

**DECENTRALIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT:
A CASE STUDY IN OROMIA
NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE**

**BY
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ACRONYMS

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
DR	Dropout Rate
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
ETEC	Ethio-Education Consultant
ETP	Education and Training Policy
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross-Enrolment Ratio
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OEB	Oromia Education Bureau
PDRE	Peoples Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
PHRD	Project for Human Resource Development
PSR	Pupil Section Ratio
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
REB	Regional Education Bureau
RR	Repetition Rate
SDP	Sector Development Programme
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEO	Woreda Education Office
ZED	Zonal Education Department

ABSTRACT

The Ethiopian government has pursued decentralization policy by shifting authority and responsibility to regions. Since 1992, significant changes have been made in the area of provision of educational services, and the management of the education system whose foundation was based on the proclamation issued and the new education and training policy promulgated. The decentralization reform seeks to improve the access, equity, quality and efficiency of education. The decentralization process that has been chosen as an approach to address educational problems was a new phenomena, and a series of factors can complicate its implementation. Thus, the objectives of the study were, to assess how decentralization was working and the extent to which the administrative levels effectively played their roles in implementing the policy of decentralization. Furthermore, assessing changes that took place, favorable conditions and constraints in the implementation were also the focus of the study. Therefore, the study seeks to contribute valuable information related to educational management problems, which is hoped to encourage the conducting of detail process evaluation.

The study has made a brief review of the related literature and experiences of some countries. Using a descriptive survey method, data are drawn from focus group meetings, key informant interviews, data gathering questionnaire and direct observations and transcribed and analyzed.

The report focused on how objectives/ purposes of decentralization filtered down the educational administrative levels, the extent to which key management functions were maintained at the intermediate levels, authority and decision making were shared in key areas and creating an environment for reform and changes to take place under the decentralization process.

The data indicated that the objectives and purposes of decentralization were poorly articulated and differences in opinions existed between decision-makers and implementers. Regarding transfer of power to intermediate levels to under take the management functions, it was not to the expected level. The findings

showed that high influence of upper authority in planning functions over the lower administrative levels was observed and the central ministry loosely controlled compliance with standards. On the other hand, the degree to which decision making authority was pushed down to the lower administrative levels was found to be medium and it was observed that authority was shared among each level to some extent. However, the data also revealed power concentration at regional level. The enabling environment so far practiced in the area of policy issues and interventions was found to be fair. The data obtained also showed the local capacity of REB and ZED to be fair while it was poor for WEO.

There were also efforts made to delineate responsibilities and authorities at each level by the REB. However, the leadership and management competence to create momentum for innovation and facilitate implementation of decentralized management was found to be low. Although the results of decentralization take a long time to notice and it would be premature to interpret the findings as a full impact they, however, signaled the direction of the changes. Thus, the changes in school environment were reported as a mix of poor, promising and modest impacts for different educational objectives.

Therefore, it is suggested that building consensus around the objectives of decentralization, restructuring of the organizational settings, developing strategies to promote greater school autonomy and capacity building at all levels are indispensable for the effective implementation and sustainability of the decentralization efforts.

SUBMISSION APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

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Signature 

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH

In this chapter, the problem and its approach including background of the problem, statement of the problem, significance of the study, operational definitions, research methods and procedures, limitations and organization of the study are treated.

1.1 Background of the Study

Oromia is the largest region in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia which was established on the basis of Proclamation No.7/1992. At the moment the region's population is estimated at 22 million, which accounts for about 30 percent of the country's total population (Oromia Economic Study Project Office, 1999). The region is divided into twelve administrative zones and 180 woredas (anas).

Regarding educational coverage, only 50% of the 4.5 million primary school age children and about 9% of secondary school age population have got the chance of schooling. The overall literacy rate of the region is 28% (OREB, 2000).

The major educational problems of the region are low access, inequitable educational distribution, poor efficiency and low quality of education (Oromia ESDP, 1998). The efforts to improve educational opportunities, and efficiency to meet the needs of the region are also hampered by limitations in financial and qualified human resources, as well as geographic and demographic conditions. One mechanism used to alleviate the stress could be drawing on local resources. Local communities can mobilize financial, self-help labor and other locally available resources and such initiatives have to be supported. On the other hand, the effective use of whatever resources available demands competent and strong management. There fore, the task of managing the resources, decisions to be taken on educational policy issues regarding what services should be provided and at what level are some of the concerns of decentralized educational management. Furthermore, the inadequacy of reliable information, the existence

of little or no monitoring mechanisms, and the rapid expansion and increasing complexity of educational services increase managerial challenges. In some cases responsibility is fragmented and the division of roles is unclear both at the centre and down the line of educational organ. Even the accountability, the technical and professional support the centre gives to the regions seems to be questionable.

The relationships between each organ, the Ministry of Education, regional, and local education offices, local authority, community groups, and the schools need close examination. Eventhough, there seems to exist a greater degree of decentralization as indicated on the blue print, whether it results in lasting improvement in the management of the system or not has to be supported with evidences from the field. Thus, to examine what is going on and to come up with some recommendations, a thorough study in the regional context is indispensable.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The wide spread dissatisfaction with over centralized planning and administration, the will of some governments to respond to changes and the intention to use limited resources more effectively pushed governments to embark on decentralization as a partial solution for their problems. Hence, many governments in developing countries have begun decentralizing their development planning and management functions (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986).

There are various approaches taken by governments all over the world to decentralize development planning and administration. In some federal systems, power in the hands of regional governments is not delegated or devolved from the central governments; however, it is a "residual power" (Hanson, 1997). In some governments authority transferred from the centre to local governments has varied. On the other hand, a combination of decentralization and centralization for various reasons are used by some countries (Ayalew, 1995).

In general, a decentralized system is characterized by the exercise of substantial power at the local level on many aspects and subject to some limited control by the central government.

Authority may be decentralized to a region, zone and other lower level echelons up to an individual school. Countries decentralize their education systems for different reasons. It might be to improve management efficiency and flexibility to give users a greater voice in decisions that affect them, and to recognize local differences (Weiler, 1990). This is to mean that decentralization enhances responsiveness to the felt needs and with a view to create closer affinity to the people being served. Other authorities have also substantiated that decentralization ensures a respect for diversity, an optional use of human and material resources, a balanced distribution of educational investments and an efficient administration, avoiding redundancies, competing jurisdictions and situation of conflict (UNDP, 1993).

There are some arguments among authorities, which view decentralization as a means of redistributing power, enhancing efficiency and improving learning (Weiler, 1990). The arguments for more decentralization of education can be ideological, economic efficiency, administrative and pedagogical in responding to local needs that favor decentralization (Malpica, 1995). On the other hand, there are also demerits of decentralization related to stabilization, distribution and efficiency arguments.

The key elements for effectiveness of decentralized education system include the presence of trained manpower, appropriate administrative structure and communication mechanism, sharing and delegating responsibilities and basic infrastructure and equipment. For countries with poor infrastructural development, rigid centralization locks the flow of resources and information. In such circumstances, education systems are likely to be more efficient if certain functions and responsibilities are devolved to lower levels (Lockheed, 1991). Experiences of most developing countries of Latin America and Africa showed the limitation of the system. However, a lot of lessons can be drawn. A variety of criteria can be set to assess the effectiveness of decentralization. This includes

the extent to which it contributes to achieving broad objectives, promoting economic and administrative managerial efficiencies, increasing responsiveness to diverse needs and its appropriateness as a means of designing, implementing local development programs and projects (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1984). Decentralization is also assumed to be a way of easing financial burden on the centre, reducing administrative overload, generating additional resources, permitting local variation, providing regional autonomy, fostering professionalism at school level, making more decisions by being closer to information, promoting local initiatives and democracy as a way of life and enabling to solve local educational problems favouring decentralized educational management. However, the inadequacy of financial resources and shortage of qualified manpower and traditionalism are some of the limitations of this system (Ayalew, 1995).

