

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN WOREDA EDUCATION OFFICES IN
CENTRAL ZONE OF TIGRAY

BY

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Acronyms

AAU	Addis Ababa University
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BED	Bachelor of Education
BSc	Bachelor of Science
DF	Degree of Freedom
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
ETP	Education and Training Policy
EFA	Education for All
GOs	Governmental Organization
MA	Master of Arts
MED	Master of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSc	Master of Science
NGOs	Non- Governmental Organizations
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats
TREB	Tigray Regional Education Bureau
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organizations
WEO	Woreda Education Office

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to assess the practice of strategic planning in woreda education offices in central zone of Tigray with the intent of suggesting ways for improving it. Accordingly, to answer the basic research questions in relation to the magnitude of stakeholders' involvement, components of strategic plan adequacy and utilization of resources, competence of WEO heads for effective preparation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of educational strategic plans, system of monitoring and evaluation, and major difficulties encountered in preparing and implementing strategic planning were sought in the course of the study. The research method employed was a descriptive survey, availability, stratified and simple random sampling were used to select sample of the respondents. The data included 66 staff members of WEO, 30 principals of preparatory, secondary and full elementary schools and 40 head departments of preparatory and secondary schools. Questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used as data gathering tools. The data were analyzed using percentage, mean, chi-square, Kolmogorov-Smirnov one-sample test and t-test. The finding of the study revealed that the practices of strategic planning and woreda education in Tigray has been characterized by weak stakeholders' involvement in the strategic planning activities, inadequate budget and poor utilization of resources, lack of integration of components of strategic plans, lack of competence of WEO heads to implement the strategies, inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation system were the major problems that affect the successful implementation of the educational strategic plans in the sample woredas of the region. Based on the major findings conclusions were drawn as; meaningful participation of stakeholders, relevant planners' knowledge and/or experience were found to be weak and there was an adequacy of plan monitoring and evaluation system in the selected woredas. Finally, recommendations were accordingly recommended. Thus, increasing stakeholders' participation, enhancing sources of resources, integrating the components of strategic plans, providing sustainable capacity building trainings for WEO heads, creating an independent body for plan monitoring and evaluation, the need for further research works were some of the most important remedies that need to be taken so as to alleviate the existing situations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The development of society is at present being strongly influenced by education, which results in scientific and technological progress (UNESCO, 1998). Thus, it seems that education has been recognized as an engine that largely drives the socioeconomic transformation of nations and facilitates personal success. This could be the major reason for education to be given top priority by most developed and developing countries. Despite these realities, educators sometimes fail to reach desired purposes, the fact that they are unable to deal with the complexities of planning, making decision and implementing the change itself (Cunningham, 1982). This implies that educators need to plan in order to make better use of the changes and the result that would be brought about. As no organization is free of change, which is often the result of education, effective planning ensures survival and growth (Forojolla, 1993). Hence, a fairly systematic preparing, implementing and monitoring & evaluating educational strategic plan needs to be adopted in educational organizations.

Planning as a management task can take place at all levels of the education system and it is a central part of the whole process of the educational management. As Forojolla (1993) noted “the notion of development has come to be bounded with education and planning as nowadays no sound development can occur in the absence of the proper planning system and an equally sounded education system.” If education is to make an effective contribution to national development, a more successful educational planning is needed to supplement its effort. A systematic preparation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of educational strategic plans to the developing nations have become more popular since 1960s, which is followed by qualitative turning point. Regarding the origin of the strategic planning, Preedy et al. (1997) have the following to say:

Strategy becomes popular in the 1950s and 1960s when large number of firms and expanding business opportunities necessitated looking more systematically at the future. This took the form of long range planning, the purpose of which was to first define the firms objectives, then establish some plans in order to achieve the objectives, and finally to allocate resource through capital budgeting. Such long range planning, as a way of formulating strategy, lost its appeal when it becomes evident that forecasting existing trends into the future did not produce accurate results. Consequently, long range planning was replaced by strategic planning, which incorporated accepting possible changes in trends and was not based on the assumption that adequate growth could be assured.

This implies that strategic planning is the heart of any activity in various organizations. Without strategic framework you don't know where you are going or why you are going there. Goodstein et al. (1993) defined strategic planning as "the process by which the guiding member of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future," These shows that the preparation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of educational plan is a special kind of decision making which enables to forecast the future and helps to solve problems related to education.

Strategic planning involves determining organizational goals and how to achieve them. It is concerned with making and implementing decision about an organizations future. Kaufman and Herman (1991) explain strategic plan as a dynamic, active process that scans current realities and opportunities in order to yield useful strategies and tactics for arriving at a better tomorrow. It involves educational partners in defining and supporting the purpose and mission. This implies that strategic planning is crucial in providing better understanding about the future and motivating the organizations to respond proactively to the future uncertainties.

Kaufman (1995) argue that strategic plan preparation involves analyzing the educational systems strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in order to have clear guidance for ones decisions as one moves from current results to wards his mission and macro mission and for building year by year towards achieving each of the close in and distant mission objectives. Thus, while preparing strategic plan, one has to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible are involved in the planning process. Involving at least those who are accountable for implementing the plan is very decisive to improve organizational performance.

Accordingly, Bush and Burnham (1994) argue that educational planners and managers should encourage the participation of all the concerned stakeholders in the planning process because participation in the preparation process motivates them effectively to participate in the implementation and monitoring & evaluation process. However, there are problems in the educational planning. Especially, in Africa Mbamba (1992) identified them as planning by directives and order of politicians, little consideration for technical experts, subjective criteria for appointments to key positions of power, frequent change of top bureaucratic, political statement guide policy, poor coordination of educational programs and projects, shortages of funds for recurrent expenditure, lack of well trained educational planners and implementers, poor communication and transportation system and poor control mechanism to ensure that scarce educational resources are efficiently used.

It is apparent that the introduction of educational planning in Ethiopia is associated with the introduction of modern education in the country in 1908. Subsequently, Educational planning has passed two epochs i.e. the centralized management and the epoch of decentralized management that came in to power with the arrival of EPRDF in 1991 as a state in the country. That Ethiopia is currently exercising the decentralized System of educational management by intensifying the mandates of lower level educational hierarchs of the importance of educational planning for the effective realization of their duties is a task not to be overlooked. The strength of these institutions among other things relies on their capacities to formulate, implement and monitor & evaluate the strategic plans.

Many countries design educational strategic plans in order to address the pressing needs and problems of their country. The Transitional Government of Ethiopia issued a new Education and Training Policy to respond to the accumulated deep rooted educational problems prior to 1991. The Education Training policy and its Implementation (2002) document further enumerate that unrelated and easily copied education system of the pre-1991 curriculum that can not address the pressing needs and problems of the country with lack of implementing capacity of planning MOE (2007) has also suggested that to put into practice the designed educational strategic plans as to prevent the deterioration of educational quality, the

Ethiopian government has been designed a General Education Quality Assurance Package (GEQAP) consists of six programs.

According to the Tigray Education Sector Development Program (TESDP,2006), Tigray Regional State Education Bureau is committed to improve educational quality, relevance, efficiency, equity and expand access to education with special emphases on primary education in rural and under served areas, as well as the proportion of education for girls as a first step to achieve primary education by 2015. For the realization of the above issues, it has introduced a sector wide approach in preparing, implementing and monitoring & evaluation of its educational strategic plan. The Regional Education Bureau has furthered decentralized the power of decision making on the strategic planning down to woreda and school levels, so that they could implement their plans accordingly. But, though the region tried its best to decentralized planning responsibilities, the various units of planning practitioners, especially at woreda levels are not seen while executing their respective plans as desired. Hence, examining the educational planning practices of the woredas, in line with educational strategic plan of the woreda will find to be timely response to the current situation.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

In the present world, the need for strategic planning has significantly been increasing although there have been debates on its importance. For instance, scholars such as Napuk, Burch and others have been arguing useless and fruitless exercise. Particularly, Napuk (1993) claimed that "...we are too busy doing the business to waste time on useless plans, they are never any good anyway, because they always change." Similarly, Burch (1996) showed his doubts on planning that it is not as such important since everybody exists as an individual in purposeless and moving universe. However, despite these arguments there have long been convincing evidences showing that organizations which practice strategic planning consistently perform better than those with none or limited strategic planning and improve their performance over a period of time (Chandan, 1997). In other words, Strategic planning facilitates the success and/or failure of the organization depending on the capacity to put in to effect. Hence, if an organization wants to put a bridge between its current performances and where it dreams to be in the future, necessarily it has to plan its overall activities. If not,

the organization may lose its status quo to greater degree since failure in strategic planning is immediately felt every where in the organizational structure.

Planning enables the managers to be proactive and make things happen rather than reactive and let things happen. It helps managers to consider seriously the present status of the organization and the environment in to which it operates. Besides, Forrojella (1993) noted that the central task in educational planning is to recognize the present conditions in adequacies that point to the desirability of change. Therefore, educational planning contributes to the process of policy formulation by identifying the central areas and the various policy options which are available to address the problems. Every country has designed its development plan for some year. Similarly different sectors of the country draw their strategic plan to achieve the development objectives, so education as a sector has designed its own plan to accomplish its own plan and purpose in order to achieve the long term development goals of the country. Coombs (1970) argued that “planning is a process, concerned not only with where to go but how to gather and by what best means. Its work does not get end when a plan gets on paper and has won approval. Planning must be concerned with its own implementation.” Effective implementation is crucial to organizational change and innovation (strategic plan). Wolf (1994) argued that it is more important to know what an organization does than what it decides to do, As Klein and Sorra (1996) noted “increasingly, organizational analysis identify implementation failure, not innovation (strategic plan) failure, on the cause of many organizations’ inability to achieve the intended benefits of the innovations they adopt.” Effective plan preparation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation are the key factors in effect. Harvey (1982) argued that strategy implementation consists of securing resources, organizing these resources, and directing the use of these resources with in and outside of the organizations.

Moreover it is clearly indicated in the MOE (2005) inadequate planning and management capacities at the lower level of the organizational structure are a critical problem in realizing the goals of the education. Skills to interpret polices, collect and analyze appropriate data and enabling woredas to take appropriate action to meet minimum quality standards defined for local situations are critically lacking at the lower level of the organization structure.

On the other hand, Chanie (2010) in his research on “The Challenges and Prospects of strategic planning Formulation and Implementation Process in Selected Management Institutions of Ethiopia” asserted that, the formulation of strategic plan was not supported by the active participation of top management, customers and employees as required. Implementation of strategic planning had faced different challenges. Some of the challenges are: low commitment from the top management, unable to cascade strategic plan to operational plan, low strategic plan revision, poor communication, poor performance management system and lack of monitoring and evaluation system.

Tigray Regional State Education Bureau (2007) on the other hand, on a topic a “proposal prepared for discussion on an issue of School Improvement Program [SIP] also indicated that, disorganized effort on the part of Wereda Education Offices in giving support to schools to enable them organize school improvement program committees, absence of immediate corrective measures, many woredas and schools copying a plan prepared by others, leading schools without preparing three-year strategic plan and one-year action plans, or preparing the coming year plan without looking to changes were achieved and participating stakeholders. Therefore, these are among the problems of implementing. (Translation from Tigrigna language).

Besides, Esayas (2010) in his research, On Survey of the Practice and Challenges of School Improvement in Selected Government General Secondary Schools of Tigray Regional State has revealed that, the developed strategic plan was not based on effective use assessment data: goals are not properly set in terms of quality and quantity: woreda and school leaders have not adequate background and training which enable them to develop effective school strategic plan. And MOE (2005) clearly indicated, inadequate planning and management capacities at the lower level of the organizational structure a critical problem in realizing the goals of education, skills to interpret and analyze policies.

This study therefore, aims at assessing the extent to which the educational strategic plan is currently implemented in the selected woredas of central zone of Tigray. And, as the researcher was the head of Wereda Education office, he has witnessed problems in formulating, implementing and monitoring & evaluating educational strategic plan. From

these the researcher understood that the preparation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of educational strategic plans still require much effort to be exerted.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general intention of this study was to analyze the problem of strategic planning in education at woreda level in the selected woredas of central zone of Tigray .The specific objectives were to

1. To examine the educational strategic planning process in the selected woredas.
2. To assess the degree of stakeholders participation.
3. To assess the extent of readiness for strategic planning process.
4. To examine the degree of implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Therefore, accordingly, this study had attempted to seek answer and recommendations for the following basic questions.

- 1.What does the practice and development of strategic planning at the woreda education offices show?
2. What is the degree of stakeholders' participation in the existing educational strategic planning?
3. To what extent are heads of woreda education offices competent to educational strategic plans?
4. To what extent have monitoring & evaluation systems instituted in the design of the strategic planning?

1.4. Significance of the Study

Strategic planning in general and educational strategic plan in particular is a far reaching guideline in which organizations operate and move forward in order to attain their vision, mission and objectives successfully. However, practically, the development of educational strategic plan is constrained by various factors which hold its success back. Among the major problems presently faced at lower level organizational structure are highly centralized (not participatory), lack of knowledge and understanding of planning, lack of commitment,

inadequate resources and arrangement for coordination. Therefore, the study may be helpful to

- Initiate discussion and promote awareness on the problems related to the practice of preparing, implementing and monitoring and evaluating educational strategic plan in the selected woreda's.
- Contribute the efforts being made to strengthen the quality of the practice in preparing, implementing and monitoring and evaluating educational strategic plan in the selected woreda's.
- Serve as initial reference to conduct further study
- Serve as source of information for readers.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The development of educational strategic planning process is a broad issue. Because of this the scope of the study becomes very important. Therefore, to make the study more manageable the study delimited to only seven woredas [Axum , Adwa and Abiy Adi from urban woredas] and [Ahferom .Werie leke, Laelay Maychew and Nadir Adet from rural woredas] sample woredas. Furthermore, the study is delimited to strategic planning formulation, strategic plan implementation, processes[steps] of strategic planning, making strategic planning effective, plan monitoring and evaluation, meaningful participation of stakeholders, and knowledge and experience of planners and the time boundary of the study of the educational strategic planning was delimited to the last three years (2008-2010).

1.6. Limitation of the study

The study was designed to focus on strategic planning in woreda education in central zone of Tigray. However, because of financial and time constraints the study has covered only seven woredas and 14 preparatory and secondary schools in the selected woredas. Besides this, due to the same reason, the schools treated in the central zone of Tigray are only those found in the selected woredas. Therefore, the result of the study should be considered with these limitations.

1.7. Organization of the Study

This research paper is organized in five chapters. Chapter one deals with the general background, statement of the problem, objectives and basic questions of the study, delimitation of the study and how the research paper is organized. Chapter two indicates the review related literature and chapter three presents in detail the research methodology and techniques employed of the study. Presentation and analysis of data organizes under chapter four followed by the subsequent findings of the data and its discussions. Chapter five contains brief summary, conclusion and recommendations. Finally, bibliography and appendices are also included easy references.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with reviewing literary works of various scholars on the practices of preparing, implementing and monitoring & evaluating educational strategic plan. Primarily, concepts related with planning, types of planning,(strategic & operational planning), characteristics of strategic planning, the relation between strategic and operational planning, importance of strategic planning, process (steps) of strategic planning, problems of educational strategic plan, making effective strategic planning, strategic plan formulation, strategic plan implementation, plan monitoring and evaluation, meaningful participation, planner's knowledge and experience and why strategic plans fail?

2.1. Planning: An overview

Planning is considered as a crucial activity for an organization success by deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it. It bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to arrive since it makes possible for things to occur which would not otherwise happen (Burch,1996).In this sense, changes and events are left to chance and random unless they are accompanied by effective and efficient planning. Moreover, although the exact future can rarely be predicted and factors beyond which may interfere have tendencies to being some undesired consequences, planning by far, has the power to minimize these uncertainties and risks since it is the conscious determination of a course of action, the basing of the decision on purpose, facts, and considered estimates.

Planning serves to gain control of the future through current acts and its purpose is to provide a bridge between useful knowledge and purposeful coordinated action (Cunningham, 1982). In this regard, administrators look ahead, predicts events, prepare for contingencies, formulate directives map out activities, and provide an orderly sequence for achieving goals through planning (Morphet, et al, 1982). Even though there is widespread support for using strategic planning in education. there are those who do not see the value of its application. Mintzberg (1994), former president of the strategic management society, was one of the earliest critics of strategic planning. Although his criticisms of strategic planning were not

directed specifically at education, his views can be applied to its use in schools. For Mintzberg(1994), one of the major weaknesses of strategic planning process lies in the fact that formal planning does not produce effective strategies. He argued “we have no evidence that any of the strategic planning system....no matter how elaborate....succeeded in capturing the messy informal processes by which strategies really do get developed” (Mintzberg, 1994).

On the other hand (Mintzberg, 1994) describe as strategic planning as is an involved, complicated, and complex process that takes an organization into the uncharted territory. It does not provide a ready to use prescription for success instead; it takes the organization through a journey and helps develop a framework and context within which the answers will emerge. Literature and research has documented extensively the possible problems that may arise during the process. Being aware of these issues and prepared to address them is essential to success: organizations strategic planning effort may fail if these potential pitfalls are ignored.

With regards inflexibility, strategic planning might inhibit changes, and discourage the organization from considering disruptive alternatives. Planning might inhibit creativity and “does not easily handle truly creative idea.” A conflict lies with a desire to “retain the stability that planning brings to an organization...while enabling it to respond quickly to external changes in the environment” (Mintzberg, 1994).

Therefore, almost every organization be it regional education bureau, or what ever its types and purpose, need to plan in order to make a responsible decisions on how to achieve the general/specific objectives by making a wise allocation of the available resources, to complete in the world of dynamics, and survive in competitive world.

Ethiopian Experience on Educational Planning:

In Ethiopian context, educational planning and its implementation, the encouraging efforts regarding the long term planning, Education Sector Review (ESR), ERGESE and the Ten year perspective plan have not registered effective results because the education system in this period was more of bureaucratic, centralized and was not accompanied by enabling

political environment and sound policy frameworks. Consequently, Educational planning and its implementation were found to be weak.

Following the downfall and replacement of the military government by the transitional government of Ethiopia (TGE) in 1991 and later on by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), among the major changes that were promised and are being implemented; the transition from highly centralized system to a decentralized system of governance is the major one. The education system which was highly centralized since its time of start in the country has been decentralized with major devolution of powers to the regional, zonal and woredas education offices. In this connection, due emphasis was given to decentralized educational management after the introduction of the new education and training policy (ETP) declared in 1994.

