (R26, RP30).

4.3.1.2. Organizational structure and policy issues

The different structures within the university serve as a guide that outlines the responsibilities of each party within the institution. As highlighted by many respondents, the university's organizational structure does not facilitate faculty involvement in community service missions (RP31, RP12, and RP3). The community service mission is concentrated at the highest level of the university structure. However, no departmental structure allows academic staff to participate in community service activities. A respondent expressed his confusion as follows:

...if the university wants to fulfill its mission, the primary internal agents responsible for carrying out the community service mission are the teachers/the faculty. Therefore, if there is no such structure at the departmental level, why does the university include community service as one of its core missions? This poses a major challenge to practicing the mission activities. (RP2)

Another respondent (RP5) stressed the importance of organizational structure within an organization in achieving its mission. He stated that community service is not structured as other teaching and research functions. Therefore, as he added, the staff often falls short of accomplishing activities to the expected level. In response to this idea, another respondent noted:

... because of the absence of clear guidelines on accomplishing community service mission activities, the work is being done haphazardly. If there is a clear guideline, it lets you do your work responsibly (RP27).

Molepo and Mudau (2020) noted that some universities lack clear policy guidelines, which prevent faculty from participating in community service activities. Even among those with policies, some fail to enforce them, leading to a lack of staff compliance with the rules.

4.3.1.3. Financial and resource constraints

Stressing the importance of financial resources for carrying out various activities in universities, including community service, a respondent (RP4) stated that while community service activities are typically done without charging any professional fees, they still require funding to operate.

Based on feedback from several respondents, there seems to be a shortage of budget allocated to community engagement office activities for planned projects. Respondents have highlighted that expenses such as transportation fees and daily allowances are crucial for facilitating these activities.

This budget shortage creates obstacles to implementing community service activities. Regarding the community service mission in universities, the lack of funding and infrastructure resulted in only limited fulfillment of the mission (Hikins & Cherwitz, 2010; Johnson, 2020; Marks, Erwin, & Mosavel, 2015).

Overlapping schedule conflicts may prevent participation in community service activities. In addition, as (RP7) pointed out, individuals may have a desire to participate in community service activities. However, according to this respondent, there are obstacles, such as a lack of time to complete these activities, especially when they are not considered part of one's primary faculty responsibilities. Faculty struggle to prioritize community service due to teaching and research commitments (Naranjo, Vega, & Manjarres, 2023).

Regarding this matter, the respondent (RP8) pointed out that community service activities are being carried out in a disorganized manner without a formal plan and logistics. He stated that they were only reminded about these activities at the promotion times.

(RP10) also mentioned that due to financial and resource constraints, staff lacks motivation and a positive attitude towards the mission in general. Furthermore, (RP17) stated that although the staff raises the issue of community service during promotion, nothing is obligatory as far as the mission is concerned. Even if the faculty is interested, there are no provisions to run community service activities.

4.3.1.4. Reporting and measurement

In the university policy, it is unclear who is required to participate in community service and who is exempt. According to (RP15), though the university senate legislation stipulates that 12.5% of the faculty's time should be dedicated to community service missions, this guideline is not being properly implemented due to a lack of a clear trajectory that measures this. (RP13) pointed out that this raises issues of accountability.

Faculties are expected to contribute to their community, and without clear measures and reporting of activities, their engagement in community service is hindered. A research participant uttered:

Community service is not scheduled like the teaching activities set by staff members. For example, the service has no specific schedule like teaching. The guidelines are not visible at the lower level. That makes it difficult to measure and report the activities. (RP1)

There are measurement and assessment tools for community service activities in higher education. As higher education institutions become more closely tied to broader audiences, consider innovative ways to quantify their societal impact. The Campus Engage Metrics and Evaluation Working Group has developed a nationwide and globally informed Metrics Framework that operates within an Irish community engagement context and narrative, yet is equally applicable to other institutions and higher education systems worldwide. However, many of the criteria are ambitious and not feasible to quantify over a short period (Irish Universities Association, 2018).

Koryakina, Sarrico, and Teixeira (2015) highlighted that the key challenge to embracing community service in faculty responsibilities is allied to the academic career structure, especially the evaluation of academic staff's work and its impact on career progression.

4.3.2. The Teaching-Research-Service Balance Impact on Faculty Engagement in Community Service

Faculty involvement with the university's three core missions (teaching, research, and community service) is greatly impacted by the weight allocated to each mission. There is a noticeable disparity in the workload distribution among missions despite national policy documents calling for faculty members to support all three goals, including community service.

In particular, the teaching mission is given precedence in the university's senate legislation (62.5%), followed by the research mission (25%), and finally community service mission (12.5%) (AAU, 2023). Several respondents stated that the excessive focus on teaching and research limits the amount of time and energy that faculty can dedicate to community service missions.

According to a participant (RP21), this disparity has a negative impact on the community service mission's resource allocation and managerial attention as well. Participants argue that their poor participation stems from an institutional lack of emphasis on community service, primarily resulting from the assignment of a minimal load to the mission. This issue is exacerbated by a lack of enough money, organizational support, and clear priorities.

In addition to the lesser allocation of workload, policy documents do not provide a clear definition or description of community service. This uncertainty has led to differing interpretations among faculty members, resulting in uneven awareness and comprehension of the mission. This finding is consistent with more general results in the literature, as stated by O'Meara (2002), who claims that community service is typically undervalued in higher education compared to research and teaching.

Although community service is emphasized in ministry and university documents, it has yet to receive practical support and institutionalization in universities. Emphasizing the need for political decisions to support universities' efforts in community service, Sellamna & Gebremedhin (2015) suggest that to institutionalize community service missions, universities in Ethiopia face challenges, and to tackle the challenges. They must link community service activities together to staff incentives, performance evaluation systems, capacity building schemes, and the facilitation of joint learning mechanisms with stakeholders.

Faculty attitudes and involvement in community service are greatly influenced by institutional support and emphasis, too. Faculty frequently interpret a management preference for teaching and research over community involvement as a sign that the institution does not value community service. As a result, they become less motivated and engage in related activities.

According to the participants, the lack of these organizational frameworks limits the support and visibility of community service programs and makes resource allocation more challenging. Without managerial support, encouragement, or a clear plan, community service initiatives struggle to thrive. The issue is further exacerbated by the lack of a specialized department or designated point of contact to oversee community service programs at both the college and departmental levels. Because of this view, community service is now referred to as the "third mission" of universities, a secondary goal instead of a primary one.

In conclusion, the existing disparity in workload distribution, unclear policy definitions, and a lack of institutional support all contribute to the university's poor culture of community service. These issues must be addressed to encourage increased participation and ensure that community work receives the recognition and resources it deserves.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

In this chapter, the analyzed and interpreted data are summarized and conclusions are drawn. Then, recommendations are made for the higher education community and further research.