Decentralization, to be effective, has to reach all the way down to grassroots levels. Initiating educational innovation, even if decision and implementation remain at zonal, local or institutional, regional or national level, may have an important role in stimulating research, coordinating experiments, and promoting activities. Reforms or innovations require delegation of authority and responsibility throughout the hierarchy to encourage initiatives and speed up decisions (UNESCO, 1970). Under performance and ineffectiveness or failure to achieve satisfactory results may be related to organisational level issues. Thus, organizational level analysis and what might be done to improve performance has to focused on decentralization (Wunsch, 1991). This implies organizational restructuring, or increasing organizational resources, regulations, laws and conditions outside the organization which serve to improve performances (Rondinelli, et al. , 1984).

In Ethiopia, the decentralization of education is a recent phenomenon which has replaced a deeply rooted centralization that lasted for a number of decades as a result of political and economic transformation that took place when the transitional government came to power in 1991. So, the federal structure of administration with power devolution to the regions is in place. Proclamation 41/1993 gave power and duties of the Ministry of Education to the Regional

Education Bureau which indicates the transfer of responsibilities of educational management. The Education and Training Policy (ETP, 1994) also envisaged decentralization of educational management to enhance the expansion, enrichment and improvement in the relevance, quality, accessibility and equity of education and training. In the sphere of the size and diversity, there is a need for a number of educational institutions to be organized, managed, and link cultural values to the content and process of education. This calls for decentralization of educational management as a means of planning and implementation all the way down from the centre to the institutions.

The global experiences indicate that management of education under a decentralized system has to be assessed and must be viewed realistically, as a range of administrative or organizational devices used in improving the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness to meet the needs. In this respect, there are few studies on educational decentralization that have been conducted in Ethiopia (Ethio-Education Consultant, 1994; USAID, 1996; Girma, 1998; Derebesa, 1998). Therefore, there is a need to carryout the study in the context of Oromia that addresses the management of education system starting from the upper administrative echelon down to the grass roots level.

The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP) of the 1994 stresses the need to adopt decentralized educational organization and management. From this point of view, the study aimed to examine whether or not the newly introduced decentralization of educational management was implemented as intended and the problems encountered in the context of Oromia. This study also tried to assess the effects of decentralization of educational management on quality, relevance and access. Furthermore, the study intended to assess the adequacy of technical and managerial skills necessary to sustain decentralized management of education system, and how responsibility and authority were shared at different levels. Therefore, the purposes of this study were:

- i) To assess the extent to which the objectives/ purposes of decentralization of educational management were known to each administrative level;

- ii) To assess the overall enabling environment, local capacity in terms of organizational structures, leadership and management capacity at local levels in planning and implementing the decentralization policy;
- iii) To examine the extent and scope of decentralized management functions at local level of the system;
- iv) To assess the extent to which decision-making authority and responsibility were decentralized from the center to schools in key areas: pedagogy, administration, finance, and human resources;
- v) To identify major constraints in the management of education in the decentralized system;
- vi) To assess the changes/ improvements made to achieve the educational objectives of the region;
- vii) To scan policy interventions and management strategies that enabled the management of the education system to be more efficient, effective and responsive.

1.2.1 Basic Research Questions

In Africa and other developing countries where decentralization of education has been proposed, efforts made are influenced by different priorities, contexts and levels of resources available to them. The extent to which policies and programs are appropriately designed and organized, the level of support that political leaders and bureaucracies give to decentralization, the capacity of the organization to which responsibilities and authorities are transferred, the availability of resources to the organizations to which responsibilities have been transferred are some of the conditions that affect the implementation of decentralized system (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986).

In Oromia region, for the past seven years (since 1993) decentralized management of education system has been underway. Therefore, this study was designed to assess the actual practice based on the following basic research questions.

- i) What are the priorities of the decentralized educational management system?
- ii) What are the basic features of educational decentralization, in terms of management/ administration, and planning functions?
- iii) What decision-making authority and responsibility in key areas of educational management functions are decentralized?
- iv) Is the management of decentralized education system supported by:
 - a) Adequate organizational structure, adequate staffing and management capacities and financial resources?
 - b) Guidelines which enable the management of educational decentralization to define the roles of each layer?
- v) What barriers do exist?
- vi) To what extent has decentralized management of education contributed to improve the education system and/or the overall change in the education system?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Regions with poor infrastructure and scarce resources can provide educational opportunities to children and adults, if educational organs at different levels exercise their responsibilities and authorities in mobilizing the available resources.

From educational management perspectives, the local government should address the educational issues and analyze the formulation and implementation of educational plans and programs by identifying the constraints encountered in the system. Many developing countries have improved their educational access and quality through management reform (Cummings et al., 1997). In this respect, very limited studies both in number and scope have been conducted. Thus, additional and detailed information is necessary in the local context. Therefore, assessing the management of education under decentralized system in its totality is appropriate.

This study might not exhaustively provide solution for the problem under consideration. However,

- i) it may scratch the problem by providing a green light for practical actions;
- ii) it could enable educational officials and other authorities of the region to gain valuable information about the management of education in decentralised system;
- iii) it may help to create awareness among the different layers of the educational organs and the regional state government in order to take corrective measures;
- iv) it may contribute to a policy and planning strategy; and
- v) it could encourage others for further investigation;

1.4 Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study was delimited to 29 public schools in 9 zones, 18 woreda education offices and 4 zonal education departments of Oromia. The selected sample areas involved in the study can represent the whole population. Furthermore, the study was delimited to major decentralized educational management functions, local capacity, constraints in the course of action and basic changes observed in the schools while implementing the decentralization policy. The region was selected because of its large size both in land and population. It was assumed that the region has attempted the decentralization system by closing the gap between decision-making Organization and service delivery institutions, in order to respond to local needs and more efficiency. Due to the existence of similarities among zones, woredas, and schools of Oromia the study was delimited to the selected sub-regions. Hence the findings would be applicable to the zones under consideration and the other zones in the region.

1.5 Operational Definitions

Authority: The right to make decision and utilize resource for organizational objectives; delegate power to others.

Decentralization: Any change in the organization of government which involves the transfer of power or functions from national level to any

sub-national levels or from sub-national level to another lower one (Conyers, 1984).

Regional Government: Regional state with autonomy provided by Proclamation No. 7/1992.

Responsibility: Something for which any one is responsible or accountable (Good, 1973).

Woreda: A division or area marked off, developed for administrative purpose, with defined authority and responsibility (Proclamation No. 7/1992), the estimated population size of about 100,000.

Zone: An intermediate administrative level between region and woreda.

1.6 Research Methods and Procedures

1.6.1 Methodology

The research method employed was the descriptive research method because it enabled the researcher to mirror the current status in management of educational decentralization and was helpful to test the basic research questions. The descriptive method was appropriate, because it helped in obtaining information about the strength and weakness of the current decentralized management system and it enabled to find possible solutions through the analysis of variable relationship. It can also elicit recommendations for change. Prior to the study, the pilot test had been under taken, then for the project the researcher visited the sample areas, and supported by trained assistant researchers in the field, collected qualitative and quantitative data for the study.

Different techniques have been used in selecting subjects of the study. For the selection of the subjects of the study, purposive sampling technique was preferred, because it left room for the researcher to collect detailed information as required. The selected persons provided their insight and shared their experience on the problem. In selecting subjects of the study, gender, qualification, age, and other relevant factors were taken into account.