In this regard, much effort has been made to improve the implementation of educational plan. According to the Review of the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP) and its Implementation (2002), The ETP document has identified three areas of priorities for a change. These were curriculum reform and the preparation of learning resources, teacher affairs, and education planning and management. In realizing this, ETP is converted into a programmatic action through the ESDPs for implementation. So far Ethiopia had three ESDPs, the first is launched 1997, the second is launched 2002/03, and the third is also launched 2005/06. In the third ESDP, the main emphasis was, more specified in to general, technical and vocational and tertiary education (MOE, 2008).

However, as studies conducted by different scholars depicted, despite its encouraging trends, the decentralized plan implementation was entangled by so many problems. Thus includes; lack of decision making power, lack of accountability and representation, lack of meaningful participation of the population, and sever shortage of skilled man power and capacity constraints (Hussien, 2002; Jeilu,2001). In light of this, careful planning and its implementation are obviously important, but it accounts for nothing, unless the lower level echelons are aware of the product and have the skills to implement educational activities at regional, zonal, woreda and school level (Derebssa, 2001).

2.2. Types of planning

Most scholars share common understanding on what planning is and how it contributes to a given organizations success. But, when it comes to types, they differ based on various aspects. For instance, Jain (1990) and Kumar (2002) classified planning types in to: single use plans - which incorporates objectives, strategies, programs, projects, and budgets and standing plans – which include policies, procedures, methods and rules. On the other hand, Lewis et al (1995) grouped planning types in to strategic and operational planning based on the time range and content they contain.

Furthermore, many scholars classified it in a more comprehensive way as: strategic planning, tactical planning, and operational planning (Black and porter, 2002: Koory and Medley, 1987). Although experiencing the above variations of plan classifications could broaden our knowledge of planning types, the major ones that there are to discussed in the following sections are the strategic planning in detail and operational planning which is common to different institutions including educational organizations.

2.1.1. Strategic planning

Strategic planning has been defined differently by various scholars. For instance, Pearce and Robinson (2003) defined, it as “...the set of decisions and actions resulting formulation and implementation of the strategies design to achieve the objectives of the organization.” O’Brien (1999) and Griffin (2000) on the other hand, describe it as a general plan out lining decisions of resource allocation, priorities and action steps necessary to reach strategic goals. Its application to the education system seems to foster the emergence with, the strategies of autonomous action making it possible to narrow the gap between the procedures and the consumers of education or training products (UNESCO, 1989). Generally speaking strategic planning is a type of planning which is set by the broad of directors, stakeholders, and top management which has an extended time horizon: addresses questions of scope, resource development, and competitive advantage of the organizations.

As to Longan and Judyth (1997), strategic planning is the process of indicating the future status of an organization that is to be manifested in an extended period of time. It concentrates on the most crucial tasks that contribute to organizational development with in a

longer time period. Sallis (1994) thereby is acting as a bridge to narrow down the gap that exists between their present level of status and the future aspired destination Bush and Jone (1994). Strategic planning focus on goals of greater impact. This makes it necessary Stoner et al (2005) their preparation be run by higher-position managers through an over whelming participation and consultation of stakeholders. Even though there is no fixed acceptable time that dictates the lifespan of strategic planning. Bush and Jone (1994) suggest that strategic plans are designed to be exercised with a time limit of three to five years.

2.2.1.1 Characteristics of Strategic Planning

The basic aim of strategic planning is to actively determine the nature of the character of the organization and to guide its directions. It identifies the mission and mandates of the organization and devises strategies for fulfilling its purposes educators discussed on the different features of strategic planning. Eku (2005) elaborated the following characteristics that are commonly associated with strategic planning:

- 1) Strategic planning emphasizes looking from the outside. In identifying and understanding conditions in the environment over which the institution may have little control, but which may have an impact on its nature and vitality .Since many of the challenges and changes experienced by institutions are trigged by out side forces this emphasis on the external environment, monitoring major demographic, social, economic, political, and technological trends that may hold opportunities or threads for institution. While strategic planning also considers internal factors, it requires that they be balanced by an assessment of external realities.
- 2) Acknowledging the changeability of the external environment and the rapid growth of knowledge, strategic planning uses a 3-5 planning time frame.
- 3) Because of the external environment undergoes continues and often rapid change and because it is impossible to predict future conditions with certainty, strategic planning is a dynamic continuing process in which adoptions and/or devotions from the plan will be required and should be expected. For this reason, plans are reviewed and updated regularly.

- 4) An institution strives to distinguish itself from its competition through strategic planning. So that people inside and outside the institution will recognize its special identity, character, and areas of expertise. Finally, to be effective, strategic planning must be integrated with budgeting so that the allocation of resource reflects the priorities that have been established, they moving the institution in the direction it has charted.

According to Bush and Jone (1994), strategic planning is definitely a process involving a series of functions to take in to account. There are several implementation of strategic planning as a process.

1. It means that changes in any components of the system will affect several or all the components.
2. It is sequential. The process of strategic planning and management follows its own path from the preparation of the plan time to the time where the strategy is implemented, reviewed and evaluated.
3. It is the necessity for feedback from implementation, review and evaluation to the early stage components of the process. Managers should carefully measures and analyze the impact upon the need for possible modification for the organization mission; thus making a great relationship between the planning and the controlling part.

2.2.1.2 Strategic Plan in Education

According to Gamage (2006), in the contemporary world, similar to other fields, education is undergoing unprecedented change, due to the advancement of technology, globalization and changing expectations of the society. Educational leaders find it extremely difficult to face the challenges and predict the future of their organizations. Strategic planning a means by which they can establish and maintain a sense of direction. It is a continuous process by which an organization is kept on course, through making adjustments, when both the internal and external contexts change. Planning cannot be considered as having been completed when the written document is finalized; it is only a record of the process, at a given point of time, while the difficult part is the implementation.

More importantly, Fidler (2002) in Gamage (2006) asserts that, the process of strategic planning should involve three conceptual stages: a strategic analysis, strategic choice, and strategic implementation followed by three action steps to include: deciding how to plan, deciding how to choose and deciding how to plan and implement. However, in developing strategic plan for educational institution, the educational leader needs to embrace the key elements of the planning process. This involves the following managerial skills:

Developing a shared vision to determine where the organization is heading-so as to provide long-term direction, delineate what kind of organization is envisaged and infuse the community; setting objectives-converting the strategic vision into specific performance outcomes to be realized by the organization; developing the strategies-to achieve the desired outcomes; implementing the chosen strategies- efficiently and effectively; monitoring and evaluating the performance-initiate corrective adjustments in the vision, long-term objectives and strategies, in the light of actual experience, changing conditions relating to new opportunities, threats and new ideas.

Generally, according to the Arizona model of strategic planning (1998) a successful strategic planning process: Has the full support of the top management, It is participatory and involves staff at all levels, ensuring that the plan has “buy in” from everyone in the organization, its flexible, fits the organizations and uses friendly, clearly defines responsibilities, establishes and ensures accountability galvanize common purpose and understanding. Stays aware of the environment in which it functions strategic planning is realistic about goals, objectives, resources and outcomes develops and conveys compelling evidence for its recommendations, has a method or strategy of resolving conflicts about stakeholders, leads to acknowledge the reality of having to do more with less, both the plan and the planning process are reviewed and modified regularly.

2.2.2. Operational Planning

Operational planning, as its name implies, is the most specific and detailed activity which is made at the operational level of the organization, and concerned with the routine activities of the institution. It is concerned with the physical implementation of plans. Operational planning is, in short, a process by which administrators ensure that resources are obtained

and used effectively and efficiently in the accomplishment of strategic objectives (Cunningham, 1982). It focuses on establishing specific and detailed procedures, budgets, and schedules of plan execution. Operational planning is usually narrower in scope. Thus an organization's operating plan should help to explain how the organization will contribute to achieving the organization's overall strategic plan. Generally, operational planning is an expanded version of strategic planning and is generally more tangible and less conceptual.

2.2.3 The Relation between Strategic and Operational Planning

Cunningham (1982) elaborated the two main types of planning as:

Strategic planning is seeing that the organization is doing the right thing: operational planning is ensuring that the organization is doing things right. Strategic planning is defined as the process of deciding on objectives, on the resources used to obtain objectives, and on the policies that are to govern the actuation, use and disposition of the resources. Strategic objectives are directed toward long term survival, future resources, future potential, and flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions. Strategic objectives are future directed, usually are client oriented, and are directed external needs. Strategic plans determine the character and direction of organization and are often based on value systems. Operational is the process by which administrators ensure that resources are obtained and used effectively and efficiently in the accomplishment of the strategic objectives.

He further noted that for the planning process to work appropriately, strategic plans must be developed and made final preceding to developing and implementing operational plans. That means, the developing and implementing operational planning should be based on the strategic planning. In relation to this, Judson (1996) stated that operating plans should be formulated immediately following the validation of the strategic plan. Cunningham (1982) also said that operational plans should not be developed first with the intent of imposing strategic plans on top. He argued that the best approach is first to develop strategic plan under the direction of top level administrators and then use these strategic plans to guide the efforts of operational personnel in the development of operational plans.

Despite of the interconnected relationships, they also differ based on various dimensions like the time they cover, the content they contain, their objectives, focuses,....strategic

planning focuses on “Doing the Right Things” while operational planning deals with “Doing Things Right” (Cunningham,1982). Moreover, Chang (2006) stated that, strategic planning is done with involvement of high levels of management, while operational planning is done at lower levels.

Operational planning consists of making specific commitments to implement the objectives and policies established by strategic planning (Hampton, 1981). He continued saying that if strategic planning provides the “big picture” operational planning provides the details without which the big picture would remain a blank outline. Here from Hampton words, one can easily understand that operational planning is the final phase of planning process which is mainly put in the place as strategy to successfully implement the strategic planning piece-by-piece. Generally the major differences between strategic and operational planning are summarized as follows

Table 1: the relation between Strategic Planning and Operational Planning

Emphasis	Operational Planning	Strategic Planning
Focus	Operating problems and realities	Long term survival and development
Objective	Present Performance	Future school system success
Constraints	Present resources/school environment	Future resources desired system
Rewards	Efficiency, stability	Future potential, flexibility
Time frame	Short, fixed	Long (3-5 years), continuous
Nature of Problem	Structured	Unstructured
Details	Many (detailed)	few
Organizational level	Usually (low)	Usually (high)
Organizational Type	Bureaucratic/stable	Entrepreneurial/Flexible
Leadership	Conserve which succeeded in the past	Inspire change for future needs
Uncertainty	low risk	Higher risk

Sources: Modified from Chang (2008): Cunningham (1982).

2.3. Problems of Educational Strategic Plan

Planning problems are easily left every where in the organization and distort organizational statuesque. Problems in plan preparation highly affect successful plan execution. Educational strategic planning in developing nations is constrained by various factors which hold its

success back. Farrel (1997) and Forojella (1993) identified the major problems of educational strategic planning as highly centralized (not participative), Lack of healthy communication, Command oriented, Lack of knowledge and understanding of planning by most of the officials, limited and short time given to prepare plans, Lack of adequate experiences, and inadequate arrangement for coordination. Moreover, other researcher (Kumar,2002;Terry & Franklin,2002) found that the main obstacles of planning like inflexibility of the plans, lack of accurate information, resistance to change, lack of commitment, ambiguous objectives, reliance on the past happenings, lack of management support, lack of controlling technique, and time as cost factors as the major factors to effective educational strategic planning. In the same manner, Griffin (2000) and Koory and Medley (1987) discovered the major drawbacks of strategic planning as: it fails to anticipate emergencies, unexpected conditions may inhibit plan implementation, it can be so theoretical that political values are lost, reluctance to establish appropriate goals, less qualification of the implementing bodies, improper reward system, and dynamic and complex environment which they thought are planning problems of affecting quality of strategic planning in education in general. More comprehensive, problems of educational strategic planning as Dixon (1993) can be the result of lack of commitment to the planning process particularly among an organization's senior management: failure to set meaningful, verifiable targets bend absence of clear aims for the organization as whole: resistance to change among middle and junior management and among the ordinary workforce: over reliance on past experience: poor and inflexible control techniques, lack of clear delegation in the organization: and lack clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult.

The fact that implementation phase of strategic planning process is the hardest step which deals with change: it is likely to meet a lot of constraints which hold the successful implementation of the plans back. Hence, it can be said that there could be as many problems as possible which might affect effective and efficient strategic plan execution.

In this regard, Smith, et el (1991) found out the major problems which tackle the smooth implementation of strategic plan as: implementation usually takes more time than originally allocated: implementation activities are often poorly coordinated: major problems that surface are not anticipated: competing activities and crises distract attention from

implementing decisions: lower level employees are not adequately trained and instructed: uncountable factors in the external environment have adverse impacts: developmental management may not provide adequate leadership and directions: key implantation tasks and activities may not be defined in sufficient detail and information systems used to monitor implementation may not be adequate. To this effect, all the above mentioned problems of educational strategic plan can, directly or indirectly, be categorized under political, administrative and economic constraints which will almost certainly ensure failure.

2.4. Making Strategic Planning Effective

Planning is the primary managerial function on which the successive managerial functions are built. Moreover, it is a tool which shows how, when, and why organizations operate. Hence, to ensure the effectiveness of this decision making process, various scholars have suggested ways to make it effective. Among these Chandan (1997) identified the major principle of effective strategic planning as: keeping aims crystallized, developing accurate forecasts involving subordinates in the planning process, the plan must be sound one, do not be over optimistic deciding in advance the criteria for abandoning a project, keeping plan flexible, and fit the plan to the environment.

Like the above one, Kumar (2002): Kumar and Mittal (2001) suggested the following important steps for making strategic planning effective: establish better climate for planning, setting clear out objectives, installation of sufficient information system, participation in planning, integration of long term plans and short term plans, economical (time and cost), installation management, communication of planning elements (goals and planning premise), dynamic planning, and careful premising. Smith, et al (1991) added the following measures to ensure the effectiveness of planning process: review objectives, environments: evaluate, adjust, and commits resources; develop organizational structure; introduce the changes; and re-evaluate the plan.

Generally, one must keep in mind that various limitations strategic planning should not lead one believe that strategic planning is unnecessary in the organization, or it is the luxury that only few large organizations can afford. It must be accepted that planning is an essential managerial function and should be given special attention. The question here is that not

whether or not to plan; it is how to plan the strategy. Therefore, managers should take the great care to make strategic planning activities more effective to gain its real contribution in realizing organizational missions and vision. However, it is not enough to say that managers should take action to make strategic planning effective, but they should be clear about what actions should be taken in this regard.

2.4.1. Meaningful Participation in Strategic Planning Process

Among the various issues requiring higher attention and which are believed to enhance the effectiveness of strategic plan preparation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation: creating conducive environment to the different stakeholders take part in the process, and the strategic plan to be prepared by professionals with special skills and their experience, have strong acceptance on the quality of strategic plans (Bharadwaj & Balchandran, 1988). By participation, we mean that, the lower level implementers could effectively incorporate their needs in the plan and commit them for its successful implementation. Parkinson, et al. (1984) expressed the importance of participation in the strategic planning practices as:

When a person participates, when he makes suggestions, when his views are given importance, he feels important. His self respect is enhanced. He, then, naturally, exerts himself in the best possible manners when members of group participate in its activities: the group devices the benefit of their combined knowledge, experience and skill, unnecessary conflict is avoided and the task are performed with maximum efficiency.

From this, one can logically understand that participatory planning can be performed with fewer resources but maximum efficiency since it creates democratic environment and we naturally like democratic situations. In short, the planning system comes to life when members of the group are come involved in the strategic planning process Cunningham (1982). More convincingly, Cunningham (1982) proven that participatory planning process encourages managers to consult their subordinates and potential stakeholders which result in effective strategic planning and decision making process. He has stated the findings of his study as follows:

.....administrators who consult their subordinates during the planning process receive the highest ratings for being helpful, letting people who know where they stand, assisting people to get ahead, inspiring subordinates with enthusing, building team spirit, being familiar with subordinates work, and for forward planning delegation, problem solving and trust. They also achieve high score on items of reflecting efficiency.

To this effect, in order to ensure effective and efficient practices of preparing and implementing educational strategic plan, the people who are going to be affected by a particular development project should be involved in as much as possible in the strategic planning stages, partly to ensure that detailed information on social conditions and needs is obtained: and partly to encourage a sense of involvement in, and commitment to, the project by the people. Hence, participatory strategic planning enables the planning process to focus on the commonly felt needs of the society through group involvement and eases effective strategic plan execution.

According to Kaufman (1995), developing education plan with out the input of representative educational partners is one of the mistakes usually made by educators and their partners. A plan put together and produced more quickly by small groups is not likely to be accepted by others who feel they have not contributed. When a stakeholders don't feel they are the part of planning; the results usually will be ignored or thwarted. Planners also grow frustrated seeing their product sit on shelves without the achievement of intended objectives.

Preparing a plan and coming up with a document is not an end by itself. It should be efficiently and effectively implemented. The likelihood of plan implementation would be increased by increasing authentic participation of stakeholders in plan formulation. Participation of stakeholders in plan preparation promotes the sense of accountability for the effective accomplishment of organizational goal, deciding on the goal and means for realizing goal, managing an organization and its unite, help to be responsive and responsible and to create better future for tomorrow's participative plan preparation, also, provide the chance of sharing different ideas, experiences, feelings, getting constructive suggestions,

facilitating staff perception on the current status and future aspiration of the education system and thereby reduce the opposite view that prevail between and among the different groups and individuals (Chapman and Lars,1997).

Participation in planning renders a number of advantages. In the first case, inflows of ideas, experiences and feelings of those who have a stake lifts the standards of plan up as there is the chance of obtain constructive suggestion from the different tiers within the organization and at the different directions out of the organization. Taking part in the planning process facilitates staffs' perception on the current status and future aspiration of the organization thereby reducing the opposite views that prevail between and among the different groups and individuals. Participation in plan preparation also helps initiate individuals to exert their full potential: everybody will behave as if the plan is his own not anybody else imposition Rue and Byars in (Wezel et al...2006).

For Schermerhorn (1996), participative planning, which included all the people who are affected by the plan and who will be asked to implement the plan, increases the creativity and information availability for planning and increases understanding, acceptance and commitment of people to final plans.

Hence, strategic planning to be a source of good performance needs to follow the decentralized system which allows participation of all the people who are affected by the plan and are asked to implement the plan in order to ensure the creativity and availability of information for planning and get acceptance and commitment of people to final plans.