5.1. Summary

This study examines faculty perceptions and practices regarding their community service mission at AAU. The study also identified challenges that faculty encounter while engaging in their community service activities. A qualitative research method with a case study design was conducted at Addis Ababa University, and the necessary data were collected from faculty, vice deans, department heads, community service professionals, and official documents through in-depth interviews and document review. Although the community service mission is recognized as one of the core missions of the university and is collectively acknowledged at national, institutional, and individual levels, its practice within AAU is often limited and lacking. The University provides less attention and budget to its community service mission.

The study identified that the faculty perceptions of community service mission can be understood in terms of varying categories: community service as independent versus integrated activities, compulsory versus voluntary participation, professional versus non-professional roles, and activities initiated by the university versus those initiated by individuals. The study also reveals a significant gap between the perceived significance of community service and faculty engagement in community service activities, primarily due to the varied perceptions of community service among faculty members. The findings reveal that numerous factors influence this faculty's

perceptions of community service, including institutional and national policies, less emphasis on community service within the university, inconsistent academic promotion practices, and a lack of accountability.

Regarding its implementation practice, a significant number of academic staff members are indifferent toward the community service mission. The faculty is lagging in community service practices due to issues related to weak institutional support for community service missions, including biased policies and strategic documents, reduced leadership commitment, and an unfair organizational structure. The current structure places responsibility for community service at the top management level but lacks practical implementation at the college and departmental levels.

Rather than integrating community service meaningfully into their professional roles, the AAU allowed its faculty to participate in the mission in various unsystematic ways. Some of the ways promoted at AAU include project-based community engagement activities funded by external bodies, university-initiated and funded engagements, community service-learning/Field Education, and volunteerism/individual staff-initiated engagements.

Concerning the challenges faculty faces, four major categories of challenges hindering the community service mission practices are identified: communication, engagement, and awareness deficiencies; organizational, policy, and structural obstacles; financial and resource limitations; and hindrances in reporting and measuring community service activities. The majority of academic staff members show little interest in community service, citing weak commitment from the university's admin. As a result, the university's third mission is not being achieved.

5.2. Conclusions

Faculty perceptions and practices regarding the community service mission, as well as factors influencing their engagement in the mission at AAU, are the core issues investigated in this study.

However, there is a significant gap between the perceived significance of community service missions in general and the actual engagement practices in the university concerning community service mission activities. The study reveals that the inconsistency between the perceived significance of community service and faculty engagement in community service is primarily due to the diverse views of faculty on community service, which can ultimately affect its implementation practice. This implies how faculty perceive community service dictates and impacts faculty community service engagement practice. Although the university's policy encourages faculty engagement in community service, there is a lack of specific activities that qualify. The definition of community service activities is ambiguous, and there is no consensus among respondents on what these activities entail. This ambiguity also makes it challenging to measure and report on community service activities.

In the study, faculty members recognize the importance of community service to the university's mission; however, in practice, they often prioritize academic responsibilities over the university's third mission. This is partly due to limited resources allocated to community service. This perception, combined with a lack of resources, presents significant challenges for the university in fulfilling its third mission. Therefore, the lack of internal drive, combined with external motivation, is hindering the accomplishment of the community service mission at AAU, particularly in terms of faculty engagement.

Sufficient financial resources and logistic issues are essential for the successful implementation of the university's community service mission. Community engagement activities require significant investment to reach the target community in various ways. Without adequate financing, universities are challenged to provide their faculty with the necessary infrastructure, materials, and skills to continually engage and collaborate with the community.

The study reveals that the community service mission at AAU is not being implemented to the level outlined in the institution's policy documents and the Ministry of Education. Though the study emphasizes the importance of addressing challenges related to academic staff perceptions, practices, and institutional shortcomings in the community service mission, it discloses that the university is lagging practically in achieving its mission. To properly carry out its service mission, the university requires a clear operational structure and regulatory framework that establishes roles, duties, and communication channels to facilitate efficient resource allocation and coordination of community participation activities among university entities. Furthermore, strong standards for service ethics and teamwork promote an environment where faculties can operate transparently and accountably. Without effective policies, AAUs may encounter challenges such as resource misallocation, a lack of direction, or ethical issues, which can hinder goal accomplishment. Thus, a strong organizational structure, together with comprehensive policies, is essential for fostering a culture that is efficient, imaginative, and aligned with institutional goals.

AAU should consider making community service a more central component of faculty roles, potentially integrating it into research and teaching responsibilities. This shift could enhance engagement by normalizing community service as part of the professional identity of faculty rather than treating it as an optional or secondary task. National and institutional policies related to academic promotion and resource allocation should explicitly value and reward community service, so that faculty members feel encouraged to participate without fearing negative impacts on their academic careers. AAU must also implement more explicit accountability measures to ensure faculty members participate in community service activities. Without ensuring accountability, community service is likely to remain underprioritized and insufficiently integrated into the academic culture.

The findings draw attention to an important direction for future research: examining whether the factors that influence faculty perception of community service are influential in universities in Africa and beyond.

The study has multiple implications as it provides a deeper insight into how faculty perceive, implement, and the challenges they face while implementing the community service mission. These implications include enhancing universities' community service approaches, inspiring educational policymakers and planners to better integrate community service into higher education frameworks, and supporting universities in advancing their engagement with local communities.

The study emphasizes the need for tailored approaches to enhance academic staff practices of community service. It underscores the importance of coordinated efforts among different university units, clear organizational structure, and effective communication. Factors such as low priority given to the mission, accountability issues, poor organizational structure, lack of awareness due to ineffective communication channels, and resource constraints influenced faculty participation in the community service mission.

Hence, the findings provide universities elsewhere with valuable insights into improving their approach to community service and achieving the mission's objectives. Since significant community service work is expected at the university's entry-level, the current structure needs to be reassessed and improved to promote inter-unit collaboration.

Therefore, the study highlights the necessity for universities like AAU to adopt a more balanced approach that elevates the status of community service alongside teaching and research, ensuring a more holistic contribution to societal development.

5.3. Recommendations

To develop academic staff practices of the community service mission, the study suggests establishing formal communication channels between different university units, providing incentive programs and motivating staff, ensuring strong leadership support for community service initiatives, recognizing and rewarding excellence in community service activities, prioritizing accountability in the university environment, and allocating dedicated resources. The absence of a clear link or structure for the community service mission at the college, institute, and department levels results in a weak commitment from faculty towards the mission. There is also a significant discrepancy between the university's policies and guidelines and how the academic community perceives it. To be effective in community service, it is recommended that the university revise its community service guidelines, conduct a needs assessment before planning the activities, encourage collaboration between faculties, and identify and address any gaps in the structure to ensure all faculty members can participate.

Therefore, it is recommended that clear guidelines be created to facilitate the engagement of academic staff in community service initiatives. Additionally, AAU should consider conducting awareness-raising sessions for the faculty on the importance of community service missions. Promoting a culture of engagement and empathy and establishing partnerships across different university units can lead to improved outcomes and a more effective accomplishment of the mission's objectives. The Office of Community Service should assume full responsibility for executing activities related to the community service mission by establishing and continuously revising effective policies and guidelines to improve the practice.