All principals of selected educational institutions/schools, educational officials (personnel) at different levels, because of their position and involvement in the management of the education system, and teachers as implementers of the policy were included in the study. Local community members (parents and leaders), students as beneficiaries of the education system and also due to their participation in school management were involved in the study. In the region, sub-regions (zones), woredas, and schools were selected to diversify the sample. In the selection process socio-economic situation, rural-urban, location, infrastructure development, number of schools, and school levels were considered. For effective usage of resources and manageability, the samples were considered adequate and representatives for the purpose of the study.

1.6.2 Data Sources/ Subject of the Study

The data were collected from different sources. The sources included educational officials (personnel) at the school, woreda, zone, region and federal ministry level. Students, teachers and community members (parents) in selected schools, statistical data, official document and/ or letters relevant to the study were the major sources of the study.

1.6.3 Instruments for Data Collection

Questionnaire, both closed and open ended, interview and focus group discussion guide, and observation checklists were used to collect any available information that support the study. The data collecting instruments were piloted and validated before the actual survey was conducted.

1.6.4 Procedures of Data Collection

Randomly and purposely selected sample areas from 9 sub-regions were taken as representatives of the population.

Category -1 This is western part of Oromia where East Wellega and Jimma were taken to represent the sub-region. In this category, 3 woredas, 2 secondary schools and 2 primary schools were involved in the study.

Category-2 Comprises of central Oromia where, North, West and East Shewa were taken as representative of this category. Of these, 5 woredas, 4 secondary schools, and 6 primary schools were considered.

Category-3 This is the Eastern part of Oromia which includes East and West Hararges. Of these, 5 woredas, 5 secondary schools, and 4 primary schools were selected to represent the sub-region in the study.

Category-4 Is the Southeast Oromia, where Borena and Arsi were categorized. Of these, 5 woredas, 2 secondary schools and 4 primary schools were considered in the study.

1.6.5 Size of the Sample Population

The sample comprised 4 zones, 18 woredas, 13 high schools, and 16 primary schools. The respondents were officials, senior experts and supervisors of education from all administrative levels. Thus, in number, 13 from the Ministry of Education, 18 from the Regional Education Bureau, 5 from each Zonal Education Departments, 3 from each Woreda Education Offices, 1 principal and 5 teachers from each school were involved and the total number of respondents were 297. Some students and parents' committee representatives for selected schools were also involved in the interview held and forum organized for discussion groups. Therefore, the sample size of the population that responded to the research study/questions was reasonable for this specific study.

1.6.6 Data Analysis

The raw data was tallied and structured so as to make it manageable for analysis. Tally forms were used to organize and systematically frame the data obtained by observation, questionnaire, interviews and others. Based on the data collection instruments the qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed using logical statistical methods (tools) like,

- i. Calculating the central tendencies, the mean values, rating scales and percentages;

- ii. The correlation, chi-square, t-test and standard error tests were utilized for further analysis;
- iii. Where necessary tables, charts and graphs were used to interpret the findings; and
- iv. Documents were reviewed and analyzed in relation to the responses.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study had its own limitations. The following were some of the major factors that contributed to the limitations of the study;

- i) Lack of information due to limited capacity of the management information system.
- ii) Difficulty to organize focus group discussion as anticipated because of in-availability of appropriate persons as scheduled.
- iii) Dispersed geographical locations of sample areas were in-convenient for transportation and data collection.
- iv) Financial and time constraints have also restricted the researcher's intention.

As a result, the scope and depth of the information desired were limited and thus, had an implication on the outcome of the study.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research report has been organized into four chapters. The first chapter deals with the problem and its approach. The second chapter is concerned with the review of the related literature. The third chapter treats the analysis and interpretation of the data. The fourth chapter contains summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Finally, list of reference materials and papers containing important information are annexed in the appendices.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the review of the related literature and lays down the conceptual framework for the study. It includes a descriptive overview of the system of decentralization, definitions and types of decentralization, context for decentralization and implementation strategies of decentralized educational management system. It also provides analytical insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the system drawn from case examples and a brief description of decentralization of educational management in Ethiopia as well as some background information on Oromia education.

2.1. A Brief History of Decentralization

In history, it is possible to identify some periods with different attitudes to decentralization. These include the colonial period (1940s and 1950s), where the colonial governments were keen to establish systems of government that were a replica of their own. In the 1960s, after independence many countries nationalized and centralized their planning system. The 1970s were characterized by integrated rural development and there was a need for local initiative to be fostered in favour of some degree of autonomy. In the 1980s, the view was more flexible, less didactic, and that witnessed a renewed interest in decentralization and strengthening of local governments (Conyers, 1984; Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986; Winkler, 1989).

Many countries have either considered or attempted to implement decentralization policies for various reasons like, to respond to changes and priorities, to increase productivity and equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth and political power (Rondinelli, and Nellis, 1986; Abdulaziz and Arnold, 1996).

The idea of decentralization in development administration caught and retained the attention of scholars, donors and governments. Some International organizations like USAID favour community involvement in educational planning

and others, too support the decentralization efforts (Korten and Alfonso, 1981; UNESCO, 1985; Tendler, 1997).

2.2. Definition and Types of Decentralization

Creamer and Browne have outlined four types of educational control and numbered decision-making roles played by various controlling authorities. These are:

- i) Strong local responsibility and a decentralized system;
- ii) Strong national or state responsibility with centralized control;
- iii) Responsibility divided between national and local units; and
- iv) National control of a policy but decentralization of administrative details (Hughes, 1975).

2.2.1. Centralized Decision-making

Centralization of authority means concentration of decision-making power at the top hierarchy of management. Decisions are made in the nation's capital. Thus, centralization is a systematic and consistent reservation of authority at central points. The central government regulates all aspects of the system. It sets policy and performs management functions. In centralized government structure, education is financed and managed from the center (Winkler, 1989). However, absolute centralization is not found in practice.

2.2.2. Definition of Decentralization

According to Malpica (1995) and Ayalew (1995), decentralization refers to a transfer of authority away from the central state to autonomous bodies having their own legal entity, for taking political and administrative decisions and assuming responsibility for the delivery of education.

Similarly, other authorities have also clarified the conception and discussed from different angles (Conyers, 1984; Rondinelli, et al. , 1984; Lauglo and McLean,

1985; Brown, 1990; Ostrom, Schroeder and Wynne, 1993; Maclure, 1994; USAID, 1997).

Maclure (1994) has interpreted decentralization as an intervention strategy, and the assumption is that, decentralization of education will result in improved service delivery by reducing the role of the central government and enabling local authorities.

Moreover, a decentralized system is characterized by the exercise of substantial power at the local level on many aspects and subject so that it makes its own managerial decisions and to some limited control by the central government.

2.2.3. Types of Decentralization

It is important to draw distinctions between various types of decentralization for highlighting the many dimensions to successful implementation. The question of whether decentralization per se is good or bad for human development, there should be an appreciation of various possibilities of decentralization, to determine what to decentralize, how to decentralize and for whom.

Decentralization can occur in two dimensions, as vertical decentralization where authority is delegated to lower levels and horizontal decentralization where authority spreads across the same level (Kai-Ming, N.d in Cummings and McGinn, 1997; UNDP, 1993).

The other dimension of decentralization includes political, administrative, fiscal and market decentralization. Rondinelli has distinguished four major types of decentralization as, deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatization that have been exercised at different times or simultaneously or various combination of it (Rondinelli, et al., 1984; Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986; Ayalew, 1995).

Deconcentration: is spatial relocation of decision making that involves the transfer of some administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels within central government ministries or agencies.

