

## **Reflections on the Trimmed Roles of Research Institutes at Addis Ababa University**

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**Abstract:** *This article aims to examine critically the recent policy changes at Addis Ababa University (AAU) concerning the downsizing of the traditional roles of research institutes as part of the newly introduced structural reform by the university. Conquering the traditional teaching and research nexus in universities, Addis Ababa University denies its research institutes the right to own and run teaching programs. The article considers the pitfalls of putting teaching and research apart, and explores a range of strategies that the university can adopt to enhance the teaching and research synergy, particularly at the postgraduate level. Based on a review of the debates and experiences of other countries, documentary evidences on teaching-research nexus and key informant interviews, the article argues that research institutes are the appropriate places to promote and enhance the interconnections between teaching and research, particularly at a postgraduate level. Finally, the article suggests key mechanisms for organizing the teaching and research wings in research institutes in order to optimize the joint functions of the two wings at Addis Ababa University.*

**Keywords:** *Higher Education, University, Research, Teaching, Nexus, Linkage, Synergy.*

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## **Introduction**

In the current dynamic and competitive global environment, universities, being parts of actors in knowledge production, play a critical role in a country's survival. They are engines of development and social change. As key technologies for knowledge production, teaching and research are the twin pillars of university missions. In other words, teaching and research have for long been the two major areas of activities that characterize knowledge functions of many universities and their connection to the wider society. The research function of universities fundamentally focuses on generating knowledge whereas teaching deals with preserving, renewing, and transmitting knowledge.

The interconnection between teaching and research has been a subject to longstanding discussions in the history of European Universities at least since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, most universities around the world had been influenced by Humboldt's view where the two processes have been organized together and in many ways have jointly functioned in reinforcing quite a manner since the 19th century. This trend continued unchanged until modern times (Halliwell, 2008). Currently, there are ongoing debates on how the two recognized processes (teaching and research) can be combined and interact in a given university setting (Deem and Lucas 2007). There are no universally accepted, framework conditions that underlie the interaction between teaching and research still, though many universities in different countries tried to design strategies to better align education and research (Lyll, 2006).

In the Ethiopian context, teaching and research have until recently continued to be the core missions of all universities. This is part of the 650/2009 Higher Education Proclamation (FRDRE, 2009) which is the key legal framework for higher education of the country. Recently, the pioneer higher learning organization of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa University) has introduced a new organizational structure and

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governance system following the implementation of the BPR at the end of 2011.

The newly introduced structural reform has brought about a paradigm shift in the organization of teaching and research across colleges and research institutes of the university, among others. One of these policy changes denies research institutes to own and run teaching programs. Only colleges and teaching institutes have been granted the mandate to run teaching programs, whereas research institutes are required to mainly focus on and run research projects (AAU, 2011). Consequently, almost all graduate programs (including PhD) of the research institutes have been made to phase out without adequate consultation with the research institutes. Research institutes were pitifully denied official letter or evidence of program review underlying the phasing out of their teaching programs - a clear indication that some corners had heavy hands in dumping institutional voices. The staff members of the research institutes are currently required to invest 75% of their time in research and publication, and the remaining 25% in teaching at their home-base academic units.

However, the change in policy on the teaching and research nexus often raises doubts and concerns among the university community: viz., academic staff, students, and even administrators. The theoretical assumptions and the underlying pros and cons of such divide in the university is not clear at the moment and enough debates and empirical studies have not been conducted in this regard. Thus, it necessitates the present reflection on the teaching-research divide at the university.

This article draws on a review of the debates, experiences of other countries and interviews to examine critically the recent policy change at AAU that conquered the traditional teaching and research nexus in universities. It considers the pitfalls of bringing teaching and research apart, and explores a range of strategies that the university can adopt to enhance the interconnection between teaching and research across

colleges and research institutes, particularly at a postgraduate level. The article is guided by the following basic questions:

- 1) What are the current debates on the teaching-research divide in universities?
- 2) What do the different university models and experiences of other countries tell us about the teaching-research nexus at research institutes in universities?
- 3) What are the implications of bringing teaching and research together or taking them apart at research institutes in the context of the Addis Ababa University?
- 4) What should be done to improve or change the current practices at Addis Ababa University?