Incorporating a reward structure into the planning stage to recognize staff members who excel in community service can increase faculty participation in community service. The necessity for

collective action, informed strategies, and ongoing research to enhance community service missions in higher education institutions is highlighted. Additionally, the study contributes to the limited body of literature on the challenges faculties face while practicing their roles in the university's third mission, laying the groundwork for future research. The findings aim to advance academic discourse and inform policies and practices that enhance the role of community service in promoting societal progress. Finally, fostering a culture of accountability is also necessary.

References

- Abebe, D. (2019). University Students' National Community Services in Ethiopia: A Historical Glance (1964-1985). *The Ethiopian Journal of Behavioral Studies*, 2(2), 35-51.
- Abreu, M., Demirel, P., Grinevich, V., & Karataş-Özkan, M. (2016). Entrepreneurial practices in research-intensive and teaching-led universities. *Small business economics*, 47, 695-717.
- Adamu, A. Y. (2014). *Ethnic and religious diversity in higher education in Ethiopia: The case of Bahir Dar University*. University of Tampere: Tampere University Press.
- Addis Ababa University (AAU) (2021). *Rubrics for guiding Community service at Addis Ababa University*.
- Addis Ababa University (AAU). (2023). *Senate Legislation*. Addis Ababa: Author.
- Addis Ababa University. (2024a). *Senate Legislation*. Addis Ababa: Author.
- Addis Ababa University. (2024b). *Strategic Plan*. Addis Ababa: Author.
- Adekalu, S. O., Suandi, T., Krauss, S. E., & Ismail, I. A. (2018). Challenges Obstructing Academic's Career Experience in Community Engagement Practice: The Nigerian Universities Experience. *International journal of academic research in business and social sciences*, 8(12), 109-122.
- Adusei, A. (2020). Examination of university-community engagement: A case study of KNUST's surrounding villages Admission Policy. *Global Educational Research Journal*, 8(3), 19-23.
- African Union Commission /HAQAA Initiative. (2018a). *African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA)*.
- Agbodeka, F. (1998). *A history of University of Ghana: Half a century of higher education (1948-1998)*. Woeli Publishing Services.
- Agyeman, E. A., Tamanja, E. M., & Bingab, B. B. (2021). Dimensions of university governance and community relations in Ghana. *Africa Development/Afrique et Développement*, 46(1), 45-70.

- Ahmed, T, Umar, K. & Paul, C. (2015). Analysis of Factors Enhancing Pitfall in Research and Teaching of the Nigerian University System. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 4(3): 82-89.
- Ajayi, J. F. A., Goma, L. K. H., & Johnson, G. A. (1996). *The African experience with higher education*. The Association of African Universities, Accra, James Currey Ltd.
- Akpan, C. P., Archibong, I. A., & Undie, J. A. (2016). *Lecturers' access to research fund in Nigerian universities: Challenges and strategies for improvement*.
- Alharahsheh, H. H., & Pius, A. (2020). A review of key paradigms: Positivism VS interpretivism. *Global academic journal of humanities and social sciences*, 2(3), 39-43.
- Amare, G. (1988). Current trends in higher education in Ethiopia. *Northeast African Studies*, 10(1), 47-68.
- Ashcraft, L.E., Quinn, D.A. & Brownson, R.C. (2020). Strategies for effective dissemination of research to United States policymakers: A systematic review. *Implementation Science*, 15.
- Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance. (2006, July). *Universities and community engagement (Position paper)*. AUCEA Inc.
- Awwalu, M. I., & Najeemah, B. M. Y. (2014). University community service towards the development of local communities in Sokoto, Nigeria. *In National Conference on University-Industry-Community Engagement*.
- Bahari, S. F. (2010). Qualitative versus quantitative research strategies: contrasting epistemological and ontological assumptions. *Sains Humanika*, 52(1).
- Balmasova, T., & Zinevich, O. (2019, July). Active Regionalism as a Way to Implement a "Third Mission" of Universities. In " *Humanities and Social Sciences: Novations, Problems, Prospects*"(HSSNPP 2019) (pp. 667-670). Atlantis Press.
- Beere, C. A., Votruba, J. C., & Wells, G. W. (2011). *Becoming an engaged campus: A practical guide for institutionalizing public engagement*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Bekele, M.N. (2020). The institutionalization of the university third mission: a comparative study between Addis Ababa and Jimma universities, Ethiopia (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Addis Ababa University.
- Bender, C.J. 2008b. Curriculum enquiry about community engagement at a research university. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 22(6):1154-1171
- Bender, G. (2008). Exploring conceptual models for community engagement at higher education institutions in South Africa. *Perspectives in Education*, 26(1).
- Berghaeuser, H., & Hoelscher, M. (2020). Reinventing the third mission of higher education in Germany: political frameworks and universities' reactions. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 26, 57-76.
- Bernardo, M. A. C., Butcher, J., & Howard, P. (2012). An international comparison of community engagement in higher education. *International journal of educational development*, 32(1), 187-192.
- Bidandi, F., Ambe, A. N., & Mukong, C. H. (2021). Insights and current debates on community engagement in higher education institutions: Perspectives on the University of the Western Cape. *Sage Open*, 11(2), 1-11.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*, 5th ed. Boston: Pearson.
- Bogo, M. (2015). Field education for clinical social work practice: Best practices and contemporary challenges. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 43, 317-324.
- Bonaccorsi, A., Daraio, C., & Geuna, A. (2010). Universities in the new knowledge landscape: *Tensions, challenges, change—an introduction*. *Minerva*, 48, 1-4.
- Bosanac, M., Milutinović, J., & Lungulov, B. (2023). Dimensions of the universities third mission from the university teachers and students perspective. *Croatian Journal of social Policy*, 30(1), 71-88.
- Boucher, G., Conway, C., & Van Der Meer, E. (2003). Tiers of engagement by universities in their region's development. *Regional studies*, 37(9), 887-897.

- Boulton, G., & Lucas, C. (2011). What are universities for? *Chinese Science Bulletin*, 56, 2506-2517.
- Brandt, L., Schober, B., Schultes, M. T., Somoza, V., & Spiel, C. (2018). Supporting Third Mission activities at Universities: Deans' opinions and recommendations. *Zeitschrift für Hochschulentwicklung*, 13(2), 21-40.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Breznitz, S. M., & Feldman, M. P. (2012). The engaged university. *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, 37, 139-157.
- Bridges, D., Juceviciene, P., Jucevicius, R., Mclaughlin, T. H., & Stankeviciute, J. (Eds.). (2006). *Higher education and national development: Universities and societies in transition*. Routledge
- Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (2002). Campus-community partnerships: The terms of engagement. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(3), 503–516.
- Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (2009). Innovative practices in service-learning and curricular engagement. *New directions for higher education*, 147(147), 37-46.
- Bruneel, J., d'Este, P., & Salter, A. (2010). Investigating the factors that diminish the barriers to university-industry collaboration. *Research Policy*, 39(7), 858-868.
- Buczek, J., & Modrzyński, P. (2015, December). The third mission of Polish universities: Theory and practice. In 2015 PRADEC Conference Proceedings, 3(1), 86-97.
- Buyakova, K. I., & Malkova, I. Yu. (2021). Volunteering as a form of organizing educational activities in the context of the “third mission” of the university. *Higher education in Russia*, 8(9), 69-79.
- Buys, N., & Bursnall, S. (2007). Establishing university-community partnerships: Processes and benefits. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 29(1), 73-86.
- Carrión, A., García-Gutiérrez, V. R., Bas, M. C., & Carot, J. M. (2012). A new methodology for measuring third mission activities of universities. In INTED 2012 proceedings (1218-1223). IATED.