Delegation: is assignment of specific decision making authority, that is transfer of managerial responsibility for specifically defined functions to public corporations and development agencies (local governments or parastatals) outside the normal bureaucratic structure of central government.

Devolution: is transfer of responsibility and authority from central to local bodies (McGinn and Street, 1986).

The creation or strengthening of sub-national units of governments whose activities is substantially outside the direct control of central government. Devolution is said to represent the purest form of decentralization. The new levels (local governments) operate independently of central government. Hence, devolved systems of governments are characterized by: autonomy, clear geographic boundary, corporate status, the power to raise finance, a freedom to interact on an equal basis with other units in the system of government of which they are part and in which decision is made by elected representatives.

Privatization: Involves the transfer of functions from public sector to the private sector or to voluntary organizations. Privatization covers many aspects, not only selling off publicly owned enterprises (Rondinelli, et al., 1984; McGinn and street, 1986; Winkler, 1989; Riddel, 1994).

Eclectic (Mixed) Model: Some countries use a combination of decentralization and centralization for the different aspects of the educational system. For example Kenya and Indonesia have nationalized primary education and more decentralized provision of secondary education (Winkler, 1989).

2.2.4. Alternative Conception of Decentralization

In practice, there is a great diversity in the extent and type of decentralization of educational functions. Not all functions can or should be financed and managed in a decentralized fashion. When national governments decentralize responsibilities they often retain important policy and supervisory roles. They create or maintain the enabling conditions that allow local units of administration or non-government organizations to take on more responsibilities (Winkler, 1989; Parry, 1997).

Two alternative conceptions of decentralization have been described, that adequately explain the political dynamics of the argument over how much centralization or decentralization should be in educational governance (Weiler, 1990). These are,

i) Decentralization as Conflict Management:

Usually conflict becomes intense when planned to reform the educational system. Therefore, the conflict management is a challenge in educational policy. From practice the resolution and elimination of conflict by centralized management system is unrealistic and thus, decentralization serves as an instrument of conflict management (Wieler, 1990).

ii) Decentralization as Compensatory Legitimation:

Decentralization as strategies may serve as putative sources of compensatory legitimation. Since less centralized system is more attentive to internal variations of needs and conditions, that could be seen as a source for added legitimacy. There is also adverse effect of over-centralized educational systems. However, it was argued that, in real decentralization imply a loss of control for the centre, and decentralization holds out the attractive prospect of compensatory legitimation which are conflicting objectives to be reconciled by retaining as much control over the system as is possible without a severe loss in legitimacy (Wieler, 1990).

Cummings and Riddell (1994) were able to produce an educational model, from which an education system run from a highly centralized to highly decentralized educational system. Their argument was based on issues of diversity and equity under alternative patterns of educational governance using indicators of efficiency, and concluded that greater diversity is afforded under more decentralized educational systems. Thus they suggested that the state must play a strong role, particularly in financial decentralization (Cummings and McGinn, 1997).

With respect to the argument of Weiler (1990) on decentralization, being pursued for rational reasons such as the pursuit of greater efficiency, or allowing greater representation in diversity, or greater response sensitivity by bringing power closer

to those whom it affects. Therefore, the challenge lies in reconciling the conflicting objectives, by retaining centralization without severe loss in legitimacy and at the same time committed to decentralization benefits in terms of compensatory legitimation (Cummings and McGinn, 1997).

2.3. Context for Decentralization in Education

2.3.1. Rationale for Decentralization

In some countries a centralized management structure in the education sector was inherited to satisfy social expectations, while in some countries decentralized management of education system was adopted for logical and compelling reasons. The motivations for decentralization includes, to close the gap between the centre of the organization and the business of producing and giving the services, to save money and to render management decisions more local, to increase the chance of those decisions reflecting users preferences (Common Wealth Secretariats, 1993). According to the review made in helping countries to implement decentralization was found as administrative, political, financial and pedagogical rationale have driven such reforms (Prud' homme, 1994; Malpica, 1995).

Latin American countries viewed decentralization as a means to legitimize their status, establish mechanisms of accountability that lead to improved efficiency & to reduce financial burden. In China, the initial motive for decentralization of education was mainly financial considerations. When decentralization is seen as a means of managing developments, the motivations usually facilitate participation in local programs and projects, which reflects local needs and priorities. Centralized systems may appear to promote fairness in the distribution of resources but the large bureaucracies are often inefficient and slow to respond to changes and local needs (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986; Common Wealth Secretariats, 1993; Cummings and McGinn, 1997; Otero, 1998).

The rationales for decentralizing the governance of educational systems are generalized into the redistribution of power argument, the efficiency argument and

the cultures of learning argument (Weiler, 1990). In addition to these, other authorities have also pointed out that educational finance as rationale for decentralization (Rondinelli et al., 1984; Lauglo & McLean, 1985; Winkler, 1989).

McGinn and Street (1986) argue that redistribution of political power is the primary objective of decentralization. In education, authority can be exercised through regulation of behaviour and through allocation of resources.

The efficiency argument, for decentralization geared to enhancing the cost effectiveness through a more efficient deployment and management of resources. Thus, decentralization may yield efficiencies in the management of education systems that enable to mobilize and generate resources available under local conditions, and more economical utilization of limited resources efficiently (Rondinelli, et al., 1984; Lauglo and McLean, 1985; Tendler, 1997).

Decentralization gives a possibility to adapt the educational efforts to local and regional cultures and traditions. Yong and Hadley (1990), in Brown (1991) thought that only local managers (institutions) would know best how to allocate resources in a way, which is sensitive to local people's needs. Centrally based rules and allocation decisions might produce a standardized services rather than local responsiveness.

The financial arguments for educational decentralization is explained by the fiscal constraints of educational expenditures which could be eased by shifting the burden to parents, community and voluntary organizations in the provision of educational services (Winkler, 1989).

One of the case studies made in Nicaragua (1989) justified that educational decentralization serve to promote democracy through popular participation, to use public funds more effectively and involvement of users of the schools. The USAID (1997) argument for decentralizing social services focus on improvements of efficiency, effectiveness, and equity as well as increase in resource base by shifting resource decision making and management responsibility closer to the local level.

Silverman (1992) has also distinguished the two most common objectives of decentralization as improving management efficiency and serving political interest.

In general, the motives for decentralization includes the escape from the top down rigid bureaucratization of decision-making, entertainment of pluralistic system, accountability for individual actions, greater sensitivity to local circumstances, diversification, balanced distribution of educational investments in the system and additional finance (Cummings and McGinn, 1997).

2.3.2. Conditions for Decentralization

There have been compelling reasons for centralized decision-making authorities to devolve power and resources to local government bodies. However, some variables facilitate or deter educational decentralization.

As most of the authorities indicated, the following are major categories of favourable conditions that enable decentralization or affect its implementation.

- i) **Policy Formulation and Program Design:** The policy for reform efforts will gain support if they take place in connection with other reforms, and the degree to which such policies and programs are appropriately designed and organized to promote decentralized decision-making and management. Decentralization requires laws, regulations that clearly describe the roles and duties and the relationships among different levels of government and administration.
- ii) **Political and Organizational Context:** Implementers of the reform will require expertise, guidance, and leadership from a core of government officials who are committed. Experienced, long term staff will bring greater credibility to decentralization. Frequent staff turnover will weaken the continuity of the reform process. Stable and strong central government facilitates, strengthens and sustains the process of decentralization. In this regard, Rondinelli(1986) argues that strong obstacles to implementing

decentralized planning and administration in East African countries has been the continuing resistance of central government bureaucrats, in both national ministries. Often decentralization fails because of lack of political will to relinquish decision-making authority to lower level of government. Similarly Abdulaziz and Arnold (1996) emphasized that local institutions enjoy both political and financial autonomy. For example, the success of the Indonesian provincial development program in Madura is attributed to the positive attitudes and commitment of local leaders. In Chile the devolution of primary and secondary education to the municipalities has occurred with closer control of central government over the municipalities (Winkler, 1989). The local government has to promote positive democratic values, and consultations with the people on issues that affect them. The other crucial points to be examined is the role played by central government to the expected levels, and deliver positive values of democracy and promote local development.