Planners' knowledge & Experiences on Strategic planning process:

A strategic plan which is prepared by professional and/or highly experienced planners tends to be more successful than a strategic plan prepared by non professional and/or less experienced planners. In clear terms, highly trained and specialized planning personnel are significantly important for effective strategic plan preparation and implementation (Bharadwaj and Balchandran, 1988). In addition to this, Forrojalla (1993) witnessed that effective practice of the preparation the strategic planning require relevant knowledge and/or

experiences of planners. This implies that planners who have received good amount and kind of training in planning area could design varieties of techniques in order to address the most pressing needs of the society through effective and efficient strategic planning process.

Furthermore, the fact that the planning process involves continuous activities, the output of one stage will also serve as inputs for the subsequent stages: and planners will also learn much as they spend more times in strategic planning. Logically speaking, more experienced planners know the most common and frequently felt needs which should be addressed by the plan and problems encountered in this regard. This helps them to internalize the situations and design effective intervention mechanism from the very start to the last phase of strategic planning process. Hence, effective strategic planning process needs well developed knowledge and/or experiences of planners. To wide up, strategic planning in general and educational strategic plan in particular can become more meaningful and effective if it is participative and carried out by highly skilled and/or experienced professionals (Forrojalla, 1993).

2.4.2. The components of Strategic Planning Process

According to Glueck (1988), use the results of the internal and external analysis and customer identification to formulate the mission, vision, principles, goals and objectives of the strategic planning.

2.4.2.1. Developing Vision Statement

According to Arizona model of strategic planning (1998), vision is a compelling conceptual image of the desired future, creating a vision can help state agencies redefine, how services are provided and prepare the organization to meet the demands of the future. Great vision is conceived through a partnership between top management and all levels of the organization, vision becomes a focal point fore everyone in the agency. Ideally, the value of each employee becomes part of the organizations vision. By sharing the vision, management established commitment to the overall vision for employee at all levels. A great vision, one that will inspire and challenge, is purposefully created and will provide more than a picture of the organizations ideal future. Vision is critical ingredient for change which represents a

global, continual purpose for the organization and is the ultimate standards toward which all progress is measured.

2.4.2.2. Developing Mission Statement

Mission is a brief, comprehensive statement of purpose of an agency programmer sub program. If the mission statement already exists, the focus of this step is an reviewing it in light of the emerging vision statement, question for a critical review of an existing mission statement identifies what, and for who, agencies, programs or sub programs do. The mission statement is an invaluable tool in directing, planning and implementing institution efforts. The mission describes customers and products or services. The mission is part of an organizations identity, is all encompassing and rarely changes, and is the ultimate rationale for the existence of the agency, program or sub program (Kuber and Milan, 1996).

According to Arizona mode (1998) of strategic planning, a good mission statement will identify the basic needs or distinct problems that the agency, program or sub program designs to address. Identify clients, customers or users (both internal and external) of an agency, program or sub program. Identify customer and stakeholder expectations, services and products provided to meet these requirements and resources used to satisfy the requirements. Lead the development of performance measures that reflect customer and stakeholder requirements.

2.4.2.3. Developing Organizational Values

According to the Arizona model (1998) of strategic planning, values are factors that derive the conduct of an organization and guide the development and implementation of all policies and actions. Although organizations values may be implicitly understood, it is often helpful to explicitly state them. Values the core values and philosophies that describe how an agency conducts it in carrying out its mission. Values are often associated with a quality management culture. These include "Getting it right the first time," satisfying customers need and continuous improvement (Louise, 1990). Values are also services as criteria to guide decision making at all levels of an agency. They are powerful instruments for changing organizational culture. Values motivate employees; express basic beliefs about the conditions under people work and required skills needed to make the vision a reality.

2.4.2.4. Identification of Strategic Issues

According to Arizona model (1998) of strategic planning criteria to identify strategic issues, strategic issues may arise as a result of an agency internal assessment and may be generated by external forces. Strategic issues may be addressed in the short term in the next fiscal year. Strategic issues may be implementing over the long term. Finally strategic issues may lead to strategic planning goals represent concerns of critical importance to the organization, often these strategic issues impact several or all the program in budget unit. Identifying these few critical concerns can help management focus on high priority goals for the organization as a whole.

2.4.2.5. Developing Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Creating a strategy for any organization involves defining goals and intermediate and short term objectives. Objectives should flow naturally from goals. Be clear on the goals and outputs, make the “SMART” Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time specific goals are the broad results wish to achieve over the long term. Goals provide a framework for more detailed levels of planning. Goals are more specific than the mission statement; but remain general enough to stimulate creativity and innovation. Goals describe the “to be” state (Louise, 1990).

Goals will also represent immediate or serious problems or high priority issues that merit special attention. These critical or strategic issues, which are often uncovered during the internal/external assessment, might be described as the “make or break” kinds of issues.

According to Arizona model (1998), strategic planning criteria to evaluate goals, goals will be in harmony with and clarity, the agency vision, mission, and values that are achieved will fulfill, or contribute to fulfilling, the mission of the agency, programs and sub programs. Goals will address priorities and the results of the internal/external assessment and may be developed in response to strategic issues.

2.4.2.6. Commitment of WEO Management

According to Manobis consulting firm strategy implementation (2007), Real leadership is required to compete effectively and deliver growth. People look leaders to bring meaning, to make sense of the seemingly unquenchable demand for results and the need for individuals to find purpose and value. Leadership is the common thread which runs through the entire process of translating strategy in to results and is the key to engaging the hearts and minds of people. Whether we are distilling strategy to achieve clarity of intent, engaging people to drive the strategy into action process or performance managing the resulting actions, effective leadership will make the difference. Motivational leadership concentrated on achieving sustained performance through personal growth, value based leadership and planning that recognizes human dynamics.

2.4.2.7. Environmental Assessment

In formulating the strategy, it is mandatory to understand organizational mission and objectives. The analysis of organizational strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) is a useful technique in formulating strategies which are consistent with organizational mission and objective (Shermerhorn, 1996 and Hill & Jones, 2007).

A SWOT analysis provides a realistic understanding of the organization in relation to its environment and also assists in the creation of strategies that take maximum advantage of strengths and opportunities while minimizing weaknesses and threats (Shermerhorn, 1996). Classifying the SWOT analysis in to two broad categories, this author confirms that the internal appraisal of strengths, the first of which and the realistic base for strategy formulation at all levels, is used to identify distinctive competencies around technology, human resources, management talent, and financial strengths among others which can give the organization a competitive advantage in its operating domain which the weaknesses are found in the same related areas. The second category in the SWOT, the identification of opportunities and threats (influence of the environment), the general environment (economic socio cultural and technological) and the specific environment (customers, competitors,

resource suppliers, and regulators among others) helps the organization take advantage of potential opportunities to mitigate the negative influence of the threats (Lusthaus and others,2002; and Shermerhorn,1996).

2.4.2.8. Turning Strategy into Action

This entails a phase approach linking identified performance factors with strategic activities and projects designed to develop individual activities ‘strategy into Action’ planning is a phased approach charting a course through performance factors, linking strategic thrusts to, process and individual activity. The ultimate goal is to enable organizations to effectively translate strategic intent all the way through to results in a clear and powerful process. The real need is to creatively and systematically unfold the strategy, bring it to life by creating integrated action plans across an organization that ensure all functions and divisions are aligned behind it (Moore,2001).

2.4.2.9. Performance Measures

According to Manobis consulting firm (2009), performance measure involves the construction of organizational processes and capabilities necessary to achieve through Hearts and minds of people. Whether we are distilling strategy to achieve clarity of intent, engaging people to drive the strategy in to action process or performance managing the resulting actions, effective leadership will make the difference. To make the strategy ‘live’ everyone in the organization needs to be engaged to make action. Communicating the strategy intent, thrusts and action plans setting individual targets and work plans aligned to the strategic priorities. Performance management is a key factor in getting the whole organization aligned and mobilizes to reach higher and work collaboratively together to deliver results. An excellent performance management system has a pivotal influence on the success of strategy implementation.

2.5. Process (Steps) of strategic planning

The process of strategic planning indicates the major steps that are undergone in strategic planning. The steps that strategic planning process follows can be shortened or extended depending on the size of the organization, complexity of the programs, budget, time,

capability of the staff, availability of information, etc. Based on the specific planning framework, some steps could be skipped or shorted or else added, if necessary, without eliminating the fundamental planning questions facing the organization (CRDA, 2001). Hellriegel, et al (2002) recommended the steps that to be followed while preparing plans with particular reference to strategic plan. Hence, their models incorporate steps like developing mission and goals: assessing opportunities and threats: identifying strengths and weaknesses, developing strategies: preparing strategic plan: preparing tactical plans: controlling and assessing results: and continuing planning. Forrojalla (1993) condensed the strategic planning process (steps) in to three broad categories namely: Formulation, implementation, and Monitoring & evaluation. Therefore, however divers' models of strategic planning process exist, treating Forrojalla's planning process would be more manageable and common to all.

Planning in general and strategic planning in particular is not the end by themselves not a one shot activity. It is a continuous process where a lot of procedures are undergone. Thus, although different scholars have slightly different approaches to planning process, they all agree that the process is cyclical and never ending process. For instance, first we establish mission, then formulate goals and objectives, finally prepare plan (Chandan, 1997).

On the other hand, Napuk (1993) described the major planning procedures mainly strategic as: We look at how you arrive at this point in your company history, identifying what made you successful and what require more attention, we deal with where you want to go from here by creating your vision, looking your objectives, conducting an internal evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and setting your goals, we determine how to get where you want to go, devising strategies and dealing with external opportunities and threats and look at how to make the plan work in your company, reviewing structure and implementation and concentrating on action programs.

In addition to this, Leweis et al (1995) condensed the steps with the prior models. Thus, this model involves strategic analysis (What is the current position of the organization?): Strategy formulation (Where is the organization wanted to be?): Strategy implementation (How will the organization get to where wants to be?): and Strategic control (How will the organization know when it has arrived?). More comprehensively, although various models differ based on

their approaches, most strategic planning methodologies include SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), GTSM (Goals, Targets, Strategies, Measures), and environmental scanning of the organization. Educators developed various models of strategic planning. The following models of and McNamara (2008) provide a wide range options from which organizations might select an approach begin to develop their own strategic planning process. Such as:

Basic Strategic Planning: this very basic process is typically followed by organizations that are extremely small, busy, and have not done much strategic before. The basic strategic planning includes: Identifying the purpose (Mission statement), selecting the goals the organization must reach, Identifying specific approaches or strategies that must be implemented to reach each goal, Identifying specific action plans to implement each strategy, and monitoring updating the plan.

Alignment Model: the overall purpose of the model is to ensure strong alignment among the organization's mission and its resources to effectively operate the institution. Overall steps include: first, the planning group outlines the organization's mission, programs, resources, and needed support. Second, identify how these adjustments should be made, and lastly, include the adjustments as strategies in the strategic plan.

In general, all authorities show that planning is not an activity which is done randomly, rather it has some logical steps that planners should follow to increase its degree of efficiency and effectiveness. However, there is no consensus among authorities who write on the steps of planning process to make one and the same. There is a change and modification of steps from time to time. Therefore, educational planners may use one or the combination of the two or more classifications according to their preference.

2.5.1. Strategic Plan Formulation/Preparation

Plan formulation is the primary step in planning process. Like other planning phases, it undertakes various steps. Hampton (1981) identified six explicit procedures for preparing plans as: development of "strategic plans" by strategic planning committee: communication of these plans to the management committee as a general guideline: sub mission of proposed objectives by the department heads: review: discussion and agreement upon a set of

objectives: submission of financial data: and issuance of the plan. Similarly, UNESCO (1984) forwarded planning steps as: identifying objectives: identifying needs: inventory, classifying, and measuring costs: programming: and implementing.

Unlike the above ones, strategic planning follows a different procedure. It undertakes, determining vision, mission, and objectives: analyzing the environment: analyzing and selecting strategic alternatives: implementing the strategies: and evaluating and controlling performance (Smith, et al, 1991). This does not mean that all strategic planning should necessary follow the above mentioned steps. There could as many as the planning types.

Strategic planning is a special kind of decision making which helps to bridge the gap between where we are and where we want to be in the future with limited available resources. While preparing to plan, there tend to be as many pre-conditions as possible to which will serve the planners are the threshold components. These ingredients to be sufficient level of furnish strategic planning process. Among these components serving as precondition, availability of and adequacy of resources such as-human resources, financial and material, the support from the political figure: and adequate information are the major ones (Berara,2008). In addition to this, stakeholders' involvement should also be ensured the preparatory task since it enhances effective strategic plan preparation by incorporating local needs. To attest this, Conyers (1982) witnessed that participatory is a means of obtaining information about local conditions, needs, and attributes, with out which development programs and projects are likely to fail.

Finally, logically speaking, a strategic plan to be successfully prepared, the planners should be priory review the availability and accuracy of statistical data, skilled and experienced man power, level of commitment and other preconditions which all make up good strategic plan. Hence, a well prepared strategic plan which considers what is on the ground, can simply the ups and downs that will be faced during the implementation period.

2.5.2. Strategic Plan Implementation

The implementation stage is vital to the process of an organization. Hunger and Wheelen (2006) pointed that, although implementation is usually considered after strategy has been formulated, implementation is a key part of strategic management. They continued saying

that strategy formulation and implementation should be considered as two sides of the same coin. Without effective implementation, the strategy may become a set of unobtainable needs rather than reality. Byars, et al (1996) argued that strategies that have been carefully formulated are little value if they can not be successfully implemented. Thompson and Strickland (2001:2005) also confirmed that good strategy and good strategy execution are the most truthful signs of good management. Managers do not deserve a good star for designing a potentially brilliant strategy but failing to put the organizational means in place to carry out in higher- caliber fashion- weak implementation undermines the strategy's potential and overlays the way for short fall in customers' satisfaction and organizational performance.

Once of the best available alternatives has been selected, plan implementing bodies needs to be ready to make strategic plans to cope with requirements and problems that might be encountered in putting in to effect. While doing this, there are a number of preparation takes that should be carried out in order to make the successive procedures as smooth as possible. These pre-conditions of strategic plan implementation vary as scholars differ, for instance, (Malan, 1987; Stoner et al, 1995) identified the basic pre-conditions for implementation as: budgets, schedules, resources. and progress reports. Especially the later scholar has emphasized that plan to be implemented. This shows that, budget is essential to the planning process since the objectives and programs contained in the plan can not be implemented without it.

On the other hand, Smith, et al (1991) forwarded the following five rules or pre-conditions that organizations with successful implementation track records tend to follow: The plans must be communicated to all employees whom it will affect: the idea/concept represented by the strategic decision must have a sound response and be a well formulated: management must obtain commitment and involvement from employees: management must provide sufficient resources for the strategic plan includes money, manpower, technical expertise, and time: and the management must develop an implementation strategic plan by setting goals and keeping a record of accomplishment.

Implementation of the strategic plans is the most important stage in the planning process which remains the biggest challenge to the management team. The meaning and quality of the plan is in its effect after implementation. To strengthen this, Napuk (1993) confirmed

saying that it does not matter how well and great a plan seems to be, it is useless if it fails to implement. Implementing strategic plan requires logical and sequential activities to be carried out. In connection with this, Hersey, et al (2003) identifying the following three step process in plan implementation as: identifying alternative solution and appropriate implementation strategies, anticipating the probable consequences of each of the alternative strategies and choosing specific strategy and implementing it.

Malan (1987) differently put the sequential steps of strategic plan implementation in a more comprehensive way. His model involves: selection of levels of objectives with their associated programs and projects, and accompanying physical and financial indicators to ensure and measure their implementation: schedules: formal approval and announcement of plans: international and regionalization of objectives and programs: annual budgetary review: inspection of execution, and where necessary, the revision of objectives and planned resources. In general, although the process of strategic plan implementation varies from organization to organization, the above models are found to be common and easily adaptable by many organizations.

2.5.3. Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

The last step of planning process is to monitor and evaluates the program of the implemented plan in order to ensure that it is operating properly or not. Evaluation is defined as “a process of analysis and control design to determine the relevance, effectiveness, significance and impact of specific activities and the degree of efficiency with which they are carried out” (Miron and Chinapah, 1990). This shows that, evaluation is an exercise to assess the success and/or failure of the planned objectives, program impact, and cost effectiveness. Monitoring on the other hand, is “...process where by the progress of activities is regularly and continuously observed and analyzed in order to ensure that the expected result is achieved” (Chang, 2008).As a whole, one can generalize that monitoring and evaluation consists measuring the status of an object or activity against an expected target that allows judgment or comparison by continuous collection and analysis of information.

Monitoring and Evaluation are processes used by the organizations to collect and use feedback and are theoretically linked to planning and decision making. Monitoring helps to

clarify program objectives, link activities and inputs to these objectives, set quantitative performance targets, collect data routinely, and feed results directly to these responsible while evaluation looks at why and how results were or were not achieved links specific activities to overall results, includes broader outcomes that are not readily quantifiable, explores unintended results, and provide clear lessons for adjustment to programs and policies to improve results (Lusthaus and others, 2002).

Once we have agreed upon the importance of monitoring and evaluation with the intent of assuring smooth implementation of plans by gathering empirical feedback to avoid problems that may arise later on, the next question is who. What, how and when to monitor and evaluate plans.

Accordingly, Chang (2008) recommended that monitoring and evaluation could be carried out both by insiders (those belongs to the same organizations as the program managers) outsiders (external evaluators) in order to help decision makers and the other stakeholders to learn lessons and apply them in future programs.

Monitoring and evaluation are necessary in any educational organizations and are all the more important when undertake change. Monitoring and evaluation are management functions through which organizations can ascertain whether or not plans meet their stated objectives. The focusing of monitoring and evaluation is on relevance, performance and success of plans thus ensuring the production of sustainable results that benefit the target groups.

Regular monitoring is necessary to judge progress, ensure that the strategic plan implementation is on track and to make any necessary corrections. It is rare that actual outcomes are the same as those predicted when plans were made. Long (2001) also argued that “systematically monitoring progress of major change is essential to achieving ultimate success.”

McNamara (2008) defined monitoring as a process for checking that activities are being implemented as planned, mainly looks as inputs, process and outputs. According to him, the

monitoring phase tracks and counts events, activities, peoples and objects and can consist of their periodic or continuous data collection. The information gathered in this process, such as new trends and strengths and weaknesses of the plan, should be used to improve plans.

Hence, educational administrators are obliged to monitor strategy regularly, refining and recasting it as often and as much needed to match the organization's changing internal and external circumstance. Educational organizations at any level should have monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure the effective implementation of strategic plan.

In monitoring the progress of the plan reports have a significant role. In designing formal reports to monitor strategic progress Thompson and Strickland (2001) developed four guidelines. These includes: information a reporting system should involves no more data and reporting that is needed to give reliable picture, report and statistical data gathering have to be timely, the flow of information a statistics should be kept simple, information and reporting system should point out clearly warning signs rather than just produce information.