- Charles, D., Kitagawa, F., & Uyarra, E. (2014). Universities in crisis?—new challenges and strategies in two English city-regions. *Cambridge journal of regions, economy and society*, 7(2), 327-348.
- Clifford, D., & Petrescu, C. (2012). The keys to university-community engagement sustainability. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 23(1), 77-91.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Method In Education*. Routledge.
- Compagnucci, L., & Spigarelli, F. (2020). The third mission of the university: A systematic literature review on potentials and constraints. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 161, 1-30.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Cross, M., & Ndofirepi, A. (2016). Reconnecting the university to society: The role of knowledge as public good in South African higher education. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa/Revue de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique*, 14(1), 119-140.
- Ćulum, B. (2018). Literature review: dimensions and current practices of community engagement. *Mapping and Critical Synthesis of Current State-of-the-Art on*, 39, 47.
- Ćulum, B., Turk, M., & Ledić, J. (2015). Academics and community engagement: Comparative perspective from three European countries. In Fumasoli, T., Goastellec, G. & Kehm, B. M. (Eds.), *Academic work and careers in Europe: Trends, challenges, perspectives*, (133-150). Springer.
- D'Este, P., & Patel, P. (2007). University-industry linkages in the UK: What are the factors underlying the variety of interactions with industry? *Research Policy*, 36(9), 1295-1313.
- Davey, T. (2017). Converting university knowledge into value: how conceptual frameworks contribute to the understanding of the third mission role of European universities. *International journal of technology transfer and commercialization*, 15(1), 65-96.
- Deimel, K. (2017). Universities Third Mission and Business Incubation: Cooperation Between Universities and Business Incubators Demonstrated with the Example “Digital Hub Region Bonn”. In Munyoki, Bode (Eds.): *Universities, Entrepreneurship and Enterprise*

- Development in Africa-Conference Proceedings 2017. Nairobi, Kenya, 19. July 2017 (73-80).*
- Desta, A. A., & Belay, H. M. (2018). Nature, benefits, challenges and opportunities of university-community engagement: in the case of University of Gondar, Ethiopia. *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement*, 1-15.
- Dinh, V. T. (2021). The third mission of universities: Constraints and policy recommendations for the case of Vietnam. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 3(4), 144-153.
- Driscoll, A. (2008). Carnegie's community-engagement classification: Intentions and insights. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 40(1), 38-41.
- Duderstadt, J. J. (1999). New roles for the 21st-century university. *Issues in Science and Technology*, 16(2), 37-44.
- Egwunyenga, E. J. (2008). Dystrophies and associated crises in research and academic publications in Nigerian universities. *The Anthropologist*, 10(4), 245-250.
- Etzkowitz, H. (1998). The norms of entrepreneurial science: cognitive effects of the new university–industry linkages. *Research policy*, 27(8), 823-833.
- Etzkowitz, H. (2001). The second academic revolution and the rise of entrepreneurial science. *IEEE Technology and Society Magazine*, 20(2), 18-29.
- Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L. (2000). The dynamics of innovation: from National Systems and “Mode 2” to a Triple Helix of university–industry–government relations. *Research Policy*, 29(2), 109-123.
- Etzkowitz, H., Webster, A., Gebhardt, C., & Terra, B. R. C. (2000). The future of the university and the University of the Future: Evolution of ivory tower to entrepreneurial paradigm. *Research Policy*, 29(2), 313–330.
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2019). *Federal Negarit Gazeta. Higher Education Proclamation No. 1152/2019*. Addis Ababa: FDRE.
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2023). *Education and training policy of Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa: Ministry of Education.

- Fitzgerald, H. E., Bruns, K., Sonka, S. T., Furco, A., & Swanson, L. (2012). The centrality of engagement in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 16(3), 7-28.
- Fourie, M. (2003). Beyond the ivory tower: Service learning for sustainable community development: Perspectives on higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 17(1), 31-38.
- Furco, A. (1996). *Service-Learning: A Balanced Approach to Experiential Education. Expanding boundaries: Serving and learning/Corporation for National Service.*
- Gillham, B. (2005). *Research Interviewing: The range of techniques: A practical guide.* McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Goddard, J., Charles, D., Pike, A., Potts, G. & Bradley, D. (1994). *Universities and Communities, Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, London*
- Goddard, J., Hazelkorn, E., & Vallance, P. (Eds.). (2016). *The civic university: The policy and leadership challenges.* Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Göransson, B., Maharajh, R., & Schmoch, U. (2009). New activities of universities in transfer and extension: multiple requirements and manifold solutions. *Science and Public Policy*, 36(2), 157-164.
- Gorski, I., & Mehta, K. (2016). Engaging faculty across the community engagement continuum. *Journal of Public Scholarship in Higher Education*, 6, 108-123.
- Hadidi, H. E., & Kirby, D. A. (2016). Universities and innovation in a factor-driven economy: the performance of universities in Egypt. *Industry and Higher Education*, 30(2), 140-148.
- Hall, B. L. (2009). Higher education, community engagement, and the public good: Building the future of continuing education in Canada. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*, 35(1).
- Hall, B., Tandon, R., & Tremblay, C. (2015). *Strengthening community university research partnerships.* Victoria and New Delhi, India: University of Victoria Press and pria.