- iii) **Stakeholders' Involvement:** Reform efforts have to be demand-driven and supported by community. Issues to be addressed and solutions that need to be generated should involve the stakeholders, those directly affected by the changes. The political and policy positions of key actors and interest group in education play great role in the implementation of decentralization.
- iv) **Information Dissemination:** Collecting, analysing, publishing and dissemination of information have to be an integral part of the reform efforts. Information, policy analysis, open policy dialogue, information dissemination mechanisms and the machinery are crucial in societies undergoing decentralization.
- v) **Administrative Mechanisms:** There has to be linkages between the central and local government in terms of developing strategies, issuing operational manuals, monitoring performance indicators, key information to translate policies into operational systems.

- vi) **Cultural Context:** This refers to the degree to which dominant behaviour, attitudes and culture are conducive to decentralized decision-making and administration. The historical and cultural context, tradition of local community and religious values influence decentralization. Therefore, decentralization requires not only development of new institutions but also a change in the attitude and behaviour of those in both the central and decentralized organizations (Parry, 1997).

- vii) **Resource Availability:** Availability of financial, human and physical resources to the organization to which responsibilities are transferred affect the implementation of intended policies. The local governments should be able to generate their own resources to carryout development activities, and should not be over dependent on higher-level government for their financial needs. Thus, adequate raising power, devolution of funds and the presence of skilled manpower support and facilitate decentralization (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986; Winkler, 1989; Abdulaziz and Arnold, 1996; Otero, 1998).

On top of this, for success, decentralization reforms require authority to make decisions, should be close to the point of actual operations, full confidence in local management from top management level should exist, the responsibility should commensurate with decision-making authority, and understanding of the role of staff personnel.

2.3.3. Decentralization Legislation

In any decentralization effort, law should define the decision-making authority, responsibilities, and how much control the central ministry exercises. Objectives of decentralization may not be fully realized if they are not supported by legislation.

Rondinelli, McCullough and Johnson (1989) discussed the necessities of laws, regulations and directives that clearly outline the relationships among different levels of government and administration in decentralization. The roles and duties, at different levels, allocation of functions among organizations should be indicated (Parry, 1997). For example, as Prawda (1992) indicated, Chile introduced

privatization of primary education through decentralization, where the private sector participating in the provision of education comply with the legal frame set by central government. The decentralization effort in Nigeria shows that each state has its own educational law, rules and regulations for administering the law.

Generally speaking, the amount and nature of the legislation that is necessary in a particular country will depend upon local circumstances, historical, cultural and political context as well as on the activities that are to be regulated.

2.3.4. Desired Level of Decentralization

The degree of centralization in educational systems typically varies with the decision-making areas. The desirability and feasibility of decentralization depends on the structure of government finance, political environment, the administrative structure, historical and cultural context, which influence the delivery and finance of educational services. Given these conditions, the economic criteria such as social efficiency, technical efficiency and equity serve to assess the desirable level of centralization (Winkler, 1989).

The balance between centralized and decentralized arrangements and to link them in ways such that it supports development effectively is the challenge for most governments, because the optimal mix shifts over time with changes in social, economic and political conditions. Literatures dealing with factors that determine the relative degree of centralization and decentralization includes, size and complexity of the organization, competence of personnel, effectiveness of communication system, dispersion of organization units, degree of standardization and complexity of situation (Mintzberg, 1983; Winkler, 1989).

Elmore (1993) observes that in practical world of political and administrative decisions no absolute values attach to centralization or decentralization. Planners should seek the optimum balance or mix of centralized and decentralized elements. The appropriate balance of educational functions can be arrived at appropriate balance of political objectives, needs and consensus among various actors in support of this balance. Thus, for the purpose of analysis, what goals served and how it can be achieved by decentralization, interest of stakeholders

are important issues to determine levels of government that suit to carryout what functions of educational system (Rondinellii and Nellis, 1984; Winkler, 1989).

2.3.5. Decentralization of Educational Functions

There is a wide range of perspectives on the distribution of decision-making authority with respect to various educational functions like; school organization, curriculum and teaching methods, examination and supervision, teacher recruitment and compensation, finance and school construction, whether the education system can be characterized as centralized or decentralized. Every system has regulations that affect the education functions. The degree of decentralization is likely to vary according to each function (Common Wealth Secretariats, 1993; Winkler, 1989).

For example, in Chile the central government did maintain some regulations and minimum standards. The decisions regarding the operation of schools were devolved to local government and private schools. Municipal and private school owners determine matters concerning teachers, other staff and curriculum such as hiring, what salary to pay, what course to offer, class-size, what daily schedule to use, and what expenditures to make (Parry, 1997).

In Mexico, the leaders of teachers' union participate in administration of plans and programs of education. Uniformity of content is ensured by national curriculum, and nationally designed and printed textbooks. Administration of primary education is delegated to provincial ministries of education, whereas upper secondary schools are under the control of the Ministry of Education. Students are promoted from one grade to the next and from primary to lower secondary on the basis of teacher evaluation, while at the upper secondary graduates must take a national examination controlled by the Ministry of Education (McGinn and Street, 1986).

In the United States of America, control over education is reserved to each of the states, which relied on local governments to finance education, to choose teachers, design curricula, and to award diplomas. Public formal schools provide teacher training.

UNICEF (1990) reports cited in Schiefelbein (1991) showed that, parents and village leaders have been actively involved in establishing and running BRAC schools. The village is responsible for providing the actual classroom and for deciding upon school hours.

In Nicaragua each school is administered by governing council composed of teachers, parents and school principals. The councils exert pedagogical, administrative and financial authority, while parents make voluntary contribution to primary schools (Otero, 1998; Gershberg, 1999).

Despite the differences in political and social context, there are striking parallels in contemporary educational reforms adopted in countries like Australia, Newzealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America which combine both decentralization of management decision-making to schools and a tendency to stronger centralization of control over specifying and monitoring educational standards (LoweBoya (1992) cited in Levacic, 1995).

2.4. Implementation Strategies of Decentralized Education System

Not all functions can or should be financed and managed in a decentralized fashion. Thus, governments must balance the decentralization of certain managerial, financial and pedagogical responsibilities with the need to keep other functions centralized (Hanson, 1997).

When national governments decentralize responsibilities they often retain important policy, supervisory roles and maintain enabling conditions for implementation of decentralized policy at local and regional level by developing appropriate and effective policies and guidelines for strengthening local institutional capacity. Important elements to successful implementation strategy includes:

(i) Initial efforts have to focus on small scale activities, for which there is support to expand incrementally;

- ii) Decentralized systems should be kept simple, flexible and appropriate to local financial and managerial capacities;
- iii) Lengthy period of gestation has to be supported by political commitment;
- iv) Closely supervised efforts facilitate decentralization more than those that transfer new responsibilities (tasks) all at once;
- v) Train both local and central administrators and officials to change attitudes as well as improve the skills;
- vi) Transfer adequate financial resources as well as powers and responsibilities (Rondinelli and Nellis, 1986).