From this, we can understand that an effective organization control system in educational organizations has its own consequences. Byars et al (1996) forwarded the following consequences of poor controls: inflexibility, missed opportunities, loss of motivation and morale, lack of accountability and stifling creativity and innovation.

2.5.3.1. Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation

The importance of monitoring and evaluation system in educational institutions is unquestionable. McNamara (2008) argued that monitoring and evaluation helps to improve performance, to assess and enhance impact, to day-to-day decision making, to provide early warning of the problematic activities and process those need corrective actions, to help empowered stakeholders by creating opportunities to critically reflect on performance and subsequently make decisions on strategies and direction to build understanding and capacity among stakeholders, to motivate and stimulate learning among all involved, and finally to demonstrate and strengthen accountability.

The creation of monitoring and evaluation set up for it ascertains efficiency, effectiveness, equity and value for money is necessary Glover, D (1997). Monitoring and evaluation despite the difference in the nature and purpose of information they yield play enormous role in the aiding of organizational decisions. Evaluation, for instance, is more rigorous and provides data of more qualitative nature to measure effect Basarab & Darrel (1992). Evaluation on the whole is used to assess the performance of organizations, and according to Schleehty (1990), has the following multifaceted interconnected benefits.

First it should provide those who work in the system with a basis for knowing what is expected and what they are to do with respect to those expectations. Second, it provides people with information from which is to judge how well their performance, the performance of those who supervise the performance of their department or unit and the performance of the system in general confirms with requirements and expectations. Third, it provides basis for analyzing the source of performance problems and ground for taking action to correct those problems. Fourth, it provides a data-base for assessing the merits of any corrective action that is taken to address performance problems the evaluation system might reveal.

2.5.3.2. Components of Monitoring and Evaluation system

Good monitoring and evaluation design is a much better broader activities than just development of indicators. McNamara (2008) suggested that, it rather should have the following five components: clear statements of measurable goals and objectives: a structural set of indicators, covering out put of goals and services generated by the plan and their impact on beneficiaries: provision for collecting data and managing records so that the data required for indicators are compatible with existing statistics, and are available at reasonable cost: institutional arrangement for gathering, analyzing, and reporting data, and for investing in capacity building, to sustain the monitoring and evaluation service: proposal for the ways in which monitoring and evaluation findings will be feedback in to decision making.

2.5.3.3. General Rules for Monitoring and Evaluation

Educational institutions to make its monitoring and evaluation system effective in achieving its purpose, it should have guiding monitoring and evaluation. Accordingly, McNamara

(2008) listing the following guiding principles of monitoring and evaluation: it should address the specific needs of the stakeholders: encourage participations of various stakeholders at various levels monitoring and evaluation functions: be simple, flexible, cost effective: employ and carried out participatory review and reflection, and primarily the learning should be based on action, result and critical reflection: participation of stakeholders in various functions of monitoring and evaluation should also focus on empowering them. Finally, all monitoring and evaluation works should be carried out in a very transparent manners and findings should be shared to all concerned through various mechanisms.

He also identified key questions while monitoring and evaluation status of implementation of the plan. The first question should be the goals and objectives being achieved or not? If they are, then acknowledging, reward and communicate the progress. If not, then consider the following questions: will the goals be achieved according to the timeless specified in the plan? If not, then why? Should the deadline for completion be changed? Do personnel have adequate resources (money, facilities, training, etc) to achieve the goals?

2.5.3.4. Monitoring Tools

Designing a proper information flow system or communication is a pre-condition for effective strategic plan monitoring. The function of information system is to provide administrators with the information on which they can take timely action in pursuit of plan activities. Information is passed from different sites to the administrators, who use it to monitor program progress against plan Woldemedhin (2008) identified the most widely used means of communication employed in monitoring. These includes: progress reports, progress review meetings and site visits. He further recommended that progress review meetings needs to be well planned to be effective and minutes of review meeting should be carefully be recorded and documented. In addition, site visits have to be conducted in participatory way before progress review meeting is arranged.

Generally, we can understand that, monitoring and evaluation is fundamental in strategic planning process to know the status of the strategic plans and make the necessary adjustments if any. In addition, the unit has to be equipped with the necessary facilities and

personnel so that it can provide reliable and immediate information to stakeholders. Finally, the documents should be carefully documented and distributed to the bodies timely.

2.6. Why Strategic Plan Fail?

All organization strategic plans may not be implemented as expected due to various reasons. A number of educators recognized different reasons for the failure of strategic plan. McNamara (2008) identified the following reasons that organizational strategic plan fail: failure to understand the clients, inability to predict the environment reaction, failure to develop new employee and management skills, failure to coordinate, inadequate reporting and control relationships, organizational structure not flexible enough, failure to obtain management and employee commitment, failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish tasks, under estimation of time requirement, failure to manage, poor communication, arbitrarily selecting planning team member, not educating the planning team members to the strategic planning process, putting the plan on the shelf and keeping it there, reluctance to revise the strategic plan, resistance to change, and keeping the strategy secret. Mbua (2002) also argued that the failure to implement plans can result from variety of causes. These include: shortage of financial resources, unanticipated bottlenecks in teacher supply or facilities, unforeseen imbalances between the flow of students and the educational capacity at different levels, and lack of political commitment will to implement the plan.

Byrson (1995) and Roering cited in Vinzant J. and Vinzant D. (1996) suggested that a government unit, wishing to implement a strategic planning process, should have the following in place prior to attempt implementation: a powerful process sponsor, an effective process champion, strategies team, an expectation of disruptions and delays, a willingness to be flexible concerning what constitutes a strategic plan, an ability to think junctures a key temporal metric and a willingness to construct and consider arguments geared to many different criteria.

Therefore, we can conclude that, lack of commitment, shortage of resources, pressure of external environment, capacity to implement the given tasks and absence of monitoring and evaluation systems are commonly identified as reasons for the failure of the implementation of the strategic plan.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1. Research Method

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative approach enabled the study to get pertinent information from key informants through interview. Moreover quantitative approach was employed in order to obtain broader information that encompasses the concerned stakeholders such as employees (staff members) and principal of secondary schools of the selected woredas under study through questionnaire. Therefore, the major concern of the study, as indicated earlier, was assess the challenges or problems which hampered the strategic planning on education in selected woredas of the central zone of Tigray. To this end, a descriptive study approach was employed as the method of study. This method is appropriate mainly to review current status of challenges or problems of the strategic planning process together with several kinds of data related to the subject under study. The relevance of this approach for such purpose has been noted by Best and Khan (1993). Moreover, it is a planned method of data collection that involves entering a subject population and measuring a specific set of responses (Jacob, 1987).

3.2. Sources of Data

This study used both primary and secondary sources of data. The secondary data sources was used the strategic plan document, annual reports, the strategic planning projects/TOR, the guidelines or methodologies adapted document, the performance reports of the concerned woredas and their mandates. Primary data gathered from key informants of the woreda head officers, staff members or employees working in the woreda education offices, principals of secondary school, principals of full elementary school and department heads of secondary schools.

3.3. Instruments of Data Collection

It is well known that choosing appropriate methodology is mainly dependent upon the type of research and its undertaking purposes. Being the fact the concept of using different

methods approach in data collection in a single study is favored in recent trends for many authors. Large numbers of researchers are using multi-method approaches to achieve broader and often better results. Denzinger in Teshome (1998) for example, argues that because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods should be used in every investigation as a rule. Brower and Hunter cited in Teshome (1998) noted that there are strengths and weaknesses to any single collection strategy, and using more than one data collection approaches, permits the researcher to combine the strength and correct some of the differences any one sources of data. By using its advantage, Chen and Manion (1994) even in single small scale study, a mixture of methods can often be adapted.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

One of the instruments used to collect data in many research is questionnaire, the same is true with my research. The objective of the questionnaire is to provide the necessary realistic information for the study on the strategic planning process in selected woredas of central zone of Tigray.

The researcher was developed open ended and closed ended type of questionnaires based on the reviewed literature. Open ended questions give a greater insight and understanding of the topic researched and closed ended questions are easy to classify and quantify, require less time, effort and ingenuity to answer. Thus, the questionnaires are used in this research to collect data from the staff members, principals and head departments of secondary school of the selected woredas.

3.3.2. Interviews

An interview is one of the instruments in collecting data in research process. Interview is used to gather information that cannot be obtained from field observations, and to verify observations. Its purposes is to explain the participants' point of view, how they think, interpret, and explain their behavior. Due to this fact the researcher used interview to collect data from the head officers. This will be done to collect extensive data about the whole process, to create and to substantiate data collected through other instruments since the interviewee is the head officers of the woredas. (Mason, 2002) argues that data should be generated from research participants using instruments like interview. As she further clarifies

her point she says, because a qualitative research is a part of the research and she/he cannot be neutral collector of the data.

3.3.3. Document Analysis

To enrich the data obtained through questionnaire and interview relevant documents were analyzed. Like annual performance, reports and strategic planning documents. More over, reliability and validity are central concerns in document analysis. The theme of documentary reviewed was obtaining data on the formulation, implementation and monitoring & evaluation process of strategic planning.

3.3.4. Pilot Testing Data Collecting Tools

The purpose of the pilot study was to assess the relevance of the instruments designed to collect data for the study. The aim was also to find out ambiguous, omissions and misunderstanding of each item. After questionnaires were prepared, pilot testing of the instruments were made in one woreda of the sample area that was woreda werie-leke to confirm the validity and reliability of the instruments. To do this, the researcher had distributed the draft instruments to 5 WOFED experts and 5 vice principals and unit leaders of secondary schools of woreda werie-leke.

Accordingly, in order to test the internal consistency the instrument (questionnaires), reliability test was applied using estimation of Guttman split-half method. Thus, the result of the reliability estimated 0.728. This shows that the instrument reliable since numbers (reliability test results) near to 1(one) are generally considered as more reliable or highly reliable

3.4. Sampling Technique

Tigray regional state is located in the northern part of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). The capital city of the regional state is Mekelle which is about 780 km away from Addis Ababa. This regional state has seven zones and 46 woredas (34 rural and 12 urban woredas).

Moreover, the central zone of Tigray has 12 woredas (9 rural and 3 urban woredas) and 528(28.4%) schools, 313,458(28.6%) students, and 6914 (28.2%) teachers are covered out of the 1859 schools, 1,095,012 students, and 24,466 teachers of the regional states respectively. Thus, the researcher has interested to employ the study in the selected woredas of the central zone by using availability and random sampling technique after stratified the woredas into urban and rural woredas.

In order to collect sufficient and relevant data for the study, out of 3 urban woredas and 9 rural woredas of the central zone of Tigray regional state; the researcher selected all the urban woredas using availability sampling and four rural woredas through random sampling technique. Moreover, one preparatory and one secondary school were selected from each sample woredas using simple random sampling technique. The names of the selected woredas are Axum, Adwa and Abyi Adi from urban and Ahferom, Nadir Adet, Laelay Maychew and Werie Leke also from rural woredas of the sample zone. Moreover, the researcher had used purposive sampling and it is a process seeking to see high – informed persons and those, who have direct relations. Moreover, the researcher had interviewed only to 7(100%) woreda education head officials. Generally the major categories of respondents had summarized as follows

Sample zone	Sample Woredas		Categories of Respondents				
	Urban Woredas	Rural Woredas	Type of Respondents	WEO		School	
				Urban	Rural	Type	
Central	Axum	Ahferom	Supervisor	6	12	Principals of Preparatory	7
	Adwa	Laely- Maychew	TDP	6	12	Principals of Secondary	7
	AbiAdi	Nadir- Adet	Curriculum	3	8	Principals of Elementary	21
	-	Worie-Leke	Quality Assurance	3	4	Department Heads	42
	-	-	Planner	3	4	-	
	-	-	Data Encoder	3	4	-	
1	3	4	Total	24	44	Total	77

But, 68(69.4%) Staff members (2 supervisors, 2 performers of Teacher Development Program (TDP), one performer of curriculum, one performer of quality assurance, one planner and one data encoder) from each urban woredas and (3 supervisors. 3 performers of teacher development program (TDP), 2 performers of curriculum, one performer of quality assurance, one planner and one data encoder) of the rural woredas of Education offices out of 98, 14(100%) Principal of secondary schools, 21(22.12%) principals of full elementary school out of 95 and 42 (30%) head departments of secondary schools out of 140 were given questionnaires. Thus, the total numbers of respondents would have 145.

With this, the researcher employed different sampling technique to select respondents from these woredas understudy and the woredas might be secured adequate cooperation and assistance, to my study.

- After stratified purposive sampling was utilized in selecting process performers of TDP and Curriculum from each woreda education offices.
- Availability sampling technique used in selecting the head officers of woreda education offices, process performer of quality assurance ,planner and data encoder of the WEOs, principals of preparatory and secondary schools.
- Simple random sampling was applied in selecting supervisors of WEOs, principals of full elementary schools, department heads of Preparatory and secondary schools.

In short the respondents were selected from head officers, staff members of woreda education offices, principals of preparatory, secondary and full elementary schools and department heads of preparatory and secondary schools of the seven woredas understudy.

3.5. Procedure of Data Collection

First, the questionnaires and interview guides were prepared in English and then translated in to Tigrigna. The researcher has made first contact with head officers of the woredas to get permission to have an appointment for the interview and to distribute the questionnaires to employees in the office to fill the questionnaire individually. Following this the researcher has made an interview with head officers of each selected woredas and consulted available documents related to strategic planning, to obtain additional data for the study.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collect through questionnaires (closed-ended) were presented in table form using frequency counts and percentages. Frequency counts and percentages are calculated for those items prepared in Likert type scale and for more advanced statistical operations and decisions making as such items weighted mean, chi-square and Kolmogorov-Smimov one-sample test, were used to check whether there is a significance difference in the distribution of preferences among groups of respondents in terms of given items. The responses obtained from open-ended items of the questionnaire, interview, and document analysis were used to substantiate the analysis in each table. Since the interview questions designs to get extensive

data and to use as triangulation. The qualitative data obtained from the documents, semi structure interview, and questionnaire were transcribed, edited and analyzed by using content analysis method, and organized around the subtopics derived from the research basic questions.

Furthermore, before administering the questionnaires for data collection in the sampled woreda education offices, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and how to fill the questionnaires by the researcher him self. An interview was also conducted through disclosing the purpose of the study based on the permission and willingness of respondents by the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In this part, the data that had been secured through questionnaire, interview, and document analysis concerning the strategic planning in woreda education offices in central zone of Tigray have been presented, analyzed and interpreted both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Questionnaires were distributed to Staff members of WEO (Process performers, Experts, Planners, Supervisors and data Encoders), School respondents (Principals and Head departments) and principals of full elementary schools. In general out of 145 (100%) questionnaires distributed 136 (93.8%) were collected. Besides, the interview guideline designed for the head officials of WEO of the sample woredas⁷.

4.1. Characteristics of Respondents

As it can be understood, employees' general characteristics, like , sex, age, educational qualifications and work experience have an impact on the Strategic planning formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation process and overall performance of organizational activities. With this assumption, the researcher has tried to analyze the characteristics of sample of respondents as follows.

In order to gather the necessary information for the study, 145 copies 77 for school respondents (principals and head departments) and 68 for Office respondents (process performers, experts, educational planners, Supervisors and data encoders of WEO) of questionnaires were developed and distributed to the target respondents. However, all the distributed questionnaires were not fully filled and returned to the research due to various reasons. Accordingly, the rate of return was (93.8%). Specifically, among 77 questionnaires distributed for school respondents 70(90.9%) and out of 68 questionnaires distributed for Office respondents, 66 (97.1 %) were collected with unreserved efforts made by the researcher.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Respondents

N O	ITEMS		WEO		SCHOOL				Total	
			count	%	Principals		Dep't heads		count	%
					count	%	count	%		
1	Sex	Male	59	89.4	28	93.3	31	77.5	118	86.7
		Female	7	10.6	2	6.7	9	22.5	18	13.3
		Total	66	100	30	100	40	100	136	100
2	Age	21-25	8	12.9	5	16.7	7	17.5	20	14.7
		26-30	13	19.7	5	16.7	7	17.5	25	18.4
		31-35	15	22.7	8	26.7	11	27.5	33	24.3
		36-40	18	27.3	10	33.3	13	32.5	41	30.1
		>40	12	18.2	2	6.7	2	5.0	16	11.8
		Total	66	100	30	100	40	100	136	100
3	Educational Status	Master	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Degree	63	95.5	30	100	37	92.5	130	95.6
		Diploma	3	4.5	-	-	3	7.5	6	4.4
		Certificate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Total	66	100	30	100	40	100	136	100
4	Field of specialization	EDPM	16	24.2	7	23.3	-	-	23	16.9
		Pedagogy	1	1.5	-	-	-	-	1	0.7
		Curriculum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Others	49	74.2	23	76.7	40	100	112	82.4
		Total	66	100	30	100	40	100	136	100
5	Total Service	1-5	10	16.1	8	26.7	10	25	28	20.6
		6-10	9	14.5	6	20	7	17.5	22	16.2
		11-15	13	19.7	4	13.3	5	12.5	22	16.2
		16-20	12	19.4	4	13.3	6	15	22	16.2
		>20	22	33.3	8	26.7	12	30	42	30.8
		Total	66	100	30	100	40	100	136	100

As can be seen from item one of (Table-1), among the total (136) respondents included in the study, 118(86.7%) were males and only 18 (13.3%) of them were females. This shows that there is still gender gap which is common problem in almost all levels of organizations of

woreda education of Tigray regional state.. In other words, 2 (2.6%) of female respondents in the lower workforces (Department heads) and 1 (14.17%) of principals, 6(7.15%) in the middle level (WEO process performers, planners, supervisors and experts) were presented in the position. This shows that the participant of females was almost insignificant even in the front line implementers of plans. To this effect, since lack of female participation could result in failing to incorporate their needs in the plans that would help address the major issues of entire female population of the potential stakeholders, the region should work harder to increase their involvement in the higher officials of the region and planning activities at various levels. They should give much attention to empower females in all levels of educational organizations of the region.