- Hall, N. (2022). University-Community service from the perspective of the university populace: A case study of a Canadian University. *Metropolitan Universities*, 33(1), 3-26.
- Harnish, R. J., & Bridges, K. R. (2015). Predicting volunteer motives among university faculty and staff: A functional approach. *PRISM: A Journal of Regional Engagement*, 4(2), 73-91.
- Hart, A., Northmore, S., Gerhardt, C., & Rodriguez, P. (2009). Developing access between universities and local community groups: A university helpdesk in action. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 13(3), 45-59.
- Helling, L., Serrano, R., & Warren, D. (2005). *Linking community empowerment, decentralized governance, and public service provision through a local development framework*. World Bank.
- Hewitt-Dundas, N. (2012). Research intensity and knowledge transfer activity in UK universities. *Research policy*, 41(2), 262-275.
- Higher Education Funding Council for England. (2005). *HEACF: Case studies of good practice*.
- Hikins, J. W., & Cherwitz, R. A. (2010). The engaged university: Where rhetorical theory matters. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 38(2), 115-126.
- Hirsu, L., Reyes, Z., Ketuly, K. A., Mohammad, S. A., Azizi, N., & Mwaikokesya, M. (2018). Anchoring universities into (un) expected realities: the engagement role of universities in Asia and Africa. SUEUAA Thematic Paper Series, TPS 101/18.
- Holland, B. A. (2009). Will it last? Evidence of institutionalization at Carnegie classified community engagement institutions. *New directions for higher education*, 147(Fall), 85-98.
- Huggins, R., Johnston, A., & Stride, C. (2012). Knowledge networks and universities: Locational and organizational aspects of knowledge transfer interactions. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 24(7-8), 475-502.
- Ifedili, C. J. and Ifedili, C. (2015). Management of Nigerian Universities and community services. *European Journal of Business and Social Science*, 4(9): 14-21.

- Irish Universities Association. (2018). *Measuring higher education civic and community engagement: A support framework*. Author.
- Islary, J., & Phungshok, Y. (2015). Volunteering by Students in Higher Education: An Inter-cultural and Participatory Development Experience from Northeast India. *The Journal of Development Practice*, 2.
- Jadhav, J., & Suhalka, V. (2016). University community engagement: Insights from field work practices. *Indian Journal of Sustainable Development*, 2(1), 22-28.
- Johnson, B. J. (2020). Community engagement: Barriers and drivers in South African higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(6), 87-105.
- Jongbloed, B., Enders, J., & Salerno, C. (2008). Higher education and its communities: Interconnections, interdependencies and a research agenda. *Higher Education*, 56, 303-324.
- Kaplan, A. C. (2015). *Evolution, not revolution: Building the engagement function one asset at a time*. In *Community Engagement in Higher Education* (209-224). Brill.
- Karlsen, J., & Larrea, M. (2019). Does a responsible university need a third mission? In M. P. Sørensen, L. Geschwind, J. Kekäle, & R. Pinheiro, (Eds.) (2019). *The responsible university: Exploring the nordic context and beyond*, 173-199. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Keerberg, A., Kiisla, A., & Mäeltsemees, S. (2013). *University implementing its community service role through curriculum development in a regional college*. *Discussions on Estonian Economic Policy: Topical issues of economic policy in the European Union*, (2).
- Kellogg Commission on the Future of State, Land-Grant Universities, National Association of State Universities, & Land-Grant Colleges. (1999). *Returning to our roots: The engaged institution* (Vol. 3). National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, Office of Public Affairs.
- Kemp, R. L. (2013). *Town and gown relations: A handbook of best practices*. McFarland.
- Kezar, A. (2005). Redesigning for collaboration within higher education institutions: An

- exploration into the developmental process. *Research in Higher Education*, 46, 831-860.
- Kibona, B., & Woldegiorgis, E. T. (2023). Reconstructing the social responsibilities of African universities towards citizenship education: perspectives from the ujamaa philosophy of Julius Nyerere. *Curriculum Perspectives*, 43(Suppl 1), 165-174.
- Kimani, P. M. (2017). Role of universities in development of improved crop varieties, seed production, dissemination and impacts: case studies of dry, canning, snap and runner beans, pigeonpea and onions. *Research Application Summary*, 267–272.
- Kitagawa, F., Sánchez-Barrioluengo, M., & Uyarra, E. (2016). Third Mission as Institutional Strategies: Between Isomorphic Forces and Heterogeneous Pathways. *Science and Public Policy*, 43(6), 736–750.
- Koekkoek, A., Van Ham, M., & Kleinhans, R. (2021). Unraveling university-community engagement: A literature review. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 25(1), 1-24.
- Koryakina, T., Sarrico, C. S., & Teixeira, P. N. (2015). Third mission activities: University managers' perceptions of existing barriers. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 5(3), 316-330.
- Krčmářová, J. (2011). The third mission of higher education institutions: Conceptual framework and application in the Czech Republic. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 1(4), 315-331.
- Kuttner, P. J., Byrne, K., Schmit, K., & Munro, S. (2019). The art of convening: How community engagement professionals build place-based community-university partnerships for systemic change. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 23(1), 131-160.
- Kwarteng, K. O., Boadi-Siaw, S. Y., & Dwarko, D. A. (2012). *A history of the University of Cape Coast: Fifty years of excellence in tertiary education (1962-2012)*. UCC Press.
- Lisman, C. D. (1998). *Toward a civil society: Civic literacy and service learning*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Lynton, E. A. (1995). Making the Case for Professional Service. Forum on Faculty Roles & Rewards. *American Association for Higher Education*.

- Maassen, P. A. (1997). Quality in European higher education: Recent trends and their historical roots. *European Journal of education*, 111-127.
- Magrath, C. P. (1999). Engagement and the twenty-first century university. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 4(1), 3-7.
- Major, T., & Mulvihill, T. M. (2009). Julius Nyerere (1922–1999), an African philosopher, re-envisions teacher education to escape colonialism. New proposals: *journal of Marxism and interdisciplinary inquiry*, 3(1), 15-22.
- Málovics, G., Bajmócy, Z., Csernák, J., Fehér, B., Frigyik, M., Juhász, J., & Szerencsés, R. (2025). The potential role of university community engagement in supporting transformative social innovation—experiences from Hungary. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 38(1), 366-396.
- Manjarrés-Henríquez, L., Gutiérrez-Gracia, A., Carrión-García, A., & Vega-Jurado, J. (2009). The effects of university-industry relationships and academic research on scientific performance: Synergy or substitution? *Research in Higher Education*, 50, 795-811.
- Marks, M., Erwin, K., & Mosavel, M. (2015). The inextricable link between community engagement, community-based research, and service-learning: The case of an international collaboration. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 29(5), 214-231.
- Martin, B. R. (2003). *The changing social contract for science and the evolution of the university. Science and innovation: Rethinking the rationales for funding and governance*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, 7-29.
- Mengist Adane (2022). Practices and challenges of community service at Debre Markos University, Ethiopia: A case study. In *Corporate Social Responsibility in the 21st Century*. IntechOpen.
- Meyer-Krahmer, F., & Schmoch, U. (1998). Science-based technologies: University-industry interactions in four fields. *Research Policy*, 27(8), 835-851.
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education [MOSHE] (2020). *Differentiating the higher education system of Ethiopia*. Study Report. Addis Ababa Ethiopia. MoSHE.
- Mohale, M. A. (2023). Community engagement in higher education: Developments after the first institutional audit cycle. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 37(1), 113-130.