Thus, the strategy is meant to achieve more resources and assure more equitable allocation and effective use, speed up and improve decision making process, more responsive to local conditions and needs, encourage initiatives, innovation and participation, increase local responsibility and accountability, stimulate communication down and up the system of control (Shaeffer, 1994).

2.5. Decentralized Management of Education in Different Settings

The policies and practices used to implement decentralization vary widely across countries. In some countries the decision-making authority ranges from the central to the individual, and in others some decision-making authority is delegated to legal agencies of central administrative units and decentralized decision-making responsibility to the elected officials of local units.

2.5.1. Case Examples

2.5.1.1. Latin America

A case study of educational decentralization in Chile reveals that Chile's education system began with deconcentration of administration from the central ministry to regional and provincial departments. The implementation of devolution and privatization policies has not had the expected positive impact on quality while it had a negative effect on equity (Parry, 1997). Chile's experience showed that the introduction of market mechanisms resulted in unfair policy practices, for lower income rural groups that are deprived of information and school alternatives

to make selections and significantly widened the gap in cognitive achievement results (Prawda, 1992).

Organization of school finance and expenditure as reported for Brazil indicated that, municipalities finance municipal schools with small federal contribution (10% of the total), in terms of recurrent expenditure. For financing of capital expenditures, teacher recruitment and remuneration, each government level was responsible (Winkler, 1989; Hannaway and Carnoy, 1993).

In El Salvador, the analysis of decentralization process indicates that, the management of financial and human resources in schools has been turned to the school councils and community associations in an effort to improve the use of resources, and contribute to higher quality education. However, there have been successful and unsuccessful experiences with both, not only in terms of participation but the organization and administration of transferred responsibilities. Among the factors that have contributed for success are the political commitment, organized community and the continuity of management (Otero, 1998; Prawda, 1992).

2.5.1.2. Africa

In a decentralized system, the local community finances often through voluntary contributions and constructs schools using local materials and construction standards. Especially school construction and finance tends to be more decentralized than the other components of elementary-secondary education in Africa and Asia (Winkler, 1989).

Some case studies have notified that cost reductions have been achieved locally due to a shift in the burden of resource provision from governments to households through extensive in-kind-contributions of the local community. The case in Zambian context shows that the shares to the primary level have fallen markedly and local contributions to the direct costs of equipment, instruction materials and maintenance have risen (Hopper, 1989; in Klugman, 1994).

In many countries the central government offers an implicit matching grant to address the problems of equity. For example in Nigeria it was estimated that 70% of federal and state grants to local governments support the primary education scheme (Klugman, 1994).

There are also limited evidences for malfeasance to appear as a result of local autonomy. Mwira (1990) reported that, the Harambe schools (Kenya) that are not subject to regular auditing suffer from continued misappropriations of school funds to corrupt head teachers and school committees. In addition, there were also teacher opposition to local autonomy (cited in Klugman, 1994). In most developing countries where inspections are the responsibility of higher authorities, these functions are often poorly executed due to inadequate resources (Lockhead, 1990).

2.5.1.3. Eastern Europe

In eastern Europe, former socialist countries are undergoing rapid changes and their educational systems are in flux. The hopes for decentralization includes: the scape from top down, rigid bureaucracies, democratization and accountability for individual actions. Some of the fears were: danger to rely on local authorities with insufficient financial resources and lack of capacity to run the school system (Riddel, 1994; Cummings and McGinn, 1997).

For example, in Poland, the overall functioning of schools taken over by local authorities has both negative and positive results. In the year 1997/98, there were well maintained schools full of innovative programs, and at the same time badly maintained schools with insufficiently qualified teachers, who ignore the views of local community. Decentralization, which gives schools increased autonomy provides active communities at one end and passive communities that await government action on the other extreme.

2.5.1.4. South East Asia

In the Chinese context, educational decentralization has been driven almost entirely by resource constraints. The central government finances 64% of the total education costs, while local governments, brigades, enterprises and the mass contribute the remaining cost. Over 90% of the central funding go to

recurrent costs. In the countryside, the local population finances primary schools and teaching staff (Rosen, 1985 in Klugman, 1994).

The case in Philippines showed that for given levels of enrolment and quality schools that rely more heavily on local funding are more efficient. Regarding quality, the students at school that relied upon local funding attained better achievement scores (Jimenez et al., 1988 in Klugman, 1994).

2.5.2. School Based Management in Developing Countries

Several empirical studies involving school-based management made in western countries failed to indicate changes in student learning (Taylor & Teddlie, 1992; Weiss, 1992; Fullan, 1993 cited in Watson and Fullan, 1999).

Wohlstetter, et al. (1997) found that successful districts introduce changes in the formation, accountability and control systems to enable schools to become self-improving entities better able to manage themselves (cited in Watson and Fullan, 1999).

Similarly the work of Bryk, et. al. (1998) argued that, maintaining decentralization, providing local-capacity building, establishing regroups for external accountability and stimulating access to innovation must be in-corporated to support school based management development.

There are some cases under which decentralized strategies at school level are directly linked to improvements in the quality of learning. The central and middle level management has to shift accountability and responsibility to the school and community level. Thus, in support of this Hanson (1997) suggested that,

Decentralization is not created by passing a law. Rather it must be built by overcoming a series of challenges at the centre and the periphery by, for example, changing long established behaviours and attitudes, developing new skills, convincing people in the centre who enjoy exercising power to give it up, permitting and some times encouraging people to take creative risks promoting and rewarding local initiatives, and maintaining continuity with the decentralization reform even as governments change.

The evaluation of Mombassa school improvement program in Kenya by Anderson and Nderitu (1999) found that, there is evidence of impact on the work of teachers, and their relationships to students and community members and positive on students learning outcomes (cited in Watson and Fullan, 1999).

Similarly the work of Farah (1996, 1997) in Pakistan on school improvements indicated the involvement of parents/community in school governance and decision-making (cited in Watson and Fullan, 1999).

The Escuela Nueva project of Colombia a low cost educational model, has been able to improve quality of rural basic education that apply school-based management and school improvement style (Schiefelbein, 1991).

Indonesian experience showed that, in order to provide school environment, which support the achievement of their students' growth, the school principals need to have the capability of managing the school and supervising the teaching learning activity. Thus the principal characteristics such as educational level, experience, age, training, contribute to student academic achievement (Cummings, et al., 1994).

In general school based management is a means of altering the capacity of the school and community to make improvements. So placing decision-making in the hands of schools will enable themselves to make more rapid responses about the provision of curriculum resources or upskilling of teachers, and other conditions that improves learning (Wylie, 1997).

2.6 The Consequences of Decentralization

2.6.1. Lessons Drawn from Experience

A policy of educational decentralization is expected to result in improved educational efficiency and worsened equity. Thus the goals aimed at decentralization process includes, accelerated economic development, increased management efficiency, redistribution of financial responsibility, deregulation, market based education, neutralizing competing centres of power and improving the quality of education (Hanson, 1997).

Riddel (1994) discussed that some lessons can be drawn from decentralization, such as greater access to education, greater differentiation in school quality. A trade-off access versus equity and diversity afforded through decentralization can lead to innovation. However, there may be a price to pay for national integrity. The task of educational planning and dispersed decision-making in increasingly decentralized system may influence national standards.

Lessons from New Zealand experience of decentralizing authority to the school level showed that change is catalyzed by a general reform climate, broad public support and requisite infrastructure, consistent, strong and committed political leadership, action to gain the cooperation of existing staff, and adequate fund (Wylie, 1997; Perris, 1998).

