

**Addaiyan Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**

© Addaiyan International Publishers

(An international Publisher of Research &amp; Academic Resources)

Journal Homepage: <https://aipublisher.org/projects/ajahss/>

ISSN: 2581-8783 (Online)

DOI: 10.36099/ajahss.3.7.5

**India-Ethiopia in the Educational Sector: It's Cooperation in the Past and the Present****Ivy Handique**

Research Scholar, Centre for African Studies

Jawaharlal Nehru University

**Corresponding Author\***

Ivy Handique

**Article History**

Received: 14.07.2021

Accepted: 22.07.2021

Published: 31.07.2021



**Abstract:** Historical linkages between India and Ethiopia go back around 2,000 years of recorded history. A sizeable Indian community consisting of merchants and artisans settled down in Ethiopia in the latter part of the 19th century. Indians are immigrants into Ethiopia and in entire East Africa. The majority have come from the Gujarati-speaking areas. There is tremendous goodwill that Indians enjoy in Ethiopia. Indian influence on education, small trade, and cuisine is as real as the influence of Bollywood in Ethiopia. The rapid expansion of higher education in Ethiopia has increased the demand for qualified academic staff and these included many Indian academicians. Now, aside from Bollywood, Ethiopians' principal contact with Indians is as teachers/lecturers in secondary schools or universities, particularly in the provinces. Teachers from India have carved a special place in Ethiopia with their open-handed efforts across generations.

**Keywords:** *Diaspora, Ethiopia, Academicians, Education*

**Introduction****India- Ethiopia Cooperation**

Ethiopia and India are old countries, with 3000 and 5000 years of history, their relations go back thousands of years. During the times of the Aksumite Kingdom (early Christian era), Indian traders used to bring to Abyssinia (the former name of Ethiopia) spices and silk and take back gold and ivory. Historians like Richard Pankhurst also wrote that Abyssinians had come to India in medieval and post-medieval times as slaves. In the same manner, during the Portuguese exploit of the 17th century, Indians went to Ethiopia from Goa, followed by the merchants, workers, and artisans who made their mark by opening shops and their architects influenced the Ethiopian landscape.

**Cooperation in the Academic Sector**

When Ethiopia wanted to put an effort of expanding its modern education in the early sixties, it was the Indian teacher who went to Ethiopia to teach in elementary and secondary school even in the remotest part of the country. Thus India has put its mark on the lives of Ethiopians and gained affection, trust and respect. The present warm and all the more strong relationships between Ethiopia and India has emanated from the spirit of mutual cooperation and assistance that is reflected in the two countries' foreign policies.

Ethiopia is the beneficiary of the Indian government's scholarship scheme under the ICCR programme where a large number of Ethiopians perused their Master's and doctoral degrees. In addition through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC), many Ethiopians have studied in a variety of fields like journalism, effective politics, designing, etc. The Ethiopian government also sends professionals to India where many Ph.D. and Master Students are studying in IITs, IIMs, and other universities throughout the country. The Pilot project of the pan-African e-Network was successfully implemented in Ethiopia by India. Now both India and Ethiopia are directly linked with e-education networks which benefit a large number of students. Also, tele-medicine connects which links an Indian hospital for specialist consultation and education with Ethiopian hospitals have opened various areas of cooperation.

### **Policy of Ethiopianisation**

The policy of Ethiopianisation took place after the defeat of the Emperor of Haile Selassie in the 80's. With the coming of Colonel Mengistu, he introduced this policy of Ethiopianisation which says that the foreigners in the country of Ethiopia are not allowed to teach in the Ethiopian schools. Suddenly, this came out as a shock for the Indian academicians whose daily bread was from this job. There were great numbers of them who were employed to tutor in the primary and secondary schools and were hired on the basis of the contractual term. After the shock, many Indian academicians went out of the country to find themselves bread during this crisis. Some came back to India and others went towards the western countries. One who stayed behind in Ethiopia was able to stay there for more than three generations which numbered to around 9000 families in the beginning but later on, the number came down to about 8000 (India-Ethiopia Relation).

### **Reasons for Indian Academicians Migrating to Ethiopia**

Also due to the lack of the Indian government's insufficient salary for the Indian academicians, most of them desired to migrate to Ethiopia for the sufficient salary the Ethiopian universities gave reacting back to the Indian salary. A primary push factor most Indian academics cite why they left their country is basically the attractive salary overseas.

An additional motive to leave India that few academicians mentioned is the displeasure with the Indian government's policy to reserve academic positions for people of reserved category.

But the query arises as that why does people choose Ethiopia as their destination. While the bureaucratic barriers and the specialised qualification to take on academic jobs in Europe, North America, and Australia are very sky-scraping. African countries, such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Nigeria, and Libya as well as Middle Eastern countries, kept the bureaucratic barriers and the required qualifications to a bare minimum.

### **Ethiopia Again Looks at Indian Teachers**

Aparajita Gupta in one of her articles, 'Ethiopia once again looks to Indian teachers' articulates that where in Ethiopia there was a time when Indian teachers were honoured highly, and after that Indians lost that treasure. But again it is seen that Indians teachers are needed in the ancient East African nation where the first traces of human was found and where the economy has taken a transformation from the agrarian to the industrial (Gupta, April 6, 2014).