- Mohamedbhai, G. T. G., Frempong, G., & Addy, A. (2014). University research governance & national innovation systems in West and Central Africa.
- Molas-Gallart, J., & Castro-Martínez, E. (2007). Ambiguity and conflict in the development of 'Third Mission' indicators. *Research Evaluation*, 16(4), 321-330.
- Molas-Gallart, J., Salter, A., Patel, P., Scott, A., & Duran, X. (2002). Measuring third stream activities. Final report to the Russell Group of Universities. Brighton: SPRU, University of Sussex, 81.
- Molepo, J. N., & Mudau, J. (2020). Revisiting community engagement: universities in the paradoxical context of contemporary scholarship in South Africa. *African Journal of Development Studies*, 10(4), 169.
- Montesinos, P., Carot, J. M., Martinez, J. M., & Mora, F. (2008). Third mission ranking for world class universities: Beyond teaching and research. *Higher education in Europe*, 33(2-3), 259-271.
- Mouton, J. & Wildschut, L. 2005. Service learning in South Africa: Lessons learnt through systematic evaluation. *Acta Academica Supplementum*, (3):121-155.
- Mthethwa, R. M. (2012). Critical dimensions for policy implementation. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 5(2), 36-47.
- Mugabi, H. (2014). *Institutionalization of the 'third mission' of the university: The case of Makerere University*. University of Tampere: Tampere University Press.
- Muriisa, R. K. (2014). Rethinking the role of universities in Africa: Leadership as a missing link in explaining university performance in Uganda. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa/Revue de l'enseignement superieur en Afrique*, 12(1), 69-92.
- Muwanguzi, E., Serunjogi, C. D., & Edward, K. (2023). An Analysis of community engagement in higher education: A conceptual exploration. *Development*, 6(3), 120-129.
- Nabaho, L., Turyasingura, W., Twinomuhwezi, I., & Nabukenya, M. (2022). The Third Mission of Universities on the African Continent: Conceptualization and Operationalization. *Higher Learning Research Communications*, 12(1), 81-98.
- Naranjo-Africano, G., Vega-Jurado, J., & Manjarres-Henríquez, L. (2023). Barriers to Third Mission: organizational and individual antecedents. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 12(1), 36.

- Neave, G. (2006). Redefining the Social Contract. *Higher Education Policy*, 19(3), 269–286.
- Nelles, J., & Vorley, T. (2010). Constructing an entrepreneurial architecture: An emergent framework for studying the contemporary university beyond the entrepreneurial turn. *Innovative Higher Education*, 35(3), 161-176.
- O’Banion, T., & Wilson, C. (2010). Focus on learning: The core mission of higher education. *Focus on learning: A learning college reader*, 1-12.
- OECD. 2007. Higher education and regions: Globally competitive, locally engaged. Paris: OECD Publications.
- Ogunsanya, O., & Govender, I. (2019). University-community engagement: Current tensions and future trends. *International Journal of African Higher Education*, 6(1), 51-76.
- O’Meara, K. A. (2008). Motivation for faculty community engagement: Learning from exemplars. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 12(1), 7-30.
- O’Meara, K. (2016). *Legitimacy, agency, and inequality: Organizational practices for full participation of community-engaged faculty*. In *Publicly Engaged Scholars* (pp. 96-109). Routledge.
- O’Meara, K. A. (2002). Uncovering the values in faculty evaluation of service as scholarship. *Review of Higher Education*, 26(1), 57-80.
- O’Meara, K., & Niehaus, E. (2009). Service-Learning Is... How Faculty Explain Their Practice. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 16(1), 17-32.
- Omorogiuwa, T. B. (2023). Issues and challenges in social work field education in Nigeria. *Social work and education*, 10(1), 78-86.
- Onwuebele, A. (2018). University-community engagement in Nigeria: evidence from selected universities. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(5), 29.
- Onyx, J. (2008). University-community engagement: What does it mean? *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 1, 90-106.

- Östling, J. (2018). Humboldt and the modern German university: *An intellectual history* (p. 312). Lund University Press.
- Östling, J. (2020). Humboldt's University: The history and topicality of a German tradition. *Missions of universities: Past, present, future*, 63-80.
- Oztel, H. (2020). Fourth Generation University: Co-creating a sustainable future. In *Quality education* (pp 316-328). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Paletschek, S. (2002). The invention of the Humboldt University: the construction of the German university idea in the first half of the 20th century. *Historical Anthropology*, 10(2), 183-205.
- Papadimitriou, A. (2020). Beyond Rhetoric: Reinventing the public mission of higher education. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 26(1), 1-4.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Peretomode, V. F. (2021). Demystifying the Ivory Tower Syndrome in Universities through the Use of Transformational Leadership. *International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, 13(1), 1-9.
- Perold, H., & Omar, R. (1997). *Community service in higher education. A concept paper*. Johannesburg: Joint Education Trust.
- Ph'ng, L.M., Budi, A.S., & Zolkepli Buang, U (2008). *University-Community Engagement in Malaysia: Practices and Prospects*.
- Pinheiro, R., Benneworth, P., & Jones, G. A. (2012). Understanding regions and the institutionalization of universities. In *Universities and Regional Development* (pp. 11-32). Routledge.
- Pinheiro, R., Langa, P. V., & Pausits, A. (2015). The institutionalization of universities' third mission: Introduction to the special issue. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 5(3), 227-232.

- Preece, J. (2013). Service learning and community engagement in South African universities: Towards an ‘adaptive engagement’ approach. *Alternation*, 9, 265-291.
- Pugh, R., Hamilton, E., Jack, S., & Gibbons, A. (2016). A step into the unknown: Universities and the governance of regional economic development. *European Planning Studies*, 24(7), 1357-1373.
- Punch, K. F. (2005). *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches (2nd ed.)*. London: Sage Publications.
- Roessler, I., Duong, S., & Hachmeister, C. D. (2015). *Teaching, Research and more?! Achievements of Universities of Applied Sciences with regard to Society*. Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung GmbH.
- Rospigliosi, A. and Bourner, T. (2019) ‘Researcher development in universities: Origins and historical context’. *London Review of Education*, 17(2), 206–222.
- Rubens, A., Spigarelli, F., Cavicchi, A., & Rinaldi, C. (2017). Universities’ third mission and the entrepreneurial university and the challenges they bring to higher education institutions. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 11(03), 354-372.
- Salomaa, M. (2019). Third mission and regional context: assessing universities’ entrepreneurial architecture in rural regions. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 6(1), 233-249.
- Sam, C., & Van der Sijde, P. (2014). Understanding the concept of the entrepreneurial university from the perspective of higher education models. *Higher Education*, 68, 891-908.
- Sánchez-Barrioluengo, M. (2014). Articulating the ‘three-missions’ in Spanish universities. *Research Policy*, 43(10), 1760-1773.
- Sandmann, L. R., & Plater, W. M. (2009). Leading the engaged institution. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2009(147).
- Sandmann, L.R., Williams, J.E., & Abrams, E.D. (2009). Higher education community engagement and accreditation: Activating engagement through innovative accreditation strategies. *Planning for Higher Education*, 37(3), 15.