Experiences of various countries indicated that, successful decentralization is closely related to the design principles of finance, informed decision-making, adherence to local priorities, and accountability. The policy and institutional instruments that establish decentralization have to be shaped to the specific conditions of the specific countries. Wolman (1990) explained benefits of decentralization and justified that its success is based on wide variables, such as the organizational capacity to which power is devolved (management assigned) will determine the extent of responsiveness (plan resource allocation, monitor and regulate outcomes). It also depends on the extent to which local communities are in a position to access the information available, structural arrangements for

decision-making and financial control. In addition to these, decentralization strategies depend on what is decentralized and how, the levels and nature of control, and whether control over budgets is also handed over to local levels of government (Subrahmanin, 1999).

2.6.2. Problems of Decentralized Education Systems

Decentralization may not always be efficient especially for standardized, routine services. It can result in the loss of economies of scale and control over scarce financial resources. Some authorities argue for a strong central government role in the provision of elementary-secondary education, for reasons like, to maximize social benefits, efficient resource allocation, and better information to evaluate educational attainments, equity in educational finance and expenditure (Wrinkler, 1989).

On the other hand, the chance of successful change are greatly enhanced, if the decentralization process transfer positive opportunities to local levels. That means, if badly maintained schools, poorly trained teachers, heavier financial demand without the means to pay over burden or constrained decentralization (Hanson, 1997).

Weak administrative or technical capacity at local levels may result in poor quality and inefficiently and less effectively delivered services. Administrative responsibilities transferred to local levels without adequate financial resources results in difficulties in implementation. Local government and communities can manage the responsibilities if they have the local technical and managerial capacity, to carry functions like, decision-making, resource mobilization and management, communication and coordination, and conflict resolution (Tendler, 1997).

Some authorities also ill advised to proceed with decentralization. The rational behind includes the disagreement in principle, lack of readiness to accept and lack of courage to sustain constraints in the decentralization efforts. The criticism against decentralization indicates that it negates national unity and integration,

reinforces narrowness and promotes inequality and thus becomes cyclical and unstable as to likely revert into centralization (Mintzberg, 1983; Cubban, 1990; Glickman, 1990 cited in Brown, 1991).

2.6.2.1. Role of the Central Government in Decentralized System

The central government can correct the problems of decentralized educational system by employing a combination of regulatory and incentive measures. These are, improving information available to local decision makers on standards and inform employers regarding the level and extent of knowledge through regulations and mandates by establishing national or regional standards, increasing educational spending to compensate for benefit spillovers, reducing horizontal and vertical inequalities and realize economies of scale through centralization of some educational functions (Wrinkler, 1989).

2.7. Decentralization of Educational Management in Ethiopia

2.7.1. *The Overview of Historical Context*

Ethiopia had made some preliminary attempts at decentralization. The decentralization policy has a lot of challenges that are connected with issues such as geography and service infrastructures. The following discussions briefly examine the experiences of decentralization in three different historical periods.

2.7.1.1. The Imperial Period

Modern education had been initiated early in the nineteenth century. The system of education in Ethiopia includes schools operated by the imperial government, orthodox church, other religious organization and private agencies. There were also regional schools built, financed and administered by regional lords. Since the regional lords were semi-autonomous they had a full control over the financial and political affairs of their regions.

In early times when modern school system was established in an organized form there was no standard, then instruction and administration was the responsibility of individual school directors (Bender, et al., 1976).

The progress in modern education was disrupted at its early stage by Italian invasion. During the Italian occupation the educational policy laid allowed local languages to be used as a medium of instruction in the six administrative units of their east African empire (Pankhurst, 1962).

During reconstruction, a number of legislations regarding education have been established. Among these, Order No.1 of 1943 was the first that defined the powers and duties of the government Ministry of Education and Fine Arts that has been established in 1930. The Ministry was responsible for the development of modern education and promoting the fine arts and language. The government also issued Proclamation No.93 of 1947 and No. 279 of 1970 concerning education tax to finance education. Local board of education was established by Order No. 94 of 1947, which was authorized for the accounting of local education expenditure (Ministry of Pen, 1947). The local board of education ensures that the education tax collected in the province that they represent has been expended on elementary education in that province (Pankhurst, 1962).

The board of national education and fine arts was to maintain standard and see to it that education is in conformity with national goals (Seyoum, 1996).

After 1942 highly centralized government administration has been established and the schools have been operated under the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts (Bender, et al., 1976).

In general, the administrative structure of the government school system parallels the government organization structure. The Ministry of Education and Fine Arts has direct central responsibility for the entire system. Some responsibilities were delegated to provincial and district education offices. The overall educational affairs of each province and each district were directly influenced by the ministry (MOE, 1972).

In the sixties and early seventies there were a number of privately owned schools. According to Zewdneh's (1971) observation on the administration of private schools, the directors being self-appointed, made decisions on major issues like, hiring and firing of teachers, determining salaries, fixing of fees, the opening or closing down of schools. These indicate the extent of the authority of the principals to control private schools.

One of the earliest attempts at decentralization was in the form of local self-administration at sub-provincial level by Order No.43 of 1966 (Paul and Clapham, 1967). However, it was not successful. The education system was characterized by over centralization, which was one of conspicuous limitations, as pointed out in 1958 by Mulugeta Wodajo (in Tekeste, 1996). Aklilu's (1967) study witnessed the educational administration as a bloated bureaucracy that stifled local initiative and efficiency (Seyoum, 1996). Similarly, the education sector review of 1972 also indicated that the highly centralized education system needs decentralization to the provincial governors at least at primary level, while the central ministry and the provincial offices were to retain responsibilities for secondary and higher education (Ayalew, 2000).

2.7.1.2. The Derg Period

Among the major problems the education system inherited during the Derg regime was a highly centralized and bureaucratic administration (Amdeselassie, 1978 in Ayalew, 2000). As the Ministry of Education outlined during the period, the establishment of new relationships for the education system in a decentralized structure and intention of democratizing education which calls for community participation was one of the immediate goals (MOE, 1977).

There were proclamations established concerning the management of education. For example, Proclamation No. 54 of 1975 transferred the management of most private schools to public ownership. Then, Proclamation No. 103 of 1976 established the school committee, where school committee (comprises parents and community representatives, teachers, students) was given authority to manage and control schools in accordance with directives laid down by the Ministry of Education. Next to this, Proclamation No. 260 of 1984 came up with

some amendments on the previous proclamation by defining the powers and duties of school principal. The other characteristic of the Derg period was the establishment of peasant associations and urban dwellers' association as the lowest form of local administration. Proclamation No. 1 of 1987 established the autonomous and administrative regions. As a result of these autonomous administrative regions with limited self governing authority, the regional education offices were delegated to make decisions in matters like construction of schools, employment of teachers and non-teaching staff, supervision, financing of education, while the central ministry retained policy matters, planning, curriculum, teacher education, examination and the like (Amdeselassie, 1978 cited in Ayalew, 2000).

Hoben's (1992) conference paper indicated that the political climate of the Derg regime made decentralizing the literacy campaign, (centrally planned to promote language restricted to non formal), sufficiently responsive to local conditions virtually impossible; so if major decisions are handed down from above they hardly opt to advance minority empowerment.

In general the decentralization that lasted up to 1991 was not able to give the people the power to determine their own social and economic affairs, because of lack of sound policy framework which accounts for its inability to address fiscal decentralization, and removed governors at local level. Thus the proclamation stated remained as political motives.

2.7.1.3. The Present Trend

2.7.1.3.1. Why Decentralization?

Ethiopian Transitional Government (1991) has pursued a decentralization policy, whose political choice was regionalization to respond to political problems and to come out from a long tradition of highly centralized unitary form of government. Thus, decentralizing power and adopting the federal system was seen as the most suitable form of government (TGE, 1992).