Regarding the age limits of the respondents, a large proportion was found in the age interval of 30 years and 40 years although there were few in the age below 30 years and above 40 years. More importantly, the specific figures in the above table showed that the age intervals where the majority of the respondents' falls differs as the respondents' group vary. On the other hand, this table showed that good number of principals and head departments and educational planners, experts, process owner/performer of region and woredas seem to fall in similar age groups. That is 10(33.3%) of the principals, 13(32.5%) of department heads and 18(27.3%) woreda planners, process performers and experts were in the age limit of 36-40 years. And 8(26.7%) of the principals, 11(27.5%) of department heads and 15(22.7%)WEO planners, process performers and experts were in the age limit of 31-35 years. Others, who are relatively insignificant in number, fall in the two extreme age limits (21-25, 26-30, and above 40 years). From this, one can infer that the major plan implementers (principals and department heads) were found in the age group of 36-40 years which would show that the majority of the strategic plan implementers were in the productive age level that could highly help effective strategic plan preparation, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation if properly coordinated.

On top of this, Table 1 revealed the educational qualification of respondent, thus, 59(95.5%) of planners, process performers and experts of WEOs, 30(100%) secondary and full elementary school principals and 37(92.5%) department heads of secondary school were first degree (BA/BSc/BEEd) holders. While 3(4.48%) of WEOs' planners, process performers and

experts, 3(7.5%) department heads of secondary school were diploma holders. From these data we can infer that the majority of the educational planners, process performers and experts did have the qualification expected to the position. More importantly, no respondent in the study had certificate.

Moreover, as shown in table 1, the respondents were asked about their field of specialization. The data indicated that 47(75.8%) of WEO planners, process performers and experts of the respondents field of study were not related to the position they were assigned. However, only 1(1.5%) of WEO planner was studied in Pedagogical science and only 16(24.3%) was studied in educational planning and management. More importantly, it was indicated that all school principals did not study in educational planning and management or pedagogical science. This means only 7(23.3%) of them were studied in educational planning and management. But the 23(76.7%) had rather studied fields like Geography, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, English, Amharic, History, Physical education, and so forth.

These data indicated that educational planners, process performers and experts in the woredas and principals in the schools did not study related field that were closely associate with their current position. This may show that educational leaders, planners and experts did not have the required knowledge and skill how to manage organizations and lead employees in preparing and implementing the strategic plan. Besides, as shown in Table 1, item5, WEO planners, process performers and experts were in the service boundary of 11-15, 16-20 and above 20 years respectively. From this, it can be inferred that the largest proportion fall in the relatively highest years of services. Similarly, 8(26.7%)of principals of the selected schools and 12(30%)head departments were found in the range of 11-20 years and above 20 years of services. It seems that the education offices and schools of the selected woredas have relatively enough number of well experienced planners, process performers, experts, principals and department heads that could have better understanding on how to effectively prepare, implement and/or monitor and evaluate the educational strategic plans.

4.2. Analysis of strategic planning in woreda education offices

This part is tried to present the analysis of the data obtained from questionnaires, interview and document analysis. The analysis has been done between two groups: WEO Educational officials, planners, process performers and experts represented by office respondents and on the other group, principals and department heads represented by school respondents. The analysis has been categorized under seven major categories such as pre-conditions for effective preparation, implementation of educational strategic planning activities, Educational strategic planning (vision, mission, values, goals, objectives and action plans), adequacy and utilization of resources for effective preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans, competency of WEO heads and planners for effective preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans, plan monitoring and evaluation in order to follow the success and failure of the objectives against present target in selected woredas of central zone of Tigray region discussed here under.

4.2.1. Prerequisites of Effective Strategic Planning Activities

Strategic planning in general and educational strategic planning in particular is a collective activity which helps to manage the future actions and minimize uncertainties of organizations. A strategic planning activity basically undergoes preparations, implementations and monitoring and evaluation phases. In doing so, mainly to assure its successful practices, there are various basic elements that need to be put in place throughout its processes. These governing elements include meaningful participation of stakeholders, planners' knowledge and/or experience for effective educational strategic plan practice, availability and adequacy of resources and competencies and commitment of woreda education officials.

In order to examine the availability and adequacy of these basic pre-conditions in various levels of the selected woredas of the central zone of Tigray responses were obtained using the five point of likert types scale ranging as very poor (1), poor (2), medium (3), good (4) and very good (5). Following these the mean value for t-test and percentage for Chi-square for every item were calculated and made ready for interpretation. In order to test the

significant differences between the two independent group office respondents(WEO planners, process performers and experts) and school respondents(principals and department heads) at alpha 0.05 level of significance. Accordingly, for the items analyzed by t-test, the mean scores calculated from the data were decided to be used for interpretation as 0.05- 1.49 very poor, 1.5-2.49 poor, 2.5-3.49 medium, 3.5-4.49 good and above 4.49 very good. Thus, the mean value for every item was interpreted using the median dividing line at 3.0. Thus, mean score below 3.0 were taken as weakness/threats: While above 3.0 were interpreted as strengths/opportunities.

4.2.2. Meaningful participation of stakeholders

In order to ensure effective and efficient strategic planning practices, the parties that are basically affected by a particular development project/plan should be involved in the strategic planning activities in as much as possible, partly to ensure that detained information on social conditions and needs is obtained; and partly to encourage a sense of involvement in and commitment to the strategic plan by people.

Major importantly, meaningful participation of the concerned stakeholders in the strategic planning enables the planning processes to focus on the commonly felt needs of the stakeholders through group involvement and facilitates smooth strategic plan implementation with fewer resources but maximum efficiency. Thus, under this section, discussion regarding the trend of meaningful involvement of potential stakeholders in the practice of preparing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating educational strategic planning, by attaching the literary works of various scholars and studies made before in similar area were made as follows.

As can be observed from table 2 below, all items except item 2 & 6,were rated as poor and very poor by majority of the respondents were asked the extent of principals and department heads involvement in the educational strategic plan preparation and implementation. Based on this, 57(41.9 %) of the respondents confirmed as poor on the idea that principals and department head involvement in strategic plan preparation. Active involvement of the major stakeholders is significantly important since it could create sense of belong ness in the

parties, and they feel that it is their needs that are to be addressed by the strategic plans. Moreover, parties that are affected by a given plan participate in the strategic planning process: easily understand the strategic plan and become more willing for its successful accomplishment (Lewis et al, 1995). Despite these reality, it can be felt that the strategic planning activities in the selected woredas of the central zone of Tigray regional state lacks principals and department heads seemingly important contributions for its effective practices because of their limited roles in the process. This implies, principals and department heads, who are the front line plan implementers seem to execute the strategic plans that they had not participated in its preparation. And, it is likely that such trend could discourage these major plan actors not to exert their maximum efforts and eventually show failure.

On the other hand, with principals and department heads commitment to effective preparing and implementing of educational strategic plans, 40(29.4%) of the respondents showed that as fair/ medium. Thus, although commitment is a vital element in order to execute the strategic plans as effectively as possible woredas of Tigray region seems to lack it to varied degrees.

On top of this, the degree that, 63(46.3%) of the respondents the draft strategic plans are brought for public discussion mainly by the education sector community, and 55(40.4%) of the respondents responded that the incorporation of their feedbacks acceptance for further improvements as very poor. This could have message that these principals and department heads are less important and their feedbacks are not valuable. Moreover, when someone is invited to comment on something and his/her feedbacks are left unused. It seems that the individuals are not as important as it should to be; and his /her idea is not considered as useful.

A table 2 item 5, 60 (44%) of the respondents are dealing with the involvement of external stakeholders, (NGOs, private investors, community) in the strategic plan preparation and implementation confirmed as poor. This indicates that the strategic planning practice in woredas of Tigray region lack active involvement of external stakeholders' (NGOs, private investors, community....).

Additionally, on the above ideas interviewees have shared their views in the following ways. Most interviewees (22%) have stated that the role of external stakeholders in the strategic plan preparation was so high and encourage through out its process. But (78%) of the interviewee have great complains on the participation of external stakeholders' mainly NGOs, private investors, communities; the fact that their participation has almost been given less attention.

Despite this, the interviewees have recommended that participation should be to the optimum level since involvement of concerned bodies could highly facilitate strategic plan implementation. In support of this view, Parkinson et al (1984) forwarded the following on the significance of participation in the planning process as:

When a person participates, when he makes suggestions, when his views are given importance, he feels important. His self respect is enhanced. He, then naturally exerts himself in the best possible manner when members of group participate in its activities: the group drives the benefit of their combined knowledge, experiences and skills. Unnecessary conflict is avoided and the task is performed with maximum efficiency.

Finally, as can be seen from table 2 of item 6, respondents were asked the availability of the strategic plans document at simplicity for all stakeholders, 44(32.3%) of the respondents pointed out the availability of strategic plan document ease for all stakeholders also as a medium. Furthermore, the interviewees confirmed that, the orientations were provided for stakeholders' to make clear all this issues. The researcher also observed the vision, mission, and goals of the region and each sample woreda education offices posted in the place where any one interested can read. This shows that, an effort was made to introduce the strategic plans to the different stakeholders'. This may bring some contribution in the effective implementation of the strategic plans. Moreover, the responses of the interviewees and analysis of the strategic plan document revealed that all organizations have developed three years strategic plans for their organizations.

Table 2: Responses on the stakeholders' participation

Item	Meaningful participation in preparing and implementing strategic plans at your woredas		Rank of the respondents				
			5	4	3	2	1
1	The extent to which principals and department heads involve in the strategic plan preparation	F	7	8	28	57	36
		$F_0(x)$	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.40	0.20
		$S_n(x)$	0.05	0.11	0.32	0.74	1.00
		$/F_0(x)-S_n(x)$	0.95	0.69	0.28	0.34	0.80
2	The degree to which principals and department heads are committed to effective strategic plan preparation	F	27	29	40	27	13
		$F_0(x)$	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.40	0.20
		$S_n(x)$	0.19	0.41	0.70	0.90	1.00
		$/F_0(x)-S_n(x)$	0.81	0.39	0.10	0.50	0.80
3	The degree to which principals and department heads feedbacks are taken for improvement	F	4	5	18	54	55
		$F_0(x)$	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.40	0.20
		$S_n(x)$	0.02	0.06	0.19	0.59	1.00
		$/F_0(x)-S_n(x)$	0.98	0.74	0.41	0.19	0.80
4	The degree to which discussions made on the draft of the strategic plan by the education sector community	F	3	6	24	40	63
		$F_0(x)$	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.40	0.20
		$S_n(x)$	0.02	0.80	0.24	0.53	1.00
		$/F_0(x)-S_n(x)$	0.98	0.00	0.36	0.13	0.80
5	The degree to which external stakeholders participate in the strategic plan preparation and implementation	F	-	10	16	60	50
		$F_0(x)$	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.40	0.20
		$S_n(x)$	0.00	0.07	0.19	0.63	1.00
		$/F_0(x)-S_n(x)$	1.00	0.73	0.41	0.23	0.80
6	Availability of the strategic plan document at ease for all stakeholders	F	17	29	44	24	22
		$F_0(x)$	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.40	0.20
		$S_n(x)$	0.12	0.33	0.66	0.83	1.00
		$/F_0(x)-S_n(x)$	0.88	0.47	0.06	0.43	0.80

Statistically Significant at alpha= 0.05, critical value of D=0.116

In order to test the significance of the differences between the responses Kolmogorov-Smirnov D test was applied. The calculated D test value is 0.95 for item 1, 0.81 for item 2, 0.98 for item 3, 0.98 for item 4 and 1.0 for item 5 and 0.88 for item 6, all of which are greater than the critical value (0.116) at 0.05 alpha levels. So the difference of responses among respondents is significant. From this, we can imply that the opinions of the respondents are the same regarding the meaningful participation in preparing and implementing strategic plans.

4.2.3. Planners' knowledge and/or experience

Planning is a continuous exercise that requires collective knowledge and/or experience of the plan actors. By knowledge, it means that the planners should necessary be equipped with the required planning know how and skills which could make the strategic plans effective and achievable. In other words, planners who have received good amount and kind of trainings in planning field could design varieties of techniques in order to address the most pressing needs of the society using the knowledge and skills they have. Similarly, planning experiences is significant important for effective strategic plan preparation and implementation. In other words, the fact that strategic planning involving a continuous activity, the out put of one stage could serve as inputs for the subsequent stage: and individuals who are taking part in the strategic planning process could learn much as they spent more times in these activities. Moreover, experience is a school by itself.

In the table below (table 3), data with regarding the knowledge and/or experiences of the strategic planning in woreda education offices in central zone of Tigray is presented: and consequently, discussions were made accordingly following the procedures undergone in next section.

Table 3: Responses on planners' knowledge and/or experience

Items	Planners' knowledge and/or experience on educational strategic plan	Respondents	Rating Scale										- X
			V. good		Good		Medium		Poor		V. poor		
			f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Availability of qualified person in educational planning process	Office	3	4.6	12	18.2	21	31.8	25	37.9	5	7.6	2.74
		School	12	17	10	14.3	14	20	21	30	13	18.6	2.81
2	Availability of continuous trainings for the education strategic planning	Office	7	10.6	8	12	21	31.8	24	36.4	6	9.1	2.78
		School	12	17.1	10	14.3	15	21.4	20	28.6	13	18.6	2.82
3	Adequate years of experiences of planners on strategic plan practices	Office	2	3	3	4.5	28	42.4	29	43.9	4	6.1	2.54
		School	7	10	10	14.3	13	18.6	30	42.9	10	14.3	2.62
4	The degree to which the planners are sent for further upgrading in educational planning	Office	3	4.6	10	15.2	20	30.3	29	43.9	4	6.1	2.98
		School	10	14.3	10	14.3	12	17.1	24	34.3	14	20	2.68
5	The relevance of planners' academic background to the strategic planning practices	Office	3	4.6	11	16.7	16	24.2	22	33.3	14	21.1	2.80
		School	8	11.4	16	22.9	12	17.1	20	28.6	14	20	2.77

Table 3 clearly depicted the opinions of the two categories of respondents on the availability of qualified person, availability of continuous trainings, adequate years of experience of planners, the degree to which the planners are sent for further upgrading and the relevance of planners' academic background in educational strategic planning practices in the sample woredas of the central zone of Tigray were poor and medium with weighted mean value for every item 2.74 and 2.81, 2.78 and 2.82, 2.54 and 2.62, 2.98 and 2.68 and 2.80 and 2.77 by office and school respondents respectively.

In relation to the planners knowledge and/or experience, the interviewees have also confirmed that the availability of qualified person in educational planning, continuous training for the educational strategic planning, adequate years of experience of planners, further upgrading in educational planning and the relevance of planners' academic background to the strategic planning practices were poor or enough attention given to the center than grass root levels of the woredas. For instance For instance, most interviewees specially stressed that the education plans and resources mobilization program officers in most woredas were qualified in Geography, Mathematics, Chemistry, and so on that have no relevant trainings on educational strategic planning. Thus, this could be the case why both office and school respondents complained on the relevance of strategic planners' academic background as poor and medium.

However, most literatures repeatedly suggest that strategic plans which are practice by experienced planners in relevant areas could result better outcomes than strategic plans prepared by non-professionals reactionaries with less or strategic planning experiences. Moreover, experience is a school by itself where individuals can accumulate good amount and kind of operating skills. Furthermore, skilled, relevant and adequate academic knowledge in strategic planning/managing education with vast planning experiences help the planners internalize the common needs of the society and design effective involvement mechanisms from the very start to the last phase of strategic planning processes. Stressing, this Forojalla (1993) has illustrated that effective strategic planning practices require relevant and adequate planning knowledge and/or experiences: and hence, the educational strategic planning would result in desired outcomes if prepared by professional's planners with special skills.

In summary, the discussions made above have brought the researcher to say that the educational strategic planners: knowledge and experience in the planning and managing education was poor. These seem the strategic planning responsibilities in education office of the sample woredas remain the tasks of individuals. This is in accordance the finding of Bharadwaj and Balchandran (1988) saying that educational strategic planning in educational organizations of developing countries generally lack highly trained, specialized and well

experienced personnel of middle administrative levels (woredas) which is a must for economically efficient and management.

4.2.4. The Components of educational strategic planning

Table 4: Responses on vision, mission, value, goal, objective, & action plan.

Items	The components of strategic planning	Respondents	Rating Scale									
			V. good		Good		Medium		Poor		V. poor	
			f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
1	To what extent the vision statement provides a clear picture of the organization future	Office	4	6	15	22.7	22	33.3	17	25.7	8	12.1
		School	6	8.5	14	20	19	27.1	16	22.8	15	21.4
2	To what extent the vision statement is inspiring and challenging	Office	3	4.5	12	18.1	22	33.3	24	36.3	5	7.5
		School	4	5.7	15	21.4	17	24.2	30	42.8	4	5.7
3	To what degree the mission statement answers who we are, what we do, for whom we do and why it is important	Office	3	4.5	18	27.2	20	30.3	22	33.3	3	4.5
		School	3	4.2	14	20	18	25.7	23	32.8	12	17.1
4	The degree to which values can act as a foundation for the	Office	2	3	12	18.1	20	30.3	24	36.3	8	12.1
		School	4	5.7	8	11.4	26	37.1	22	31.4	10	14.2
5	The degree to which the goal supports the mission & reflects strategic direction	Office	2	3	30	45.5	22	33.3	10	15.2	2	3
		School	12	17.1	15	21.4	20	28.6	13	18.6	10	14.3
6	The extent to which objectives are clear & understandable to all stakeholders	Office	3	4.5	10	15.1	22	33.3	24	36.3	7	10.6
		School	5	7.1	15	21.4	18	25.7	20	28.5	12	17.1
7	The action plan contains a time frame for completion	Office	2	3	30	45.5	18	27.3	13	19.7	3	4.5
		School	2	2.8	20	28.6	21	30	10	14.3	17	24.3

In table 4 of item 1, regarding the vision statement provides a clear picture of the organization future 22(33.3%) of the office respondents and 19(27.1%) of school respondents revealed that the vision statement provides a clear picture of the organization is medium. On the contrary, 17(25.7%) of office and 16(22.8%) of school respondents confirmed that, the vision statement provides a clear picture of the organization is poor. Therefore, it might be inferred that the vision of the organizations are not clear that provide a vivid picture of the organizations future. The vision is not brief enough to be memorable which help for the achievement of the mission to be reality. Moreover, the qualitative data from interview and document analysis pointed out that most of the vision are not very clear to be implemented and monitored. However, the qualitative data revealed that there is still difference among the sample woredas on the vision.

In table 4 with regarding the inspiring and challenging of the vision statement 24(36.3%) office and 30(42.8%) school respondents confirmed that the inspiring and challenging of the vision statement of the strategic plan was poor. On the other hand, 22(33.3%) and 17(24.2%) of office and school respondents respectively approved that the inspiring and challenging of the vision statement of the strategic plan in the WEOs are medium. In this regard visions had not shared among the concerned bodies of the sample woredas and all levels of the educational organizations those who will be implementing the vision. The major challenge of the strategic planning implementation is the perception of sharing vision with certain individuals and considering shared as the employees of the whole organization.