- Saunders, M., P. Lewis, and A. Thornhill. 2007. *Research Methods for Business Students*. Prentice Hall: London.
- Sayamol, C., Smriti, D., Normaliza, A.M., Nanung, A.F., Tarek, K. & Netor, T.C. (2022). *Higher education institutions' best practices for sustainability integration*. ProsperNet.
- Schelkunov, M. D. (2018). Russian higher school in the context of globalization: Towards new generation of universities. *Age of Globalization*, 4, 167-172.
- Schnurbus, V., & Edvardsson, I. R. (2022). The Third Mission among Nordic universities: A systematic literature review. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 66(2), 238-260.
- Schuetze, H. G. (2012). *Universities and their communities—Engagement and service as primary mission*. In *Higher education and civic engagement: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 61-77). New York: Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Seawright, J., & Gerring, J. (2008). Case selection techniques in case study research: A menu of qualitative and quantitative options. *Political research quarterly*, 61(2), 294-308.
- Sellamna, N. E. & Gebremedhin, A, A. (2015). *A new dynamics for community service in Ethiopian higher education policy brief 1/2015*. Ethiopian Education Strategy Center. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Smith, T., Zou, A., Nelson, G., & Al-Ghaithi, A. (2020). *Overcoming Institutional Barriers to Service Learning*.
- Smith-Tolken, A. R. (2010). *Community engagement at a higher education institution-exploring a theoretical grounding for scholarly-based service-related process* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).
- Soeiro, A. (2006). Continuing engineering education and the third mission of universities. *10th WCCEE*.
- Spânu, P., Ulmeanu, M. E., & Doicin, C. V. (2024). Academic Third Mission through Community Engagement: An Empirical Study in European Universities. *Education Sciences*, 14(2), 141.

- Stake, R. E. (2003). *Case studies*. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry: 2nd ed.*, (pp. 134-164). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research (Vol. 15)*. Newbury Park, CA: sage.
- Švec, V., Vlk, A., & Stiburek, Š. (2015). Dropout policy in Czech higher education: Can universities serve several masters? *Central European Journal of Public Policy*, 9(1), 126-147.
- Tamrat, W. (2022). *Higher education in Ethiopia: Themes and issues from an African perspective*. Brill.
- Thomson, A. M., Smith-Tolken, A. R., Naidoo, A. V., & Bringle, R. G. (2011). Service learning and community engagement: A comparison of three national contexts. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 22, 214-237.
- Toan, V. D. (2020). Factors Affecting the Implementation of the Third Mission and Challenges for Vietnamese Universities in the Transitioning Period. *VNU journal of economic and business*, 36(3), 75-84.
- Trippl, M., Sinozic, T., & Lawton Smith, H. (2015). The role of universities in regional development: Conceptual models and policy institutions in the UK, Sweden and Austria. *European Planning Studies*, 23(9), 1722-1740.
- Tuunainen, J. (2005). Hybrid practices? Contributions to the debate on the mutation of science and university. *Higher education*, 50, 275-298.
- United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa. (1963). *The Development of Higher Education in Africa: Report of the Conference... 3-12 September, 1962*. UNESCO.
- Van der Sijde, P., Popma, M., & Tushune, K. (2012). The community-engaged university: the case of universities in Ethiopia. *International Journal of Business Anthropology*, 3(2), 36-53.
- Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer. (2024). *Official letter on community engagement*. Addis Ababa University, Office of Community Engagement.
- Vorley, T., & Nelles, J. (2008). (Re) conceptualizing the academy: Institutional development of and beyond the third mission. *Higher Education Management and Policy*, 20(3), 1-17.

- Wade, A., & Demb, A. (2009). A conceptual model to explore faculty community engagement. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 15*(2), 5-16.
- Waghid, Y. (2002). Knowledge production and higher education transformation in South Africa: Towards reflexivity in university teaching, research and community service. *Higher Education, 43*, 457-488
- Weerts, D. J., & Sandmann, L. R. (2008). Building a two-way street: Challenges and opportunities for community engagement at research universities. *The review of higher education, 32*(1), 73-106.
- Weinberg, G. S., & Kistner, U. (2007). From ivory tower to market place: what future for the university in South Africa. *Journal of higher education in Africa, 5*(1), 1-8.
- Wole, D. (1999). The origins, endeavors and demise of the Ethiopian University Service: A look at the evolution of an idea. *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review, 15*(2), 43-63.
- Yalley, C. E., & Acquah, A. (2021). Reflective Examination of the Educational Philosophies of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania: Intricacies for Curriculum Development in Africa. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 8*(7). 119-126.
- Zhang, M. L., & Liu, J. W. (2024). Service beyond self: a comprehensive study on the influence of volunteerism in higher education—a Shenzhen university perspective. *International Journal of Current Educational Practice, 12*(2), 131-139.

Appendices

Interview Protocol:

Faculty perceptions, practices, and challenges of the community service mission: The case of Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

College of Education and Language Studies

Department of Educational Planning and Management

Interview Guide for Faculties/ Academic Staffs, Officials at College Level/ College vice Deans for Community Service and Department Heads, and Community Service professionals of the university

As this study is qualitative and specific questions might not be used in a given fixed order, the following three major guiding questions are to be addressed during the semi-structured reflective interview.

- How do the university community/ faculty/ perceive the university-community service mission in AAU?
- How community service mission is practiced in AAU?

- What challenges are observed in implementing community service mission activities at AAU?

A. Interview with Faculties/ Academic Staffs

- **On the perception/attitude/awareness of community service mission**

1. How would you define the community service mission of the University?
2. What do you think are the major goals of the community service mission? Any benefits of engaging in community service/engagement activities?
3. How do academic staff perceive the importance of the community service mission of the university?
4. Who do you think are the community /your communities that you want to reach on CS activities?
5. Anything that motivates academic staff to engage in community service activities?
6. Any information about activities considered as community service at Addis Ababa University?
Any of the activities that are related to community service mission?
7. How and by whom community service projects initiated?
8. Does participating on community service activities have any value for teachers? For example, used as promotion requirement for academic staff?
9. Do you think community service should be given more emphasis in your department? How?
10. Do community service/engagement activities count as one of the main activities of academic staff? Why?
11. How/what do feel about your engagement in community service activities?

- **On the Engagement/involvement of Community Service Mission**

1. Do you participate in community service activities? How do you participate in community service/engagement activities as one of the activities in the university?
2. What activities are considered as community service?
3. What recommendations or suggestions do you/academic staff have for further enhancing the community service mission at the University?
4. Do you think that all academic staff need to engage in community service activities? Why?
5. How do academic staff perceive the level of support and collaboration from university administration, departments/colleges in fulfilling the community service mission?
6. What potential benefits can be there in engaging in community service activities for academic staff, both personally and professionally?
7. What will happen if an academic staff is not involved in community engagement/service activities?