### **Methodology**

This article is mainly based on key informant interviews and desk review. The review data include literature on key concepts, dimensions, strategies and framework conditions concerning the different views on the interconnection between teaching and research, statistical abstracts and policy documents. It tries to analyze different approaches regarding the traditional models of university governance. Noting that Ethiopia is currently following the German and English Traditions (more specifically the American model), this article primarily draws lessons from universities that combine teaching-research in universities. The ultimate purpose of the review is to examine how these universities define the roles of their research institutes. It also involves key informant interviews with researchers in the field and staff of teaching colleges and institutes drawn from four research institutes and two colleges viz., Institute of Educational Research, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Akililu Lema Institute of Pathobiology, and Institute of Biotechnology, College of Education and Behavioral Studies, and College of Natural and Computational Sciences all from Addis Ababa University. Directors from the offices for research, postgraduate, and academic standards and quality assurance of University as well as

selected PhD students were also interviewed. A total of 25 participants (7 researchers, 5 teaching staff, 3 directors and 10 PhD students) in the study were selected from the sampled institutes and colleges of the University using purposive sampling technique. Both the documentary and interview data were analyzed thematically and the results are presented as follows.

### **Synthesis of the Literature Review**

This section tries to answer the first basic question in this article. It begins with a brief review of the debates about the teaching-research nexus in universities. The second part then synthesizes the strategies for aligning research and teaching and the experience of some selected countries on the teaching-research focused binary system in universities, respectively.

#### ***The teaching-research nexus in universities***

Universities, as one of the oldest organizations, evolved in ancient periods, they have been shaping themselves in a very dynamic way for the past 1000 years (history of European Universities). Throughout history, teaching has been the first and most fundamental social mission of a university. The history of European universities may be divided into two periods: from around 1100 to 1800 and then from 1800 to the present. The latter period saw the development of three main academic traditions, the German, the French and the British ones. First, the pre - Humboldtian model is exemplified by the French system of higher education where research and teaching are separated in different institutions (Schimank and Winnes, 2000) and as far back as the 18<sup>th</sup> century the pre-Humboldtian idea was institutionalized in a division of universities and research institutes. Research was carried out separately from teaching and was to be mainly a researcher's own scientific inquiry (Ibid, p. 404).

The Newman's University, for example, was a teaching institution and it was concerned with the diffusion and extension of knowledge in all intellectual fields rather than engaging in research (Marginson, 2014). Discussions on the interconnections of teaching and research are traced back to the unity of teaching and research that characterized the Wilhelm von Humboldt vision of the University of Berlin in the 19th century (Halliwell, 2008). During this time the fundamental dichotomy, as perceived by von Humboldt, was between school and university in which the essence of a university was learning based on scholarship while that of a school was (agreed) agreeing -upon and (accepted) accepting knowledge. According to Humboldt's model, the idea of a university is one where there was freedom of teaching and learning and unity (nexus) of teaching and research at the heart of academic work (Mitchell, 1997). Since then the relationship between teaching and research has been an area of ongoing ideological and academic debate across many universities in the globe.

The main issue behind the debates is how the two recognized missions (teaching and research) interact in a university setting (see Clark, 1996 1997; Colbeck, 1998; Jenkins *et al.* 2003; de Weert 2004; Durning and Jenkins 2005; Deem and Lucas 2007). There are no universally accepted models that stimulate the relationship between teaching and research though many universities in different countries tried to design strategies to better align their education and research (see Lyall, 2006). The current debates may be classified as those that are in favor of integration of teaching and research, those that are in favor of the separate treatment of the two, and those that are either neutral or conditional about the integration of teaching and research.

