

ETHIOPIAN PERSPECTIVES ON AN EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP: THE TORONTO ADDIS ABABA PSYCHIATRY PROGRAM (TAAPP)

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Background: From the standpoint of Addis Ababa University (AAU), the Toronto Addis Ababa Psychiatry Program (TAAPP) stands out for two reasons: 1. What is being done; 2. How it is being done. **Issues of Focus:** What makes TAAAP truly special is the fact that it developed over the years in an evolutionary manner, rather than a top down Platonic approach. It started out as a way of addressing a nation's dire need for mental health professionals. The collaboration has been successful because of its willingness to embrace these emergent needs and find solutions for them.

Methods: The curriculum content has been constantly changing based on the needs and capacities of AAU. The program has grown vertically, in terms of the need for sub-specializations (fellowships in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, Addiction Psychiatry) and horizontally in terms of comprehensiveness (Masters in Clinical Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Mental Health Social Work).

Outcomes: AAU is moving forward with the aim of developing services and teaching programs that focus on integrated and comprehensive care.

Discussion: The partnership has grown and expanded in an organic manner; based on mutual respect despite a gulf in terms of resources. The usual model of collaboration between HIC and LAMIC institutes implicitly perpetuates a colonial mindset which ultimately undermines the sense of ownership that is of paramount importance with regard to sustainability. The TAAPP stance of openness and willingness to learn about both cultures, and making cultural sensitivity one of its main tenets, is key. The partnership has also fostered personal relationships between faculty and trainees of both institutions, creating a sense of extended family. For anyone who knows the Ethiopian culture intimately, and the importance of the family, it is not surprising how this might be one of the secret ingredients of the success story that is TAAPP!

Author List

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Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Attendees will be able to describe factors that promote a sense of ownership over the course of the TAAPP/TAAAC partnership.
2. Attendees will be able to describe the importance of cultural sensitivity in an educational partnership between a high income university and a low income university.

References

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2. Toronto Addis Ababa Academic Collaboration. (<http://taaac.com>). Published 2015. Accessed Sept. 25, 2019.