As shown in the table 4 item 3, the majority 22(33.3%) and 23(32.8%) of office and school respondents respectively agreed that the mission statement of the organization answer who we are, what we do, for whom to do and why it is important is poor. On the contrary, 20(30.3%) of office and 18(25.7%) of school respondents responded that the mission statement of the organization answer who we are, what we do, for whom to do and why it is important was found to be poor and medium. Moreover the researcher observed from the strategic document of the sample woredas, the mission of the WEOs under study were not clear, broad enough, articulate the ultimate outcome and make sense for employees even

though there were some sort of disparities among the sample woredas. In support of this finding the qualitative data revealed that the mission is not understandable to stakeholders.

In view of this, (kuber and Milan, 1996) stated that the mission statement is valuable tool in directing, planning and implementing organizational efforts. The mission describes customers and products or services. The mission is part of the organizations identity is all encompassing and is the ultimate rationale for the existence of the agency, program or sub program.

In table 4 item 4, it shows that the majority 24 (36.4%) and 22 (31.4%) of office and school respondents respectively reported that, the values can act as a foundation for the mission and vision is poor. On the contrary, 20 (30.3%) office and 26 (37.1%) school respondents have reported that its foundation is medium. Hence, it might be deduced that there is close similarity among sample woredas in formulating of values with some degrees of disparities. However, the values of the sample woredas did not promote employee excellence, describe the way customers should be treated, clarify expectation for quality performance and act as the foundation for the vision and mission due to the absence of active participation of stakeholders. On this regard, the Arizona model (2004) of strategic planning pointed out that values are factors that drive the conduct of an organization and guide the development and implementation of all strategies, policies and actions.

In item 5, the majority 30 (45.5%) offices and 15 (21.4%) school respondents regarding the goal supports the mission is good. On the contrary 22 (33.3%) and 20 (28.6%) of office and school respondents respectively expressed that, the goal supports the mission is medium. This implies the goals of the strategic plan in sample woredas were not found to be support the mission, reflect strategic direction, align with strategic issues, and useful to customers. In support of this finding, the qualitative data with key informant also revealed that in most cases the goal attainable since goals reflect the reality in the educational organizations.

For item 6, regarding the extent to which objectives are clearly and understandable to all stakeholders 24 (36.4%) and 20(28.6%) of office and school respondents respectively asserted that the extent to which objectives are clearly and understandable to all stakeholders

are poor. On the other hand, 22 (33.3%) and 18 (25.7%) of office and school respondents respectively reported that as they have medium understandable. Furthermore, the document analysis inferred that the objectives of the strategic plan are not challenging yet realistic and attainable, indicate less accountability to meeting objectives, can not lead to goal attainment with the strategic period. This may imply that the objectives unfit the criteria for quality objectives so that the objectives are not clearly stated in the strategic plan of the sample woredas. Consequently, as the literature states the objectives of the strategic plan should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bounded (SMART) which leads to the attainment of the mission of the organization Arizona model of strategic plan (2004).

As shown in table 4 of item 7 the majority 30(45.5%) and 20(28.6%) office respondents were agreed as good respectively. Besides, 18(27.3%) and 21(30%) of school respondents had responded as medium respectively. This implies the action plan of the organization is time bounded, show responsible, organ as resource requirements has sufficient details to track milestone. In view of this, the data analysis result revealed that action plan is included as part of strategic plan although it has been given due attention for its full implementation and evaluation. The real need is to systematically unfold the strategy and make it practical. By creating integrated action plan in all segments of the sample woredas that ensure all functions and divisions are aligned be hide it.

4.2.5 Adequacy and Utilization of Resources

Now a day, almost all governments of developing nations have priotizd the education sector believing that it could bring overall nations' socio-economic developments. A brilliant strategic plan that is not supported by the adequate and relevant resource may not be implemented at the expected quality and time frame. Likewise, the current Ethiopian government has given greater to the education sector. In order to run this prioritized, program as effectively as possible, the necessary resources should adequately by available for their successful implementation resources in the context refer to the human, financial, and material resources which all together push the program forward. Thus, this section presents whether or not the required resources were available both in quality and quantity and utilize properly for the smooth functioning of the strategic plans. It also tries to identify

which resources were to the optimum level and which was not. Therefore, table 4 revealed the data obtained from various responsibilities.

Table 5: Responses on the adequacy and utilization of resources

Items	The adequacy and utilization of resources	Respondents	Rating Scale										X ²
			V. good		Good		Medium		Poor		V. poor		
			f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Adequacy qualified manpower resources at woreda level	Office	3	4.6	17	25.8	22	33.3	20	30.3	4	6.1	11.11
		School	2	2.9	14	20	14	20	22	31.4	18	25.7	
2	Availability of effective planning team in woredas'	Office	2	3.0	13	19.7	30	45.5	18	27.3	3	4.6	13.61
		School	2	2.9	10	14.3	20	28.6	21	30	17	24.3	
3	The extent to which the allocated budget is released exactly on time	Office	2	3.0	10	15.2	30	45.5	22	33.3	2	3.0	17.84
		School	12	17.1	13	18.6	15	21.4	20	28.6	10	14.3	
4	Availability of necessary material resources	Office	2	3.0	8	12.1	29	43.9	25	37.9	9	13.6	4.67
		School	3	4.3	10	14.3	18	25.7	20	28.6	12	17.1	
5	The budget approved is based on the strategic of the plan	Office	2	3.0	10	15.2	30	45.5	20	30.3	4	6.1	14.42
		School	3	4.3	4	5.7	18	25.7	30	42.9	15	21.4	
6	The extent to which an effective utilization of available resources	Office	2	3.0	12	18.2	22	33	25	37.9	5	7.6	5.61
		School	5	7.1	8	11.4	25	35.7	20	28.6	12	17.1	
7	The extent to which adequate amount of fund to implement the plans	Office	2	3.0	4	6.1	14	21.2	28	42.4	18	27.3	3.39
		School	1	1.42	5	7.1	14	20	30	42.9	20	28.6	

* Statistically significant at alpha=0.05, X²= Chi-square, df=4, P value=0.05, X² table value=9.49.

In table 5 of item 1, regarding the availability of qualified manpower resources 22(33.3%) of the office respondents and 14(20%) of school respondents revealed that the availability of qualified manpower resources are medium. On the contrary, 20(30.3%) of office and

22(31.4%) of school respondents confirmed that, the availability of qualified manpower resource is poor. Chi-square test (χ^2) was applied to test the significance difference of the variables. Since the calculated Chi-square value (χ^2) is 11.11 which is greater than the table value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels. Hence, there is a statistical significance difference among the responses of the two groups. Therefore, the responses regarding the adequacy of qualified manpower resource is accepted. Thus, we can conclude that the opinions of office and school respondents are not the same regarding the existence of qualified manpower resources. From this, one can infer that with out competent and qualified manpower resources in the education system it will be very difficult to implement the strategic plans effectively and efficiently.

In item 2 of the above table, 30(45.5%) of office and 20(28.6%) of school respondents revealed that availability of effective planning team is medium. On the contrary, 18(27.3%) and 21(30%) of office and school respondents respectively proved that there is no effective planning team or poor. In order to test the significance difference among the responses of the respondents Chi-square test (χ^2) is applied. The calculated Chi-square test (χ^2) is 13.61, which is greater than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, there is significance difference between responses of the respondents. Thus, from the above findings, one can deduce that the opinions of office and school respondents are different regarding the availability of effective planning team. Furthermore, the woreda head officials in the interview session expressed that, the majority of the planning team members left their position due to different reasons. This may be slow down the preparation and implementation of strategic planning as expected.

The findings of the study is in agreement with MOE(2005) that at the regional and woreda level, capacity has been a serious problem, with a shortage of qualified manpower resource, and high turn over and staff posts left unfilled, and with the situation being much more serious in the less developed regions. Efforts to develop staff capacity have meet with the problem of trained staff leaving their posts since training enabled them to secure more attractive employment to a different place. Furthermore, Thompson and Strickland (2001) argued that, for effective strategic plan preparation and implementation staffing the organization is paramount. This includes putting together a strong management team, and

recruiting and retaining employees with the need experiences, technical skills, and intellectual capital. This may affect the whole process of the strategic planning.

Item with regarding the allocated budget was released exactly on time, as can be seen the table above, 30(45.5%) office and 15(21.4%) school respondents confirmed that the timely release of the allocated budget as medium, while 22(33.3%) and 20(28.7%) of office and school respondents respectively rated it as poor. The calculated Chi-square test value (χ^2) is 17.84, which is greater than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels. Hence, there is a statistical significance difference between the responses of the respondents. In item 4, with regarding the availability of necessary material resources as it can be seen in the above table, the majority 29(43.9%) and 18(25.7%) of office and school respondents respectively proved that the amount of availability of material resources to implement the strategic plan was medium. On the contrary, 25(37.8%) and 20(28.6%) of office and school respondents reported that availability of material resources to implement the strategic plan was poor. The calculated Chi-square value (χ^2) is 4.67, which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels. Hence, there is no statistical significance difference between the opinions of the respondents.

In reality, resources are the basic pre-conditions for every development project/plan and serving as a fuel for their successful accomplishments. Stressing this, Malan (1987): Smith et al(1991) described that every development program or plan should be provided with sufficient and proper resource including budget, manpower, materials, technical assistance and time is organizations need to attain successful implementation track record for their goals and objectives.

In table 5 of item 5, it is shown that, 30(45.5%) office and 18(25.7%) school respondents revealed that the budget were approved based on the strategic of the plan was medium. On the contrary, 20(30.3%) office and 30(42.9%) school respondents proved that the budget was not based on the strategies of the plans. In other words, majority of planners, process owners/performers, and experts of office and principals and department heads of schools confirmed that budgets are not approved based on plans. The calculated Chi-square test value (χ^2) is 14.42, which is greater than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) there is a statistical

significance difference between the opinions of the respondents. Hence, we can conclude that, the opinions of the office and school respondents are homogeneous regarding the budget approval to the strategies of the plan; the interviewees contended that, the budget approved does not fit with the strategies being implemented. The finding of this study is against the assumptions of the Thompson and Strickland (1966) and Judson (1996) that how well a strategic implementer likes budget allocation process. Too little finding shows progress and impede the ability of the organizational unities to execute their pieces of strategic plan professionally.

In table 5 of item 6, regarding the effective utilization of resources, 22(33.3%) office and 25(35.7%) school respondents confirmed that resources were effectively utilized to implement the plans as medium. On the contrary, 25(37.8%) and 20(28.6%) of office and school respondents respectively reported that, the utilization of available resources in the sample woredas were as poor. The Chi-square test value (χ^2) is 5.61, which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$), there is no significant statistical difference between the respondents. Hence, we can conclude that the opinion of planners, process owners/performers, experts, principals and department heads are the same regarding the effective utilization of available resources. At this point, it can be felt that, the necessary resources (human, financial, and material) are an accurate shortage although resources are the most important elements with out which plans are left as on paper documents and lose their practical values. However, MOE (2005) promoted about financial utilization that contradicts with the findings of this study that financial planning and implementation has been improved from time to time.

In relation to resource for the preparation and implementation of the strategic plans majority of interviewees said that there is no provision of resources such as budgets, facilities, human resources at the expected quality and quantity. There is no serious problem in the resource allocation rather on the utilization of available resources efficiently.

Generally, we can understand from this study that, except the provision of teachers and teaching and learning materials, the other resources (budgets, effective planning teams) which are very essential for the effective implementation of the strategic plans were not as

supposed to be. Consequently, it is less likely to realize the desired strategic goals in the sample woredas of the region unless the required resources are provided to the implementers at the right time.

In table 5 with regarding the availability of adequate amount of fund or budget 28(42.4%) office and 30(42.4%) school respondents confirmed that the availability of adequacy of budgets to implement the strategic plan was poor. On the other hand, 18(27.3%) and 20(28.7%) of office and school respondents respectively approved that the availability of adequate budgets in the WEOs are very poor. In order to test the significance of difference among the responses of respondents with regard to the amount of budgets to implement the strategies in the concerned woredas, Chi-square test was applied. The calculated Chi-square value(x^2) is 3.39 which is less than the critical value ($x^2_{cv}=9.49$), there is no a significant statistical difference between the opinions of the office and school respondents are the same regarding the availability of adequate amount of budget. This may affect the performance of the education sector to implement the strategies of the plan. In relation to budget, Mbua (2002) argued that shortage of funds is one of the causes of plan failures.

4.2.6 Competence of WEO heads in implementing the strategic plan

The competence of WEO heads and commitment in the effective implementation of strategic plans are an essential element in planning process. Educational leaders with no or little commitment to implement the strategies may not be able the organization to achieve the intended results. Furthermore, it is less likely that the educational strategic plans successfully implemented unless the educational leaders are highly committed to its implementation. This part deals with the competence and commitment of WEO heads in the implementation of educational strategic plans. After collecting the relevant data, Chi-square test and implementation were made accordingly.

Table 6: Responses on the competence of WEO heads

Items	Competence of WEO heads & management on effective educational strategic plan practice	Respondents	Rating Scale										X ²
			V. good		Good		Medium		Poor		V. poor		
			f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	
1	The extent to create strategically relevant measures of performance	Office	3	4.5	14	21.2	23	34.9	18	27.9	8	12.1	3.51
		School	6	8.6	14	20	19	27.1	16	22.9	15	21.4	
2	The ability to absorb new information	Office	3	4.6	14	21.2	20	30.3	24	36.4	5	7.6	7.95
		School	5	7.1	14	20	18	25.7	29	41.4	4	5.7	
3	The ability to think strategically	Office	3	4.6	16	24.2	20	30.3	24	36.4	3	4.6	7.43
		School	3	4.3	14	20	18	25.7	21	30	14	20	
4	The ability to create new strategies to move in new direction	Office	2	3.0	12	18.2	20	30.3	24	36.4	8	12.1	3.21
		School	4	5.7	6	8.6	22	31.4	26	37.1	12	17.1	
5	The ability to align people and organization	Office	2	3.0	10	15.2	24	36.1	27	40.9	3	4.6	4.97
		School	5	7.1	14	20	17	24.3	20	28.6	14	20	
6	The ability to translate strategies in to action	Office	3	4.6	10	15.2	22	33.3	24	36.1	7	10.6	6.87
		School	7	10	14	20	17	24.3	20	28.6	12	17.1	
7	The ability to define when strategically to change	Office	2	3.0	9	13.6	20	30.3	26	39.4	9	13.6	3.03
		School	4	5.7	5	7.1	23	32.9	24	34.3	14	20	
8	The extent to which communication in every direction top-down, bottom-up across each woreda department/lines	Office	3	4.6	9	13.6	24	36.1	22	33.3	8	12.1	3.23
		School	3	4.3	14	20	19	27.1	20	28.5	14	20	

* Statistically significant at alpha=0.05, X²= Chi-square, df=4, P value=0.05, X² table value=9.49

As shown in the table 6 item 1, the majority 23(34.8%) and 19(27.1%) of office and school respondents respectively agreed that the competence level of WEO heads to create strategically relevant measures performance is medium. On the contrary, 18(27.9%) of office and 16(22.9%) of school respondents responded that the competence of WEO heads to create strategically relevant measures of performance was found to be poor. The calculated Chi-

square value ($\chi^2=3.51$) does not exceed the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) there is no a statistical difference between the opinions of the two group respondents.

In table 6 item 2, the majority 24(36.4%) and 29(41.4%) of office and school respondents respectively expressed that WEO heads had poor competence to observe new information. On the other hand, 20(30.3%) and 18(25.7%) of office and school respondents agreed that WEO heads had medium capability to observe new information respectively. Since the Chi-square value is less than the critical value. ($\chi^2=7.95$, $\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$), there is statistical difference between the opinions of the office and school respondents regarding the capability in observing new information. This findings is not in fever of to the assumption of Davis Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) that strategic leaders occurs in an environment embedded in ambiguity, complexity, and information over load. It is important strategic leaders to recognize new information analyze it and apply it to new outcomes: leaders need the ability to learn.

In item 3 of the above table, 24(36.4%) planners, process performers and experts (office) and 21(30%) principals and department heads (school) respondents agreed that the WEO heads had poor ability to think strategically for the organizations advantages. Only 16(24.2%) office and 14(20%) school respondents agreed that they have good competence to think strategically. This implies that, the WEO heads give more attention to their daily managerial activities than being strategic. The Chi-square test ($\chi^2=7.43$, $\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) result shows that there is no statistically significance difference between the opinions of the office and school respondents. The finding of this research contradicts to the beliefs of Davis, Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) that strategic orientation can be considered to be establishment of out ward-looking organization which builds an understanding of possible future direction and involves engaging in strategic conversation and debate to focus on the appropriate direction and approach.

In table 6 item 4, it shows that the majority 24 (36.4%) and 26 (37.1%) of office and school respondents respectively reported that, WEO heads had poor competence to create new strategies to move in new directions. On the contrary, 20 (30.3%) office and 22 (31.4%) school respondents have reported that their competence is medium. Since the calculated

value does not exceeds the critical value ($X^2=3.21$, $x^2cv=9.49$), there is no significance difference conserved from the data. Hence, we conclude that opinions of office respondents (planners, process performers and experts) and school respondents (principals and department heads) are the same regarding the competence of heads to create new strategies to move in new directions.

In item 5, respondents were asked whether the WEO heads have the competence in aligning people and organization or not. 27(40.9%) and 20 (28.6%) of office and school respondents respectively revealed that, WEO heads had poor. Competence in aligning people and organizing, 24 (36.4%) and 17 (24.3%) of office and school respondents agreed that as they have medium competence respectively. The Chi-square test ($X^2=4.97$, $x^2cv=9.49$) results shows that there is no statistically difference between the opinions of office and school respondents. The finding of this study contradicts with the assumption of Davis, Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) strategic leaders have the ability to align people and organizations. This means leaders should have the competence to encourage commitment through shared values need to understand themselves and the values they hold and able to nurture quality communication.

For item 6, regarding the competence of WEO heads to translate strategies in to action 24 (36.4%) and 20(28.6%) of office and school respondents respectively asserted that they have poor competence. On the other hand, 22 (33.3%) and 17 (24.3%) of office and school respondents respectively reported that as they have medium competence. To test the significance difference between the two groups Chi-square test was applied. The calculated Chi-square value does not exceed the critical value ($X^2=6.87$, $x^2cv=9.49$), there is no a statistical difference. For this reason, we can conclude that the opinions of office and school respondents are the same regarding the competence of heads to translate strategies in to action. Consequently, the response of respondents regarding the competence of heads to translate strategies in to action is rejected. The finding of this study is against the assumption of Davis, Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) that strategic leaders need to translate strategy in to action by converting it in to operational terms. This is a process that involves identifying a series of projects that need to be under taken to move the organization from its current to its future state.