Those in favor of the integration of the two argue that teaching and research are not opposed to each other; instead, both are central and necessary to the very existence of a university (Boyer, 1990, Jenkins and Healey, 2005; Norbis, Wastavino, and Leon, 2003). In this regard, Talaba and Thij (ed., 2007, P9) argue that "... without teaching no research, as we understand it today, but nevertheless for that same

reason there will not be much to teach without research.” This suggests that education and research are mutually reinforcing endeavors and thus a positive link between the two is essential for quality education (Anon, 2003; Ling et al., 2007 cited in Boyd, et al, and 2010). Scholars in this category further argue that the relationship between teaching and research is not value neutral. In this connection, Boyer (1990) challenge academics to break away from the teaching versus research debate and provide a typology of complementary and interactive forms of scholarship related to the synergy between teaching and research. These include: (1) the scholarship of discovery (advancing knowledge), (2) the scholarship of integration (synthesizing knowledge), (3) the scholarship of service (advancing and applying knowledge), and (4) the scholarship of teaching (advancing and applying knowledge to how to teach and promote learning). Most of the empirical studies in this regard are embedded in the assumption that bringing teaching and research together is crucial for improvement in the quality of student learning experience, particularly at a postgraduate level. Based on analysis of qualitative data, Zaman (2004) (not correctly referenced )concluded that research and quality teaching are not contradictory functions, and the evidences further indicate that the relationship may be modestly positive, though it is likely to be stronger at a postgraduate rather than at an undergraduate level. Substantiating this, Clark (1997) argues as follows:

Research activity can and does serve, as an important mode of teaching and a valuable means of learning... student involvement in research is an efficacious way to educate throughout the education system the great mass of students, as well as the elite performers, for the inquiring society into which we are rapidly moving (p.242).

Generally, the authors in favor of the link further argue that a split between teaching and research is reductionist and risks the production of poor quality graduates and research outputs, and hence securing positive synergies between teaching and research should be one aim

of higher education policy. However, some authors acknowledge that the integration between teaching and research is more problematic in undergraduate programs than postgraduate programs (McLernon and Hughes, 2003; Jenkins, 2000; Lindsay, Breen, and Jenkins, 2002). In relation to this, Smeby (1998) argues that the integration of research and teaching is perceived to occur most readily in the teaching of postgraduate students.

On the contrary, those who are against the integration of teaching and research argue that teaching and research can be complementary but the correlation between research productivity and teaching performance is negligible. For example, in a meta-analysis of quantitative research, Hattie and Marsh (1996) found no significant correlation between quality in teaching and quality in research at undergraduate level and concluded that teaching and research are very loosely coupled. These authors further note that one key factor here is staff time, and one might presume that time devoted to research would be at the expense of teaching (quality) and time spent on teaching would be at the expense of research. Feldman (1987) also argues that the likelihood that research productivity actually benefits teaching is extremely small, and the two, for all practical purposes are essentially unrelated and should be treated separately. In a quantitative study, Jenkins (2004) also found no empirical support for the view that a necessary link, tight coupling or 'nexus' exists between undergraduate teaching and discovery research in a university. Most of the empirical studies in this regard are quantitative, and the findings suggest the need for universities to set as a mission the improvement of the synergy between research and teaching- with the aim to increase the circumstances in which teaching and research have occasion to meet (see Hattie and Marsh, 1996).

Those who are in the middle ground or with neutral position believe that the integration between research and teaching is very important and that it exists in many forms and different contexts. Brew (1999) argued that the relationships between teaching and research are



dynamic and context driven. The context may include whether research is seen as an objective product or as a process of inquiry and whether teaching is a transmission of what is known or an exploration of knowledge. Massy (2003) also argues that research is a necessary condition for good teaching, but the imbalance between the two can be of harm for quality education. To Massy, devoting more time to research activities will, come eventually at the expense of time devoted to teaching activities. This implies that greater research intensity may actually reduce education quality. Hence, a proper balance between research and teaching activities is needed to get academics engage in research and, thereby, enhance research-teaching integration in a university. It is argued that a balanced integration of research and teaching does not occur automatically; it has to be designed, created, constructed, brought about and carefully nurtured/built into the curriculum, department, institutional and national planning (Ramsden, 2001; Jenkins and Healey, 2005).