- **On the Challenges Regarding Community Service Mission**

1. What challenges/obstacles there in relation to the implementation of community service activities? The challenges from the university management, the staff commitment, the policy documents...
2. What are the main challenges or barriers faced by academic staff in fulfilling their community service mission?
3. What are some potential strategies or recommendations that could help academic staff overcome the challenges associated with the community service mission at the University?

4. Finally, do you have something you want to say about the community service mission of the university?

B. Interview with Officials at College Level/ College Vice Deans for Community Service and Department Heads.

➤ **On the Perception/Attitude/Awareness of Community Service Mission.**

1. What is the naming given to the third mission in Addis Ababa University?
2. How would you define the community service mission of Addis Ababa University?
3. What do you think are the major goals of the community service mission of Addis Ababa University?
4. Who do you think are the community /your communities that you want to reach on CS activities?
5. Do Academic staff have a chance / an opportunity/ to access policy documents in relation to the community service mission/ third mission? How?
6. How is the relationship of your college with the community engagement office of Addis Ababa University? Is there active engagement with the experts at the office? Any challenge?

➤ **On the Engagement/Involvement of Community Service Mission.**

1. How is the participation of academic staff in community service activities in your college? Is there active involvement? If not what can be the reasons?
2. Do you think that enough attention was given (by the university) for this third mission-community service? In relation to the other core missions of the university? Why? How?
3. Any motivation mechanisms for the academic staffs' involvement in the community service activities? How?

4. Does the university evaluate and reward the contributions of the academic staff to the third mission of the university? How?
5. What is your assessment of the commitment of the leadership of this university towards the third mission?
6. Does participating on community service activities have any value for academic staff? For example, used as promotion requirement for academic?
7. Do you think community service activities benefit the university? How?
8. Any attempt to integrate community service activities of academic staff into their teaching and research activities?
9. Does the practice of community service mission varies in between departments of your college?

➤ **On the Challenges Regarding Community Service Mission**

1. What challenges/obstacles there in relation to the implementation of community service activities? The challenges from the university management, the staff commitment, the policy documents...
2. What are the main challenges or barriers faced by academic staff in fulfilling the community service mission at Addis Ababa University?
3. What are some potential strategies or recommendations that could help academic staff overcome the challenges associated with the community service mission at Addis Ababa University?
4. Finally, do you have something you want to say about the community service mission of the university?

C. Interview with the Community Service professionals of the university.

➤ On the Perception/Attitude/Awareness of Community Service Mission

1. What are the core missions of Addis Ababa University?
2. How would you define the community service mission of Addis Ababa University? Any difference between the terms “engagement” and “service”?
3. What do you think are the major goals of the community service mission of your University?
4. In dealing with community service mission, who do you think are the community?
5. Do you think the university’s’ policy documents are appropriate for effective implementation and goal achievement of the community service mission?
6. How does the university community perceive community service as one of the core missions of the university?
7. Do you assume that the community service activities benefit the university? How?
8. What do you feel / think about the attention/focus given for the community service mission in relation to the other core missions of the university? Why? How?
9. How do you think that on the structure and coordination of community service and man power in the university in general? Do you think that it is ok and let the university achieve its goals regarding this core mission? Any change you want be happen?
9. Does the university evaluate and reward the contributions of the academic staff to community engagement? How? Are the evaluation processes and rewards appropriate?

➤ On the Engagement/Involvement of Community Service Mission

1. How is community service coordinated in your university? Is the current structure/ organization effective?
2. Are there any ways to let academic staff engage in the community service mission? Any specific institutional policies and guidelines in place to support and encourage academic staff to engage in community service?
3. Any attempt to integrate community service activities of academic staff into their teaching and research activities at Addis Ababa University?
4. Are there any differences in perceptions of the community service mission among academic staff from different colleges/departments at Addis Ababa University?
5. What is your assessment of the commitment of the leadership of the university towards community engagement (service)?
6. What types/forms of community service activities that academic staff at Addis Ababa University are expected to engage in. This could include activities such as volunteering, consulting with community organizations, conducting outreach programs, and participating in public service projects...etc.
7. How does the community service mission align with the overall institutional goals and values of the University/ your college?
8. Are there any specific strategies or initiatives implemented by Addis Ababa University to support and promote the community service mission among academic staff?
9. Are there any notable success stories of community service experiences you are aware of at Addis Ababa University?

10. Any potential future directions for enhancing the community service mission activities at Addis Ababa University?

11. Are there any opportunities for academic staff to collaborate with external organizations or community partners in fulfilling the community service mission at Addis Ababa University?

➤ **On the Challenges Regarding Community Service Mission**

1. From your experience are there any challenges towards community service mission at the university? What do you think are they? Can it be possible to categorize them, like specific or major?

2. How do you perceive the relationship between the community service mission of the university and the other core academic functions (teaching and research)? Are there any tensions or conflicts between these missions?

3. How do financial considerations and resource constraints impact the capability of the university to carry out community service initiatives? Are there any specific funding or resource challenges observed?

4. What are the potential cultural or institutional barriers within universities that hinder their community service efforts? How can these barriers be addressed?

5. Are there any challenges in encouraging/ incentivizing and recognizing community service effort among faculty?

6. As far as academic staff participation is concerned, how does the university address issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in their community service initiatives?

7. Lastly, do you have something to say about the community service mission of the university?



Date: 22/05/2024

TO: College of Veterinary medicine & Agriculture

Denekaw Zewdie is a PhD student in Department of Educational Planning and Management. He/she is currently writing on the title:

Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges of the Community Service Mission: The Case of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

This is therefore, to kindly request your good office to offer him/in with the requested information. The department would like to thank your good office in advance for your cooperation. Providing.

Thank you

Demozie Bekele (PhD)
Chairman, Department of Educational Planning and Management



To - Dr. Faysa Abumera
Dr. Assef Feyiboh
Dr. Hana Zewdie
Dr. Olana Alemayehu
Dr. Meperesa R.
For appropriate cooperation

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
የትምህርትና የሥራ ጥያቄ ዘርፍ
አዲስ አበባ
22/05/2024
23/05/2024
23/05/2024

239780

A.A.U 1176

Date: _____

TO: College of Law & Governance Studies, AAU

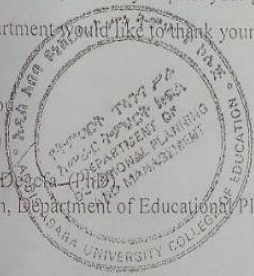
Denetew Zewdie is a PhD student in Department of Educational Planning and Management. He/she is currently writing on the title:

Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges of the Community Service Mission: The Case of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.

This is therefore, to kindly request your good office to offer him/in with the requested information. The department would like to thank your good office in advance for your cooperation. Providing.

Thank you

Demozie Desalegn (PhD)
Chairman, Department of Educational Planning and Management



To: Dr Solomon
Dr Fasit
Dr Ketema
Dr Maltha

Please assist the student to obtain the information/documents he needs that you can provide.
25 April 24

239780

AAU 1176

175 21102 100 10