Ethiopian Ambassador Gennet Zewide, who completed eight years in India as an Ambassador said in an interview, “In 1950-60 when we were expanding our education system, India came to our rescue because we did not have any teacher training colleges. Later, when our capacity grew, we started training elementary and high school teachers. Today, we are expanding our higher education and have close to 500 Indian professors in our colleges and universities”.

### **Ethiopia’s University Boom**

Higher education in Ethiopia was recognised in 1950 underneath the rule of Haile Selassie with the basis of the first university in Addis Ababa. In the subsequent years as well few specialised colleges were in progress. Below the socialist regime that overthrew Haile Selassie in 1974, the academic life of the still new and not completely developed university sector was secluded from the western world. One of the consequences of this was raising academic brain drain.

By the turn of the millennium, large growth and reform of Ethiopia’s university sector were implemented. Until today, the university sector has expanded to thirty-one public universities for their location and distribution over the country.

The explosive increase in universities and students has led to several shortfalls, which presently threaten the excellence of the Ethiopian university sector. Numerous of the new universities are situated in towns which have hardly any infrastructure in terms of transport, ICT linkages, security of water and electricity supply and do not fulfill the criterion of the Ministry of Education to achieve university status.

The lack of Ph.D. holders in a lot of universities questions the prospective for research which should be approved at every higher education institution. As a reply to the short contribution of academics, the ministry enlarged its expatriate staff, chiefly from India, in less numbers from Nigeria, Cuba and the UK, and also from the Philippines. The number of expatriate employees doubled within only one year (2002-2003) starting from 150 to 397. In the educational year 2004/2005, 12.5 percent of lecturers were by now expatriates, Indians were the majority. Until 2011, the number of Indian instructors single-handedly enlarged to 500.

Interviews taken for placements in Ethiopia are prearranged by the agencies at diverse locations in India, mostly Delhi, Chennai, and Hyderabad. University committees from Ethiopia go there to meet applicants for small interviews. Lecturers come to Ethiopia from all areas of India. Though, people from the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala position out in numbers.

### **Conclusion**

So, to conclude with it can be said that the migration of Indian teachers to Ethiopia would help to build up Ethiopia’s Educational Sector and also what was required by Meles Zenawi who was the Prime Minister then.

Migration of Indian teachers is on the rise mainly due to the shortage of teachers in Ethiopia for which they are recruiting teachers to fill these gaps in the educational sector, but this scenario is changing with the current Ethiopian government imposing a 40 percent tax cut from the salaries of the foreign professors in December 2018 which in a way is acting as a drawback. Recruiting teachers from emerging countries

is a part of the immigration policy to attract skilled knowledge workers from other parts of the world in order to meet the skill shortages. Along with the Indian teachers, Indian businessmen and other Diasporas have a great contribution to the Ethiopian economy. Ethiopia and India are also working to encourage further south-south cooperation between both countries in the Educational sector. As the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind during his visit to Ethiopia in 2017 initiated that the fulcrum of Ethiopia and India's better relation is through the cooperation in the educational sector. Likewise, cooperation in terms of education can lead both countries to a better future.

### References:

1. Paul, Z. (2005). African Diaspora, New Dictionary of the History of Ideas.
2. Yuk Wah Chan, D. H. (2014). The Age of Asian Migration: Continuity Diversity and Susceptibility. ISBN.
3. Shukla, S. R. (2003). Indian Abroad: Diasporic Cultures of Postwar America and England.
4. Alemayehu, H. (March 17,2016). Trade between India and Ethiopia is rising:Gennet Zewide, India Africa Connect.
5. Arage, T. Combating the Shortage of doctors in Ethiopia. Marie Stopes International.
6. Jonathan Penson, A. Y. (oct 30,2012). Next steps in Managing Teacher Migration. Articles or other works in a journal
7. Gabriel, B. W. (Thursday 8, 2015). Ethiopia's Diaspora Policy:Fit for diverse, Complex relationship? Horn Affairs .
8. Haokip, P. (January- June, 2010). India's Diaspora Policy in Africa, Half Baked for Francophone. Insight on Africa .
9. Magnus. (June1, 2011). Global India and its diaspora. African Arguments .
10. Melvin Ember, C. R. (2004). Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures Around the World (Edited).
11. Ahmed, H. (December 10,2014). Ethhiopia seeks Indian help to revitalise higher education. IANS.
12. Anwar, M. A. (June 2,2015). The lesser known story of India's role in Ethiopian land deals. Quartz Africa .
13. Gupta, A. (April 6, 2014). Etiopia Once again looks to Indian teachers. New Delhi: IANS.
14. Oonk, G. (May 14, 2005). Gujarati Business Communities in East Africa Success and Failure Stories. Economic and Political Weekly.
15. Bureau, R. (June 4,2004). Ethiopia Woos Induan Firms. Business Standard.