The major issue for the differences among the debates reviewed in the preceding paragraphs lies mainly in the possibility of integrating teaching and research at an undergraduate level. This is not per se a debatable issue at a postgraduate level, where research in most cases is a requirement. Interestingly, while strongly debating on the integration of research and teaching, many of the scholars acknowledge that research and teaching are conceptually related in higher education, and they focus on how the two functions can be combined. Hence, the current trend in most universities is towards effective integration of research and teaching at all levels that infuses learning with the excitement of discovery, no matter where their location is (see Angelo and Asmar, 2005; Jenkins and Healey, 2005; and Lyall, 2006). This requires the development and implementation of strategies. In this regard, a growing number of scholars have proposed strategies and framework conditions to better align teaching and research in universities globally.

***Strategies to align research and teaching in universities***

Teaching and research can be combined in many different ways and forms. Talaba (2007), for example, argues that the teaching-research synergy becomes an imperative in terms of *research-added-value to teaching*, or the *teaching benefit to research*. The research-added-value to teaching refers to the integration of research, teaching, and learning at the curriculum level in a multiplicity of ways. This may include the extent to which student learning mirrors research processes; and the ways and extent to which student research competencies are developed and assessed. In the teaching-added-value to research, research does not seem to have get special direct benefits from teaching except securing human resource needs, but an effective training of researchers cannot be done without strong professional research environment in the universities (especially at a postgraduate level).

Griffith (2004) has proposed four models of the link between teaching and research viz., *research-led* teaching, *research-oriented* teaching, *research-based* teaching, and *research-informed* teaching. In the research-led teaching, the curriculum is structured around subject content, and emphasis is laid on understanding research findings rather than research processes; little attempt is made to capture the two-way benefits of the research and teaching relationship. Regarding research-oriented teaching, the curriculum places as much emphasis on understanding the processes by which knowledge is produced in the field as it does on learning the codified knowledge. Careful attention is given to the teaching of inquiry skills and on the acquiring of research ethos. The research-based teaching emphasizes on curriculum that is designed around inquiry-based activity rather than on the acquisition of subject content; the experiences of staff in the processes of inquiry are highly integrated into the student's learning activities; the scope for two-way interaction between research and teaching is deliberately exploited. The research-oriented teaching

draws consciously on systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning process itself.

Other models are a modification of the model provided by Griffith (2004). For instance, Boyd, *et al.*, (2010) adopted five dimensions of the teaching-research link/synergy, which includes *learning through research*, *research-led teaching*, *researching teaching*, *teaching-informed research*, and *learning how to do research*. Similarly, Jenkins (2010) adopted the models by Griffith (2004) and Healey (2005) and proposed the model in the figure below.

<b>Students as participants</b>			
<b>Emphasis on research content</b>	<b>Research-tutored</b>	<b>Research-based</b>	<b>Emphasis on research processes and problem</b>
	Students write and discuss research paper and articles (e.g. reading scholarly articles)	Students do research (e.g. projects, dissertations, etc.)	
	<b>Research-led</b>	<b>Research-oriented</b>	
	Students are taught a curriculum, informed by past research, techniques (traditional teaching)	Students are taught how to do research (e.g. teaching research)	
<b>Students as audiences</b>			

Fig.1. Source :( Jenkins, 2010, cited in Duff and Mariot, 2012)