In item 6, the majority 26 (39.4%) and 24 (34.3%) of office and school respondents respectively rated the competence of WEO heads to define when strategically to change as poor. On the other side, 20 (30.3%) office and 23 (32.9%) school respondents rated as medium. Since the observed Chi-square value does not exceed the critical value ($X^2=3.03$, $x^2cv=9.49$), there is no a statistical significant difference among the two groups. Hence, we can bring to a close that the opinions of planners, process performers, experts, principals and department heads are the same regarding the competence of WEO heads to identify when strategy is to change. The finding of this research is against the theoretical assumption of Davis, Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) that the strategic leaders should have the ability to define not only what strategically to change but also when strategically to change. From the findings of the study, it is possible to infer that the leaders the educational system were not in a position to arrive at where they want to in the future.

In item 8, the majority 22 (33.3%) office and 20 (28.5%) school respondents approved that communication were poor in every direction. On the contrary 24 (36.4%) and 19 (27.1%) of office and school respondents respectively expressed that, the communication were medium in every directions. Since the observed Chi-square value ($x^2=3.23$) is not greater than the critical value ($x^2cv=9.49$) there is no a significant statistical difference. Therefore, the response to the extent of communication in every direction top-down, bottom-up and across each department lines is rejected. So, we can conclude that the opinions of office and school respondents are the same regarding the existing communication at various levels of the organization. However, by the open ended question they respond that the communication was not as expected that mostly top-down communication is more practiced.

4.2.7 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Plan monitoring and evaluation is a major step in strategic planning process which helps to follow the progress of the implemented strategic plan as to whether or not it is operating. Its purpose is mainly to follow the progress of the implemented strategic plans to take corrective measures, and to draw lessons for the next planning period by making continuums follow of plans before and/or after deviation occur. It can be carried out either at the preparatory phase (strategic plan preparation) or practical phase where strategic plans are put into effect (strategic plan implementation).

Hence, almost every organization needs to carry out plan monitoring and evaluation in order to evaluate the degree to which whether the basic objectives set in the strategic plans are successfully addressed or not; and to timely responses to stakeholders complaints and/or satisfactions.

In order to gather the necessary information on the actual practice of strategic plan monitoring and evaluation, respondents were asked lots of questions on the availability of an independent organ that carrying out the strategic plan monitoring and evaluation, and related issued as presented in table 6. It was presented using the five point likert type scale from very poor (1) to very good (5). Following this, the mean score were calculated and consequently interpreted as 0.05-1.49 very poor, 1.5-2.49 poor, 2.5-3.49 medium, 3.5-4.49 good and above 4.5 very good.

Table 7: Responses on the Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

ITEMS	Plan monitoring and evaluation	Respondents											
		Office(process performers, planners & experts)						School(principals& department heads)					
		5	4	3	2	1	- X	5	4	3	2	1	- X
1	The extent to which timely monitoring and evaluation of educational strategic plans carried out.	1	6	6	3	14	2.1	3	5	5	40	17	2.1
2	The degree to which the result of monitoring and evaluation be used to take corrective measures.	2	8	1	3	14	2.3	2	8	10	36	14	2.2
3	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by external evaluators.	-	3	9	3	20	1.9	-	4	11	37	18	2.0
4	The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators	1	2	2	8	6	3.4	1	2	18	14	8	3.1
5	The extent to which is monitoring and evaluation is done on regular bases.	2	6	2	2	9	2.5	3	6	24	29	8	2.5
6	The degree to which it is carried out before deviations occur.	2	2	1	3	3	4.0	3	2	9	4	3	4.0
7	The degree to which it is done after problem arises.	-	2	4	1	42	1.5	-	4	6	20	40	1.6

As clearly depicted in table 7, 4(57.1%) items 1, 2, 3 & 5 were found in between the mean value of 1.5-2.49 which would best describe less agreement to the items. Specifically, as the mean score in table 8 showed, the above mentioned items were rated as poor. In other words, timely monitoring and evaluation of strategic plans (mean=2.1), less frequently that the result of plan monitoring and evaluation used to take correctively measures (mean=2.2) less involvement of external parties in plan monitoring and evaluation (mean=1.9); and monitoring and evaluation has hardly been carried out on regular bases (mean=2.4); Thus, it seems that strategic plans monitoring and evaluation has not been given the necessary attention in sample woredas of the region.

However, plan monitoring and evaluation has been recognized as the mechanism to determine the relevance, effectiveness, and impacts of the given plan (Chang, 2008). Furthermore, it is recommended to be carried out both by insiders (individuals who are directly/ immediately affected by the plans) and outsiders (parties that are indirectly influenced by the strategic plans) in order to help decision makers and other stakeholders learn lessons and apply than in future plans although woreda education office seems to be seriously affected by its absence.

Worse than these, item 7, was rated as very poor. In other words, the item revealed that there is no an independent organs that monitors and evaluates the strategic plans (mean=1.48). Because of this, strategic plan are often seen while evaluated after the problems occur (mean=4.04) as to the views of respondents. On the other hand, item 4 was rated as medium. The item revealed that the degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators is medium.

Similarly, responses obtained from interview have supported the above ideas. In other words, the majority of the interviewee have witnessed there is no strategic plans monitoring and evaluation unit, less/ no regular plan follow up, less/ no involvement of concerned parties in plan monitoring and evaluation: and they claimed that the planning team usually attempts to

examine the extent of strategic plan accomplishment after plans have resulted in wider public dissatisfaction.

These interviewees have also expressed that, the major reasons that they have been resulting in failing to have strategic plan monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Among these, major challenges hindering effective plan monitoring and evaluation, lack of knowledge expressions, and resources were repeatedly stressed. But, in reality, in order to the risks that might be brought about as a result of poor strategic plan preparation and implementation, periodic strategic plan monitoring and evaluation is believed to take early measures before problems happen since it enables to follow the progress of the plans at every stage (Miron and Chinapah:1990).

In spite of this reality, from the above discussion, it generally seems that plan monitoring and evaluation in sample woredas of the region have been give less attention which would be due to lack of experiences and resources.

4.2.8 Major Difficulties of Preparing and Implementing Educational Strategic Plans

In order to ensure effective and efficient strategic planning practices, an intensive exploration of the major difficulties that could be speed up the process and/or hold the process back should be made at preparatory stage. This helps to take timely corrective measures and facilitate the way that brings to effective and efficient achievements of the desired results.

In this regard, table8, presents the major challenges that are frequently encountered in educational strategic planning activities by ragging their difficulty levels from not observed at all (1) to extremely serious (5). Thus, the respondents rated every item according their levels of seriousness of woredas realities.

Finally, for analysis purpose, the calculated mean values were categorized as 0.05-1.49 not observed, 1.5-2.49 observed, but not serious, 2.5-3.49 serious, 3.5-4.49 very serious and 4.5 above extremely serious.

Table 7 clearly depicted the opinions of the two categories of respondents on the existence, and degree of the major barriers that would be encountered while practicing educational strategic planning in the sample woredas of Tigray region. Thus, according to the calculated weighted mean value for every item, 14.28% (items 10 & 14), 35.71% (items 1, 6, 7, 9 & 13), 28.57% (items 3, 4, 5 & 8), and 21.43% (items 2, 11 & 12) were identified as extremely serious, very serious, serious, and observed but not serious respectively, and no mean for the option not observed at all.

To begin with the extremely serious ones, lack of incentives given to the works to embrace the new strategies and adequate or unreliable data were categorized as extremely serious pitfalls of educational strategic planning practices in the sample woredas of Tigray region with weighted mean values of 4.39 and 4.53 by office and 4.50 and 4.67 by school respondents respectively.

No incentives given to workers for motivation purpose rated as the most/ extremely serious problems with mean value of 4.39 and 4.50 by office and school respondents respectively. In specific terms, when workers are provided with incentives, they tend to develop motivation and exert their seeming important potentials for successful strategic planning activities. Moreover, as communication is the lifeblood of an organization, it highly helps workers to concentrate on the common goals of the organization and new strategies can effectively be executed since it creates smooth relationship in between and/or among workers and/or officials at various levels of the organization. Despite of these realities, the sample woredas of Tigray region seems to have given extremely less attention to the above issue which would certainly ensure failure.

Other important problems identified as extremely serious difficulties including in adequate and/or unreliable data with weighted mean value of 4.53 and 4.56 by office and school respondents respectively. The adequate and reliability of data is a major prerequisite for successful strategic planning activities. Unless the data we have adequate and reliable, it is extremely difficult to set achievable targets that could be addressed by the strategic plans, and the organizations would certainly face resource scarcity. Therefore, every development project/ strategic plan should necessary base its activities on adequate and reliable data. If not, over-planning may happen which would definitely entail failure. Thus, to conclude, this

problem was reported as extremely serious barriers to the educational strategic planning activities in the sample woredas of Tigray region.

Table 8: Responses on factors affecting the preparation & implementation strategic plan

ITEMS	Problems of preparing and implementing educational strategic plans	Respondents											
		Office(process performers, planners & experts)						School(principals& department heads)					
		5	4	3	2	1	- X	5	4	3	2	1	- X
1	Lack of meaningful participation of stakeholders	40	8	6	8	4	4.1	45	11	6	4	4	4.3
2	Lack of clear delegation in the region, woredas and school	4	6	5	25	26	2.1	4	3	6	14	43	1.7
3	Failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets	12	6	32	12	4	3.2	18	19	11	12	10	3.3
4	Inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of the plan action	6	26	25	5	4	3.4	82	22	24	5	11	3.2
5	Lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult	18	17	12	13	6	3.4	11	12	20	19	8	2.9
6	Inflexible organizational structures in the woredas	12	36	6	12	-	3.7	20	24	16	6	4	3.7
7	Inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems	33	13	12	5	3	4.0	36	13	12	5	4	3.9
8	Failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish tasks	4	13	35	14	-	3.1	63	13	33	12	6	2.9
9	Failure to follow the plan	33	13	13	5	2	4.1	40	16	6	4	4	4.2
10	No incentives given to workers to embrace the strategies	46	13	4	3	-	4.5	40	19	9	2	-	4.4
11	Lack of coordination among region and woreda education offices	4	5	8	13	36	1.9	4	4	11	31	20	2.2
12	Over-dependence on past experience	7	11	12	12	24	2.5	3	4	14	31	18	2.2
13	Lack of budget to implement the strategies	38	11	12	5	-	4.2	45	13	8	4	-	4.4
14	Inadequate or unreliable data	45	14	4	3	-	4.5	51	12	3	3	1	4.6

On the other hand, lack of stakeholders participation, inflexible organizational structures, inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation system, failure to follow the plans, and lack of budget to implement the strategies identified as very serious problem for the preparing and implementing of educational strategic plans with weighted mean of 4.09 and 4.27, 3.73 and 3.7, 3.88 and 3.89, 3.91 and 4.2 and 4.24 and 4.39 by office and school respondents respectively. Rigid organizational structure increases unnecessary bureaucracy and delays decision making process in strategic planning activities. Thus, organizations with successful strategic planning track record tend to fulfill the required resources and lessen the rigidity of its organizational structures. Planning process basically undergoes preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation which all require higher attention. More importantly, plan monitoring and evaluation is the major step which helps to assess the progress and impacts that have been brought about as a result of the strategic plans. Hence, it is this phase where evaluation with regard to whether or not objectives in this strategic plans have successfully been achieved and responses to stakeholders' satisfaction would be made. However, it seems that the educational strategic plan of the sample woredas lacks monitoring and evaluation which results in failing to control whether or not its objectives are addressed: This might have possibly resulted in failing to follow the outcomes of their strategic plans.

In relation to the monitoring and evaluation system, the interviewees assured the existence of the system. They believed that the system was providing information for stakeholders regarding the strategic plan implementation. However, according to them it was challenged by lack of professionals who can process the data and facilitate. Finally, they argued even though the monitoring and evaluation system has its own problems they were providing the necessary data that shows the status of the strategic plans. In addition from the interview the researcher understood that, there is lack of budget and poor utilization of available funds and budgets efficiently. The finding of this study is against to the assumption of Cunningham (1982) that states, if the budget does not support the plan the system has little chance of accomplishing it-the planning effort becomes a paper system lacking both subordinate respect and effort.

On top of this, failures to set meaningful and verifiable targets, lack of clear lines delegation, inadequate knowledge and/or experience of the plan actors, failure to obtain sufficient resource to accomplish the tasks, and lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult were rated as serious problems in the strategic planning activities of the sample woredas of Tigray region with weighted mean of 3.15 and 3.33, 3.38 and 3.16, 3.42 and 2.99, and 2.95 and 2.87 by office and school respondents respectively. Strategic planning highly helps organizations achieve the commonly felt needs of the service users. This can be done through setting clear and achievable targets. Effective and efficient strategic planning practice basically requires adequate and relevant planning knowledge and/or experiences of the plan actors. In other words, well experienced and knowledgeable know the most commonly felt needs of the society that can be addressed by plans and they could design verities of techniques to address resources (human, financial, material, time...) are basic pre-conditions for effective strategic planning practice with out which plans lose their practical values.

The items lack clear of delegation in the region, woredas and school, lack of coordination among the workers of region, woredas and schools; and over-dependence on the past experience have been reported as observed but not serious with weighted mean scores of 2.05 and 1.73, 1.91 and 2.16, and 2.19 and 2.19 by office and school respondents respectively. This implies that, these barriers are not seen while hindering the system although they are widely observed in different woredas of the region.

Generally, magnifying the aforementioned difficulties, Griff (2000); McNamara (2008) witnessed the above mentioned difficulties as major barriers to successful strategic planning practice. Moreover, the interview conducts with the higher officials, planners and inspections have generally strengthened these difficulties as the most commonly felt barriers across woredas of the region.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This is the last part of the study where the summary, conclusions and recommendations are presented. Before arriving at this point, the study has passed through various steps. In this process, the study was guided by a core purpose of examining Strategic Planning in Woreda Education Offices in Central zone of Tigray with the following four basic research questions.

- What does the practice of strategic planning at the woreda education offices show?
- What is the degree of stakeholders' participation in the existing educational strategic planning?
- To what extent are heads of woreda education offices competent to educational strategic planning?
- To what extent have monitoring and evaluation systems instituted in the design of strategic planning?

To answer the above research questions, the study had employed descriptive survey method by which seven woredas of the central zone of Tigray. Thus, the researcher was selected three urban woredas and four rural woredas through availability and random sampling technique respectively and the schools were included in the study based on random sampling techniques. In order to select respondents from the sample areas, availability, purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were applied.

As data gathering tools, questionnaires, interview, and document analysis were employed. The total numbers of sample respondents involved in the study were 145. In specific term, there were 68 office respondents of WEO (planners, process performers, supervisors and experts) and 77 school respondents (35 principals, and 42 department heads) included in the study.

The data obtained, mainly from questionnaires, were analyzed using percentage, mean, Chi-square, and t-test. At last, the analysis employed has resulted in the following major findings.

5.1 Summary of the major findings

Following the analysis made in the preceding part, the major findings of the study have been summarized here under.

Regarding the characteristics of respondents, it was shown that 89.4% of office and 84.3% school respondents were belonged to the male category. From this data, one can observe that there were more planners, process performers, experts, principals and department heads than their counter parts in professionals and leadership positions. In addition to this majority of office and school respondents were in age limit of 31-35 and 36-40. Concerning educational qualification 95.5% of office and 95.7% of school respondents were degree holders while the remains were diploma holders.

Among the key requirements for successful strategic planning activities that most literatures commonly suggest, participation of potential stakeholders, planners' knowledge and/or experience, availability of resources were systematically treated in the study. As a result, the study showed that the degree of stakeholders' involvement in preparing educational strategic planning was poor. In other words, the majority of office and school respondents responded that the extent to which discussion was made on the draft of the strategic plans by the educational sector communities and the extent of external stakeholders participation in educational strategic plan preparation and implementation was poor with mean value of 1.97 and 1.88 and 1.77 and 1.91 by office and school respondents respectively.

Further more, (28.6%) of the interviewees have witnessed that, the participation of the concerned external stakeholders in the strategic plan preparation were so high and encouraged throughout its process. But most (71.4%) of the interviewees head officers' of WEO have great complains on the participation of external stakeholders the fact that their participation has almost been given less attention. Generally, it seems there have been great complaints on the stakeholders' involvement in strategic planning practices of the sample wordas which all justify weak strategic planning trend.

On the other hand, the finding also proved that both categories of respondents together with interviewees commonly agreed that availability of qualified personal in educational strategic planning practice in the selected woredas have been less adequate. This was attested by 25 (37.9%) office and 21 (30%) of school respondents. The adequate years of experiences of planners on strategic planning practice was also proved as poor by 29 (43.9%) office and 30 (42.9%) school respondents. Thus, it can be inferred that, the strategic planning practices in the sample woredas seems to highly affected; and the major planning posts seem to have occupied by individuals whose academic know-how/experience are far to the strategic planning activities.

Regarding the adequacy and utilization of resources; it has been found that the necessary resources (human, financial, material, time) for successful planning practice in the selected woredas have generally have been medium and poor by office and school respondents respectively. This was confirmed by office and school respondents respectively as 22 (33.3%) and 22 (31.4%) for the availability of adequacy of qualified manpower resources, 29 (43.9%) and 20 (28.6%) for availability of material resources, 30 (45.5%) and 30 (42.7%) of office and school respondents regarding the availability of finance or budget proved as medium and poor respectively while 25 (37.9%) and 25 (35.7%) office and school respondents for effective utilization of time reported as poor and medium respectively. Thus, it seems that the scarcity of the available resources has been seriously challenging the smooth functioning of the educational strategic planning activities, with out which the strategic plans lose their practical values.

Concerning the competence of WEO heads, it has been reported that the competence of WEO heads in implementing the educational strategic plans were as some what poor by both group respondents. The existence of poor competence has been identified by both office and school respondents respectively as with 24 (36.3%) and 29 (41.4%) for the ability to absorb new information, 24 (36.3%) and 21 (30%) for the ability to think strategically, 24 (36.3%) and 26 (37.1%) for the ability to create new strategies to move in new directions, 27 (40.9%) and 20 (28.6%) for the ability to align people and organizations, 24 (36.3%) and 20 (28.6%) for the ability to translate strategies in to action and 26 (39.4%) and 24 (34.3%) for the ability to define when strategically to change. While, 23 (34.8%) and 19 (27.1%) for the

ability to create strategically relevant measures of performance as medium and 24 (36.4%) and 20 (28.5%) for the way of communication in every direction: top-down, bottom-up, across department lines were confirmed as medium and poor by both respondent groups (office and school respondents) respectively.