Many scholars consider *research-based teaching* as the most important academic study that emphasizes the synergy between research and teaching. Research-based education with different modifications supports a vision of a university that links research as a creative activity to education at every level (Allen, Duch, Groh, Watson, and White, 2004; Deignan, 2009; Finkle and Torp, 1995; Scripture, 2008; Savery, 2006). In this connection, Fernate, *et.al.* (2009) argue

that research-based teaching activities are the promoter of higher order learning outcomes (critical thinking) and transferable research-related capabilities expected of higher education. The student's research-related capability is the qualitative characteristic of being capable to generate an outcome in research-related activities with a special emphasis on practical professional responsibility. In connection to this, Barnett also argued as follows:

In a world characterized by uncertainty or 'super-complexity' we need, not bodies of pre-defined knowledge, but rather the skills of finding out. Knowledge has become fluid and contestable. In its many domains of discourse, it has become a product of communication and negotiation. The students of the future are going to need the skills of inquiry – of research – if they are to be able to investigate and to learn and hence be employable in the future. In such a world, the authority of the 'teacher' is continually questioned. Therefore, students need to understand how knowledge is constructed. Since it is through research that new knowledge is created, students are going to have to become researchers to survive and thrive in the complex, pluralistic world of the future (Barnett, 2000).

The arguments above suggest that a positive synergy between research and teaching is necessary for improving quality of graduate programs in general and quality of students' learning experience in particular. In this regard, the researcher argues that the conceptualization of teaching-research relationship should go beyond the view of research as outcome oriented and teaching as transfer of knowledge. Learning should become the overlapping concept in the integration of research and teaching, where the view of research as learning-oriented and teaching as inquiry-based is staged in universities. This requires creating an effective research environment that values a synergy among research, teaching, and scholarship in educational programs. Research institutions are the ideal sites for forging a strong link between research and teaching, particularly in postgraduate (PhD) programs.

Despite the continuing debates, it is common for universities across many countries with contrasting levels of intensity in academic research and teaching to show their commitment to the link between the two. Hence, many countries that introduced and implemented system structures to manage the integration of teaching and research across their universities, and these are reviewed as follows.

### ***The experiences of some selected countries***

There is a large and diverse literature regarding the experience of countries on the system structures and management of the integration between research and teaching in their respective universities. For the purpose of this article, we review the evidences from USA, UK, Europe, and Australia. The review is based on the different system structures of teaching-research link synthesized by de Weert (2004). In the existing literature, de Weert argues that there is no ideal model for an effective interconnection of teaching and research in a university, and suggests the following taxonomy of the various forms of organizational model on how universities in different countries manage the teaching and research integration.

- *Integrated systems:* These represent variations of the von Humboldt model that integrate, within universities, teaching and research structurally and conceptually in its vision of pedagogy at the level of higher education (unity of teaching, studying, and research). They also refer to a very useful link that depicts research and teaching in an interactive way (Badley, 2002). Regardless of the location, professors find their own research and teaching activities merging in a seamless blend (Clark, 1997). In some countries, research and teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels are perceived as one of symbiosis, mutuality, and synergy. Examples include Germany, Austria, Italy, and the Netherlands. Separate research institutes may also exist, but all universities are expected to demonstrate symbiosis of research and teaching.

- *Concentration of research in a separate set of research institutes:* This refers to the marital relationship between teaching and research in undergraduate programs, where university faculties are expected to teach and do research. In this modality, there is a close relationship between universities and research institutes and centers in part because of the concentration of research in the publicly funded research institutions. France, Australia, and Norway are cases in point in this regard. For example, separate institutions in France have the prime mandate for research; their staff has no teaching responsibilities. In Australia, teaching and research are treated by separate incentive and funding policies, but they are considered as overlapping activities. However, research institutes/centers are allowed to recruit and train graduate students, particularly PhDs that fit their research agendas and projects.

- *Institutional differentiation:* Within one larger higher education system, there is a stratification of institutions that reflects institutional research intensity; while all institutions have a teaching mandate as well. The US, the UK, Canada, India, and China are good examples of countries with such an arrangement. Historically, most US research-intensive universities were founded on the model of the University of Berlin (the von Humboldt's philosophy) - characterized by the unity of teaching and research. For example, the model of undergraduate education at research universities makes the baccalaureate experience an inseparable part of an integrated whole. However, in the US, along the lines of the Carnegie classifications of higher education institutions, there is a pronounced stratification of "value" for research relative to teaching. This "Anglo-Saxon" tradition is normally associated with intensive competition for research resources. For example, the integration of research and education is one of "three core strategies" that guides the US National Science Foundation (NSF) in establishing priorities, identifying opportunities, and designing new programs and activities. In the UK, the integration of research and teaching is traced back to the Robbins Report (Committee on Higher Education, 1963) which argued that faculty should be research active. Academics at

universities in this country should be both teaching and researching at the highest level possible and that a symbiotic relationship exists between the two activities. There are also research institutions and teaching-only or all-teaching institutions in the case of the USA; and research-led and teaching-led departments in the UK. In Canada, there is evidence of increasing institutional interest in the integration of research and teaching since 1994 (e.g. the University of Guelph). There is similar institutional differentiation in China and India. In Europe, in general, there has been an ongoing discussion on the research-teaching link, now being shaped by the Bologna process (harmonization of the bachelors and masters level education across countries).

- *Separation of teaching and research within universities:* This refers to the impending divorce, where separate institutions exist for research and teaching. In this case, rather than a feature of the national higher education system, an institution structures and manages its teaching and research functions in different units (e.g. teaching in schools and research in institutes), with each unit having a different head/chair. In this model, an academic staff member has two affiliations and is involved in both teaching and research. Examples include the University of Twente, Netherlands; and MIT. Nevertheless, there are also rooms for research institutes/centers to award graduate research degrees related to their research agendas.

### **Findings: The Implications of Teaching-Research Divide to the Context of Addis Ababa University**

As discussed in the preceding sections, there is no one-way of organizing research and teaching in a university. However, most of the countries with comparatively better performing universities such as the USA, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Australia organize teaching and research in one university. Although the research-teaching nexus is still subject to ongoing debate, the author of this article would like to bring the implications of the debates and

experiences to the current Ethiopian context in order to suggest what is preferable regarding the teaching-research divide at AAU. The author of this article's argument is based on the review of AAU policy documents and data collected through key informant interviews.

At a national level, a review of existing documentary evidences indicates that teaching and research have been the core missions of higher education institutions in Ethiopia since the 1960s. The current higher education proclamation of the country (No. 650/2009) also clearly articulates that universities are granted the power to open and run teaching programs and conduct research simultaneously (see articles 4, 8 and 11). There is, however, no mention in the proclamation regarding the teaching-research divide in the same university though universities have the autonomy to open and organize their teaching and research programs. Hence, the proclamation is inclined towards conducting the two functions in combination within the same university.

At an organizational level, a review of the current Senate Legislation of Addis Ababa University shows that its core missions are teaching and research, and its vision is to promote excellence in the production, growth and dissemination of advanced scientific knowledge through teaching and research that primarily focuses on technology transfer (AAU, 2013). The two functions are described separately in the premises of the senate legislation viz., research and technology transfer is described in terms of research extension, publication, dissemination, and industry/community-university linkage, whereas teaching program is defined separately as a set of modules/courses in the undergraduate and postgraduate study disciplines (AAU, 2013). The research function is also clearly articulated as a separate activity in the research policy of the university as follows:

Generating new knowledge and technology, and thereby adapting and transferring it to society, is one of the prime missions of Addis Ababa University. Building up capabilities to deliver on this mission entails a well-organized national



innovation system that enables researchers to utilize efficiently the limited resources to be made available for scientific and technological activities at various levels (Addis Ababa University, 2013, p .I).

The dichotomy between research and teaching is also reflected in the governance structure of the university where the academic vice president is in charge of the teaching/academic programs in colleges, schools, and teaching institutes and the vice president for research and technology transfer is for all the university research programs undertaken in research institutes and other colleges. The documentary evidences show that there is overlapping of responsibilities between the two offices in relation to research and postgraduate programs, particularly in PhD programs.