Regarding plan monitoring and evaluation, the majority of respondents have seriously complain that there has not been an independent organ that carries out regular plan monitoring and evaluation or adequacy of plan monitoring and evaluation system in the sample woredas of the region. In other words, the respondents have rated the existence of an independent organ that carries out plan monitoring and evaluation as poor with an average mean value of 1.63 and 1.57 for office and school respondents respectively. Unlike to this, the existence to which timely monitoring and evaluation of educational strategic plan carried out as poor with mean value of 2.1 by both respondent groups. Because of this, plan monitoring and evaluation has been on and off, and very often, there are times when it occurs to be carried out after the problems happen and plans have resulted in wider stakeholders unhappiness.

Concerning the major of difficulties of preparing and implementing educational strategic plans, among 14 possible major problems to the practice of preparing and implementing educational strategic plans in the selected woredas of the central zone of Tigray were identified as extremely serious with weighted mean score 4.50 and 4.53 by office, and 4.53 and 4.56 by school respondents. These, difficulties were: no incentives given to the workers to embrace the new strategies and inadequate or unreliable data.

Furthermore, 5 were identified as very serious problems encountered the educational strategic planning practice in the sample woredas with weighted mean ranging from 3.73 to 4.39. These were lack of stakeholders participation, inflexible organizational structures, inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation system, failure to follow the plans, and lack of budget to implement the strategies.

Additionally, 4 were identified as serious difficulties facing the educational strategic plan activities of the selected woredas with weighted mean scores between 2.99 to 3.42. These

include: failure to test meaningful and verifiable targets, lack of clear lines of delegation, inadequate knowledge and/or experience of the plan actors, failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish the tasks, and lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult.

Finally, 3 were reported as observed but not, serious problems with weighted mean scores ranging 1.73 to 2.16. These were lack of clear delegation in the region, woredas and school; lack of coordination among the workers of region, woredas, and schools; and over-dependence on the past experience.

CONCLUSIONS

Strategic planning is the corner stone of every organization with out strategic planning. The organization will never know where it is going. Therefore, this study was discussed on the strategic planning in woreda education offices in central zone of Tigray. Based on the findings, the following conclusions have been developed.

The basic preconditions for successful strategic planning activities such as meaningful participation of stakeholders and relevant planner knowledge and/or experience were found to be weak across woredas of the region. Any plan to be successful in its implementation, the provision of resources with the right kind and number is mandatory. In this study, it was found that there were a shortage of adequate facilities and qualified manpower in education planning. Furthermore, the study indicated that not only the budget approved based on the strategies of the plan but there was also delay to release the allocated budget. Similarly, the components of the strategic plan were formulated but not integrated with each other at the expected level to change the plan in to implementation. This make it less likely to move in the new strategic directions successfully and release the strategic goals as expected in the educational strategic planning process in the sample woredas.

Furthermore, the study found out that, the competence of WEO heads to carry out their obligations in implementing the strategic plans was poor. They were responding to a day-to-day problem than focusing on how to create a better future by being proactive.

Thus, in this case the attainment of long term strategic goals in the selected woredas was not as expected. The monitoring progress towards the achievement of goals is important and valuable. In finding it is indicated that there was inadequacy of plan monitoring and evaluation system in sample woredas. From this, one can infer that relevant and timely data was hard to find to the decision makers and implementers. From this, it is possible to imply that monitoring system may not be in a position to judge progress, to ensure the strategic plan implementation is on the track and to make any necessary corrections.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations have been forwarded accordingly with the objective of improving the existing situations.

5.2.1 Promoting Strategic Planning Practice at Woreda Level

As shown in the findings, the current practice of educational strategic planning in the sample woredas were faced with lack of knowledge and understanding of strategic planning, lack of commitment to participate stakeholders, failure to design SMART objectives, failure to coordinate, inadequate reporting and poor controlling techniques. Hence, to overcome this difficulty, the region should design strategies that are promoting the performance of the woredas via continuous capacity building training and strengthening the planning capacity of the woredas.

5.2.2 Mounting Stakeholders' Participation

Among the major findings made in the study, lack of meaningful participation of the potential stakeholders in the educational strategic planning practices is the first one. Thus, it is logical to recommend that developing or enhancing the stakeholders' involvement in various decisions making areas affecting to the strategic planning activities, and giving appropriate attention to the feedbacks of these stakeholders' timely response to the existing situations of educational strategic planning practices in the sample woredas of central zone of Tigray region.

5.2.3 Providing Sustainable Capacity Building Training for WEO heads

An effective educational strategic leader ensures the organization has clear purpose and direction and the means to achieve the purpose, planning and change are the primary jobs of the leaders to day and strategic thinking is the way to do this. However, the study indicated that the WEO heads lacks thinking strategically. Hence, it is suggested that leadership development may be the best way to develop strategic thinking by providing deep and need based short term and long term capacity building training in educational planning and creating conducive environment for educational leaders.

5.2.4 Creating an independent Organ for Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Plan monitoring and evaluation was one the major variables treated in this study, and it has been found out that there was no independent organ that carries out plan monitoring and evaluation. It seems that its absence has been hindering the woredas of the region not to assess, regularly, their planning performance and accordingly to take early corrective measures before differences occur. Thus, it is recommended that the region should establish an independent body having teams across the woredas in order to follow the progress of the strategic plans and their levels of execution so as to give timely strategic solutions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix - A

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies
College of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management
Educational Policy and Planning Stream

This Questionnaire filled by school respondents (Principals & Department heads) and it has been prepared to collect relevant information for a thesis entitled “Strategic Planning in Woreda Education offices in central zone of Tigray.” Thus, it mainly focuses on examining the current practice of educational strategic plan in the sample woredas of the central zone of Tigray region.

Considering that you are one of the responsible professionals in finding solutions to the problems of the preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans in the region, this research has chosen you as one of the resourceful respondent for this study. The study is purely academic and it never credits against the individual respondents. Thus, the success of this study highly depends on your genuine, accurate, and timely response to the questions provided here under. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer on the questions honestly and patiently.

Thank you in advance

1. General Direction

1.1 Don't write your name

1.2 Please, follow the instruction provided for each part

2. Personal information

2.1 Name of your Woreda.....

2.2 Name of your school.....

2.3 A. Sex M F.....

B. Age

2.4 Educational qualification

A. MA/MSc.....

B. BA/BED/BSc.....

C. Diploma

D. Certificate.....

E. Other.....

2.5 Field of specialization.....

2.6 Total years of service.....

2.7 Year of service on current position.....

2.8 Your current position.....

PART I

Pre-conditions for effective, preparation, implementation of educational strategic plans

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use (5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
	Meaningful Participation in Preparing & Implementation Strategic Planning at your Woreda Level.					
1	The extent to which Principals and Department heads involve in the strategic plan?					
2	The degree to which Principals and Department heads are committed to effective strategic plan?					
3	The degree to which discussion made on the draft of the strategic plan by the educational sector community?					
4	The degree to which Principals and Department heads feedback are taken for improvement?					
5	The degree to which external stakeholders participate in the strategic plans preparation and implementation?					
6	Availability of the strategic plan document at ease for all stakeholders?					

PART- II

Responses on the planners' knowledge and/or experiences

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use (5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Planners' knowledge and/or experience for effective educational strategic plan practice in your woreda	5	4	3	2	1
1	Availability of qualified personal in educational planning process					
2	Availability of continuous trainings for the education strategic planning					
3	Adequate years of experiences of planners on strategic plan practices					
4	The degree to which the planners are sent for further upgrading in educational planning					
5	The relevance of planners' academic background to the strategic planning practices					

PART -III

Educational strategic planning vision, mission, values, goals, objectives and action plans.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	The qualities of vision, mission, values, goals, objectives, and action plans	5	4	3	2	1
1	To what extent the vision statement provides a clear picture of the organizations future					
2	To what extent the vision statement is inspiring and challenging					
3	To what degree the mission statement answers who we are, what we do, for whom we do, and why it is important					
4	The degree to which values can act as a foundation for the mission and vision					
5	To which extent values can be embraced by every employee in the organization					
6	The degree to which the goal supports the mission & reflects strategic directions					
7	The extent to which objectives are clearly and understandable to all stakeholders					
8	The action plan contains a time frame for completion					

PART -IV

Adequacy and utilization of resources for effective preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	The Adequacy and Utilization of Resources.	5	4	3	2	1
1	Adequacy qualified manpower resources in woreda level					
2	Availability of effective planning team in woredas'					
3	The extent to which the allocated budget is released exactly on time					
4	Availability of necessary material resources					
5	The budgets approved is based on the strategic of the plan					
6	The extent to which an effective utilization of available resources					
7	The extent to which adequate amount of fund to implement the plans					

PART -V

Competence of WEO heads and Planners for effective preparation and implementation of strategic plans.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Competence of WEO, Heads & Managements for Effective Preparation and Implementation of Educational Strategic Plans.	5	4	3	2	1
1	The extent to create strategically relevant measures of performance					
2	The ability to absorb new information					
3	The ability to think strategically					
4	The ability to create new strategies to move in new direction					
5	The ability to align people and organization					
6	The ability to translate strategies in to action					
7	The ability to define when strategically to change					
8	The extent to which communication in every direction top-down ,bottom-up across each woreda/ department/lines					

PART- VI

Plan Monitoring and evaluation in order to follow the success and failure of the objectives against the present targets.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Plan Monitoring and Evaluation	5	4	3	2	1
1	The extent to which timely monitoring and evaluation of educational strategic plans carried out					
2	The degree to which the result of monitoring and evaluation be used to take corrective measures					
3	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by external evaluators					
4	The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators					
5	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation be done on regular basis					
6	The degree to which it is done after problem arise					
7	The degree to which it dependent organ that monitors and evaluates the strategic planning					

PART- VII

Problems of the practice of educational strategic plan

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use (5=extremely serious, 4=Very serious, 3=Serious, 2=Observed but not serious, 1=Not observed at all)

No	Problems of Preparing and Implementing Educational Strategic Plans	5	4	3	2	1
1	Lack of meaningful Participation of Stakeholders					
2	Lack of clear delegation in the region, woredas and schools					
3	Failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets					
4	Inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of the plan actions					
5	Lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult					
6	Inflexible organizational structures in the zones and woredas					
7	Inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems					
8	Failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish tasks					
9	Failure to follow the plan					
10	No incentives given to workers to embrace the new strategies					
1	Lack of coordination among region & woreda education offices					
2	Over-dependence on past experience					
3	Lack of budget to implement the strategies					
4	Inadequate or unreliable data					

5. What are the major challenges that you encountered while implementing the strategic plan in your woreda?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

6. What solutions can you forward for these problems?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Appendix - B

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies
College of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management
Educational Policy and Planning Stream

This Questionnaire filled by WEO Staff respondents (Process performers, Planners, Experts, Supervisors and Data encoders) and it has been prepared to collect relevant information for a thesis entitled “Strategic Planning in Woreda Education offices in central zone of Tigray.” Thus, it mainly focuses on examining the current practice of educational strategic plan in the sample woredas of the central zone of Tigray region.

Considering that you are one of the responsible professionals in finding solutions to the problems of the preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans in the region, this research has chosen you as one of the resourceful respondent for this study. The study is purely academic and it never credits against the individual respondents. Thus, the success of this study highly depends on your genuine, accurate, and timely response to the questions provided here under. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer on the questions honestly and patiently.

Thank you in advance

1. General Direction

1.1 Don't write your name

1.2 Please, follow the instruction provided for each part

2. Personal information

2.1 Name of your Woreda.....

2.2 Name of your school.....

2.3 A. Sex M F.....

B. Age

2.4 Educational qualification

A. MA/MSc.....

B. BA/BED/BSc.....

C. Diploma

D. Certificate..... E. Other.....

2.5 Field of specialization.....

2.6 Total years of service.....

2.7 Year of service on current position.....

2.8 Your current position.....

PART I

Pre-conditions for effective, preparation, implementation of educational strategic plans

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use (5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
	Meaningful Participation in Preparing & Implementation Strategic Planning at your Woreda Level.					
1	The extent to which Principals and Department heads involve in the strategic plan?					
2	The degree to which Principals and Department heads are committed to effective strategic plan?					
3	The degree to which discussion made on the draft of the strategic plan by the educational sector community?					
4	The degree to which Principals and Department heads feedback are taken for improvement?					
5	The degree to which external stakeholders participate in the strategic plans preparation and implementation?					
6	Availability of the strategic plan document at ease for all stakeholders?					

PART- II

Responses on the planners' knowledge and/or experiences

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use (5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Planners' knowledge and/or experience for effective educational strategic plan practice in your woreda	5	4	3	2	1
1	Availability of qualified personal in educational planning process					
2	Availability of continuous trainings for the education strategic planning					
3	Adequate years of experiences of planners on strategic plan practices					
4	The degree to which the planners are sent for further upgrading in educational planning					
5	The relevance of planners' academic background to the strategic planning practices					

PART -III

Educational strategic planning vision, mission, values, goals, objectives and action plans.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	The qualities of vision, mission, values, goals, objectives, and action plans	5	4	3	2	1
1	To what extent the vision statement provides a clear picture of the organizations future					
2	To what extent the vision statement is inspiring and challenging					
3	To what degree the mission statement answers who we are, what we do, for whom we do, and why it is important					
4	The degree to which values can act as a foundation for the mission and vision					
5	To which extent values can be embraced by every employee in the organization					
6	The degree to which the goal supports the mission & reflects strategic directions					
7	The extent to which objectives are clearly and understandable to all stakeholders					
8	The action plan contains a time frame for completion					

PART -IV

Adequacy and utilization of resources for effective preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	The Adequacy and Utilization of Resources.	5	4	3	2	1
1	Adequacy qualified manpower resources in woreda level					
2	Availability of effective planning team in woredas'					
3	The extent to which the allocated budget is released exactly on time					
4	Availability of necessary material resources					
5	The budgets approved is based on the strategic of the plan					
6	The extent to which an effective utilization of available resources					
7	The extent to which adequate amount of fund to implement the plans					

PART -V

Competence of WEO heads and Planners for effective preparation and implementation of strategic plans.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Competence of WEO, Heads & Managements for Effective Preparation and Implementation of Educational Strategic Plans.	5	4	3	2	1
1	The extent to create strategically relevant measures of performance					
2	The ability to absorb new information					
3	The ability to think strategically					
4	The ability to create new strategies to move in new direction					
5	The ability to align people and organization					
6	The ability to translate strategies in to action					
7	The ability to define when strategically to change					
8	The extent to which communication in every direction top-down ,bottom-up across each woreda/ department/lines					

PART- VI

Plan Monitoring and evaluation in order to follow the success and failure of the objectives against the present targets.

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Plan Monitoring and Evaluation	5	4	3	2	1
1	The extent to which timely monitoring and evaluation of educational strategic plans carried out					
2	The degree to which the result of monitoring and evaluation be used to take corrective measures					
3	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by external evaluators					
4	The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators					
5	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation be done on regular basis					
6	The degree to which it is done after problem arise					
7	The degree to which it dependent organ that monitors and evaluates the strategic planning					

PART- VII

Problems of the practice of educational strategic plan

INSTRUCTION: Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder. While rating, use
(5=extremely serious, 4=Very serious, 3=Serious, 2=Observed but not serious, 1=Not observed at all)

No	Problems of Preparing and Implementing Educational Strategic Plans	5	4	3	2	1
1	Lack of meaningful Participation of Stakeholders					
2	Lack of clear delegation in the region, woredas and schools					
3	Failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets					
4	Inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of the plan actions					
5	Lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult					
6	Inflexible organizational structures in the zones and woredas					
7	Inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems					
8	Failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish tasks					
9	Failure to follow the plan					
10	No incentives given to workers to embrace the new strategies					
1	Lack of coordination among region & woreda education offices					
2	Over-dependence on past experience					
3	Lack of budget to implement the strategies					
4	Inadequate or unreliable data					

5. What are the major challenges that you encountered while implementing the strategic plan in your woreda?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

6. What solutions can you forward for these problems?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Appendix – C

INTERVIEW PART- I

An Interview Guide for Heads of Woreda Education Office (WEO)

1. Questions related to the stakeholders involvements in the current practices of preparing and implementing educational strategic plan
 - A. Who are they?
 - B. In what way they involve?
 - C. What do you expect from these stakeholders involvement?
 - D. Do you incorporate their feed backs to in the final strategic plan documents?
2. How does the Regional strategic plan evolve itself?
3. Who takes the prime initiative in developing the Regional educational strategic plan?
4. How is the communication taking place during formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategic plan among regional, zonal and woredas level?
5. Do you think that the strategic planning team has adequate planning skills and/or experiences?
6. What is the capacity of the adequacy and utilization resources that the region has, to prepare and implement the strategic plan (man power, material and financial)?
 - A. What are the sources of the budget?
 - B. How are the resources utilized?
7. How the monitoring and evaluation systems are takes place in the WEO?
8. What are the major and most frequently occurring problems in the preparing and implementing educational strategic plan?
 - A. What attempts have been made to overcome these problems?
 - B. What changes have been achieved as a result of interventions made?
9. What are your overall comments on the practice and problems of preparing and implementing educational strategic plan in your woredas'?

Appendix - D

CHECKLIST

A check list will fill by the researcher on strategic planning Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, Objectives, Targets, Action plans, and Performance.

No	Necessary contents	Yes	No
1	The vision statement provides a clear picture of the organizations' future direction		
2	The mission statement answers who we are, what we do, for whom we do, and why it is important		
3	The values can act as a foundation for the vision & mission		
4	Values are included that can be embraced by every employee in the organization.		
5	The goal supports the mission.		
6	The goal reflects strategic direction		
7	The goals are challenging, but still realistic & achievable		
8	The objectives reflects specific, desired accomplishment		
9	The objectives are clearly and understandable to all stakeholders		
10	The action plan contains a time frame for completion		
11	The performance measures relate to the goal it represents		
12	Strategic plans are prepared by strategic planning team		
13	Strategic plans are prepared and implemented through the active involvement of stakeholders		

Declaration

I, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other universities and relevant sources of materials used for thesis has been duly acknowledged.

Name NIGUS MOHAMMED ASELE

Signature 

Date 22/09/2003

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University advisor

Name Dr. Deribessa Abate

Signature 

Date 03/06/11