Further analysis of documentary evidences shows that the university has no staff load policy regarding research engagement. In the absence of such policy, the staff members of the research institutes are required to invest 75% of their time in research and publication, and the remaining 25% in teaching at their home--base and the reverse is true for the teaching staff. However, the premises of the new governance structure of the University regarding the dichotomy in the teaching-research responsibility of staff across colleges and research institutes remains to be nominal in the absence of well-established research load policy and strategies for monitoring its proper implementation.

Moreover, as part of its vision, the university has been expanding its graduate programs over the past years, where both taught courses and research (thesis or dissertation) are requirements for graduation. However, the documentary evidences show that the linkage/synergy between the two functions i.e., how the two processes (teaching and research) reinforce each other and interact at the postgraduate education level is not well articulated in the senate legislation and related policy documents of the university. This suggests that a clear framework that governs the synergy in postgraduate teaching and

research across colleges and research institutes is missing in the senate legislation and related policies of the university.

The findings of documentary analyses discussed above raise questions regarding the purpose of the newly implemented governance structure of the university. The very essence of implementing BPR and introducing new governance structure in the university is to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and quality services geared towards the satisfaction of stakeholders.

With regard to efficiency, the Ethiopian higher education system in general and universities in particular are operating under limited human and non-human resources. When such resources are very limited, teaching and research should often be combined within a single higher education organization for economy of scale or scope in order to achieve efficiency gains from joint production. In other words, less resource is needed to produce a given amount of the two services (teaching and research) if they are combined together rather than separately treated. Following Nerlove (1972), the author of this article further argues that these interconnections between teaching and research may depend on the levels of the programs offered. The analysis of data obtained from the key informants revealed that Addis Ababa University, as the leading research and postgraduate university in the country, could reap benefits from joint production of teaching and research activities within its research institutes, particularly at the PhD programs level. However, what is actually happening at the shop floor level is contrary to the intention of BPR and the 2011 governance structure of the university as depicted by the key informants. In this regard, one of the interviewees from the teaching staff states that currently the integration of research and teaching in our graduate programs is missing, and most students are graduating without having adequate research skills which are requisites for higher order learning and problem solving skills (AS1, 2015). Another interviewee from the research staff also noted that “many of the PhD programs are running

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shortage of supervisors due to the inability to optimize staff time through the synergy between teaching and research” (AS2, 2015)

The results of the interviews with PhD students also complement the view of teaching staff that they are not acquiring the desired knowledge and skills because most of the PhD programs are opened without adequate preparation in terms of teaching staff, supervisors, resource, and research infrastructure. Another interviewee from PhD candidates shared a similar view as follows:

We are facing challenges regarding research skills, advisement and funding. We could not learn the practical aspects of the courses, which are very important for our research, and professional career, the research fund is not adequate to conduct research projects and come out with meaningful research outcomes. We are forced to limit the scope of our research to the research fund allocated by the university, the adequacy and quality of advisement is also very poor (S1, 2015).

The key informants from directors and academic staff also reflected on the newly introduced thematic research approach of the university. Majority of the interviewees among directors, research and teaching staff acknowledged the university’s efforts in encouraging staff engagement in research by identifying institutional research agenda and providing funds. However, they noted that a system is missing to ensure a synergy between the researches undertaken by PhD students across colleges and the thematic researches undertaken by research institutes. In this regard, one of the interviewees from directors of a research institute states the following:

On the one hand, research institutes are not allowed to recruit their own PhD students following the implementation of the new governance structure. On the other hand, they are required to involve PhD students to get funding for their thematic research projects. Reconciling these two issues is becoming a challenge for research institutes. The major challenge is lack of a working system

that guides and encourages the collaboration between teaching colleges and research institutes in terms of advising, funding, and engagement of PhD students in thematic research projects (DI, 2015).

The lack of synergy between teaching and research and how this affects efficiency and effectiveness of program implementation relating to research and teaching in the university is suggested by the findings in the preceding paragraphs. Further analysis of data was also conducted to understand the profiles of the research institutes of the universities. The results are summarized in the table below.

**Table: Academic staff profiles of the research institutes**

Institute	Staff profile			
	PhD holders	Assist professors and above	Total	PhD programs
Institute of Educational Research	11 (91.7%)	11 (91.7%)	12	Denied
Institute of Ethiopian Studies	9 (42.9%)	10 (47.6%)	21	Denied
Aklilu Lema Institute of Pathobiology	12 (48%)	20 (80%)	25	Running
Academy of Languages and Literature	13 (61.9%)	13 (61.9%)	21	Denied
Institute of Development and Policy Research	6(100%)	6 (100%)	6	Denied
Institute of Biotechnology	14 (48.3%)	14 (48.3%)	29	Running
Institute of Geophysics, Space Science and Astronomy	6 (26.1%)	6 (26.1%)	23	Running
Ethiopian Institute of Water Resources	7(58.3%)	7 (58.3%)	12	Running

The findings in table above indicate that the research institutes that have been denied the function to offer graduate programs in general and PhD programs in particular have adequate academic staff to run

graduate programs, even compared to the research institutes that are currently offering PhD programs. The results imply unwise use of expertise and limited resources of the university in terms of the current expansion of graduate programs in the university. The other implication of the results from the table above is that there is a double standard even in the implementation of the new policy shift regarding the divide between research and teaching in the university. Those institutes denied to offer graduate programs were without adequate evidences or official letter for the termination of their programs based on reviews. This suggests that there is no logical ground to give a place in the sun for some and leave others in such miserable and precarious situation.

As it stands today, research institutes in the university obtain very much limited financial resource from the government treasury. However, most of these research institutes house highly experienced and qualified academic staff who could teach and supervise PhD candidates as part of their thematic research projects introduced very recently. In fact, research requires more concentration of resources that can be used for teaching purpose. Thus, the current teaching-research divide policy that the university is pursuing, according to the responses of key informants, leads to wastage of the scarce resources thinly allocated to postgraduate teaching and research institutes (through thematic research projects). The author of this article's argument is that allowing research institutes to provide research-based PhD programs will lead to a wise use of limited resources such as researchers, funding and facilities.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

This article attempts to examine the recent policy changes at Addis Ababa University concerning the teaching and research roles of research institutes. It is based on a review of existing debates, strategies and experiences of some countries concerning the teaching/research focused binary system in universities and key informant interviews with staff and PhD students. Findings of the review show that there is no one size-fits- all way of organizing and managing the link between teaching and research in universities across the globe. There are differences in universities concerning the teaching-research divide based on their interpretation of research, teaching, and scholarship in their respective national policy context. The differences, however, are not per se on the location, but rather on the focus and emphasis given to the two major functions (teaching and research) of the university and their synergy. Currently, the trend across the different countries is towards ensuring a positive synergy between the two. The ideal place to forge such strong bond is a research environment that stimulates students to crave and discover knowledge. In this regard, research institutes are the appropriate locations in promoting and enhancing the teaching-research synergy, particularly at a postgraduate program level. However, this is not the case in the context of the Addis Ababa University.

There is a clear dislocation of research and teaching across institutes, i.e., researches are undertaken in research institutes/centers where there is no teaching responsibility and colleges are primarily responsible for teaching tasks. This suggests that the synergy between teaching and research at a postgraduate level is a myth in the University. This is contrary to the essence of BPR and the new governance structure viz., ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of postgraduate programs and research productivity in the university. In conclusion, given the higher education context of the country, Addis Ababa University would gain benefits from joint production of teaching and research activities within its research institutes in terms of efficiency and quality of programs, particularly at the PhD level. This implies the need to revisit the existing policies, strategies and governance structures concerning the teaching-research divide and allow research institutes to undertake research-based PhD programs as part of their thematic research projects.

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