In Ethiopia the decentralization strategy has been effected through the establishment of regional and local governments by a series of policy proclamations which include, Proclamation No. 7/1992 (TGE, 1992) that established national, regional governments, and Proclamation No. 33/1992 (TGE, 1992) that identified the sharing of revenue.

Proclamation No. 41/1993 (TGE, 1993) promulgated indicated that the powers and duties are decentralized, of decision-making power is divided between the central and regional administration. In general, the TGE has initiated the political and fiscal decentralization. The fiscal decentralization has devolved budgetary tax and borrowing powers to regional states. Thus the regional state has the responsibility for the design and implementation of development projects financed from revenue and credit derived from fiscal and financial empowerment. Other decentralization activities like privatization, the restructuring, and the economic and financial decentralization are on-going processes.

On top of these, the Education System was also decentralized. The rationales were that the education sector revealed a highly centralized, unresponsive, inefficient and a long bureaucratic chain (PHRD, 1996).

The 1994 Education and Training Policy (ETP) gave due emphasis to decentralized administration and management of educational system. As articulated in the policy document, decentralization enhances the efficiency, improves access, equity and quality of education. It advocates also democratized and professionally coordinated participatory management for the educational administration. The policy document furtherly discussed that the educational institutions are becoming autonomous having responsibility, authority and accountability with the mechanisms for the beneficiaries and society .

Community participation in the management of education has been also supported by Proclamation No. 260. 1991/92, which stipulated that communities shall be involved in school affairs through the establishment of government and community school committee. The government also issued regulations for the establishment of private educational institutions.

Currently the managerial and administrative structure has five layers. These are school, Woreda, Zone, Region and Central Ministry, whose functional responsibilities are defined by law (TGE, 1993; MOE, 1997).

2.7.1.3.2. The Status of Decentralized Educational Management

Responsibilities for education management in certain functions can be summarized as follows.

Figure 1: Summary of Responsibilities for Educational Management in Certain Functions.

Area of Responsibility	Ministry of Education	Regional Education Bureau	Zonal Education Department	Woreda Education Office
Policy	Propose and contribute to national policy	Contribute to national policy, make plans for region on basis of national policy. Formulate regional policy.	Propose plans to the REB	Make proposals in certain areas to zones.
Standard Setting	Sets standards	Implementation of Standards		
Examinations	Preparation of national examinations	Implementation and Supervision of National Examinations		
Curriculum	Set Curriculum for Secondary and Higher Education, assist in preparation of other school curricula.	Preparation of Primary Curriculum.	Provide feedback and implement Curriculum	Ensure implementation of curriculum in schools and provide feedback.
Inspection		Inspects Schools		
Teachers	Set Standards and required qualifications, post secondary teachers to regions.	Recruit teachers, pays teachers, and train primary teachers.	Pay teachers	
Teaching and learning materials	Bulk Procurement	Provision of textbooks and materials	Distribution of Materials	
School Establishment	Establish higher education institution, license private higher institutions, set standards for institutions above.	Establish schools and junior colleges, license private schools.	Establish schools and vocational training centres	
Data	Collect national school census data and assist in system development	Collect and compile regional data	Compile zonal data	Compile woreda data

Source: Social Sector Review/PER II, Volume 3. (1997)

There are merits of decentralized management. Hence for success, there has to be competent, trained, experienced and knowledgeable subordinates, that can carryout responsibilities and make decisions at all levels of the education system (Ayalew, 1995; Seyoum, 1996).

In support of these, a series of factors complicated the implementation of decentralization of educational management. Some Authorities indicated that the national policy is poorly understood by middle levels, lack of capacity and variability in the availability of staff, little understanding of the problem of education finance, unclear mechanisms to be employed to enforce the policy (ETEC, 1994; Tekeste, 1996; Seyoum, 1996).

Some other scholars also indicated their fear that Ethiopia is undertaking the daunting task of maintaining a national identity, while decentralizing almost all aspects of its school system, which is not just local control or site based management, but a newly development experiment well worth watching by the rest of the world. Thus, with out having committed, experienced and knowledgeable personnel, the decentralization will be a wasteful effort that would damage the education system.

In the past there were few attempts made to assess the implementation of decentralization policy in Ethiopia. The case example was the study conducted in Tigray (1996) that has based on promulgated policy of decentralization in education aimed at defining decentralization and concerned for the responsibilities and functions of the regional office, local administrative offices, schools and communities (USAID, 1996).

Ethio-Education Consultants has assessed the organization and management of Regional Education Bureau under the policy of regionalization and educational decentralization, by focusing on the physical facilities, and the relationships between various echelons, of the education system. Problems like lack of clarity in some functions and authority, constraints in physical resources and facilities, lack of reliable information, and lack of capacity were the major findings and

concerns over the feasibility of educational decentralization (ETEC, 1994; Social Sector Review/PER III, Volume 2, 1997; Derebssa, 1998).

Similarly in operationalizing Decentralization in education, Pilot Management Audit has been undertaken in 1997 after three years of decentralization policy to define and experiment technical tools and procedures for the production of diagnosis and action plans (MOE, 1997).

In general, in favour of decentralizing operations at different levels, liberty, responsibility and answerability to regions should be given, and at the same time certain aspects has to be retained centrally (Merit, 2000).

For decentralization process to take place major preparation effort as well as a high level of commitment are required. Therefore, to retain certain centralized functions (responsibilities) or to devolve them need to ensure good management practices.

2.8. Background Information on Decentralized Management and the Status of Education in Oromia

2.8.1. Decentralization of Educational Management

Provision of education is one of the statutory local functions devolved to regional governments. As a result of the decentralization of power after 1991 and the new education policy, the management of education has been decentralized (except tertiary level) to regions.

The new education and training policy (ETP, 1994) is the basis to lay the foundation for education development in response to educational problems manifested in the form of poor quality, inequitable distribution and unresponsiveness to the needs of the learners and the local community. The goal of the policy has been to restructure, expand educational provision and make it relevant to the learners. Based on language policy issued, the region has chosen Afan Oromo and Amharic languages as subjects to be taught and as a media of

instruction at primary level and to develop curriculum materials relevant to its region. The Regional Education Bureau is the primary decision-making centre for the region's education system.

In Oromia, there are 12 zonal education departments under the regional education bureau. The zonal education departments are responsible for education in their respective zones. Under the zones there are a total of 180 woreda education offices. The number of woredas vary from one zone to the other. However, the minimum is 12 and the maximum is 23. The woreda education offices in turn are responsible for their woreda's education and to support this there are woreda education and training board. Most schools do have school committees to make some decisions, like budgeting, procurements and maintenance. Both primary and secondary schools are accountable to woreda education offices. Apart from the regional level, other administrative organs are also encouraged to involve in the planning and implementation process.

2.8.2. The Status of Education

The Regional Education system comprises of both formal and non-formal education. The educational institutions range from kindergarten to junior higher institutions and are owned by government and non-government organizations.

According to the data obtained from the REB in the year 1999/2000:

- I) Preschool services (for children aged 4 - 6 years) have been provided for about 1% children in 252 officially recognized kindergartens. These institutions are run by municipalities, urban dwellers' associations, private, community and non-government organizations.

- II) Primary education is provided for children of 7 - 14 years of age. About 95% of 4336 primary schools belong to government and the remaining are non-government owned. Nearly 50% of 4.6 million school aged children have got schooling, which is still far away from the goals of universal primary education since 2000. Regarding equity, only 40% of rural children

have a chance of getting education, and the numbers of girls going to schools are also very much less than that of boys.

- III) Regarding secondary education, there are about 129 secondary schools (7 of them are non-government). About 42% of woredas have no access to secondary education. Only 9% of the school aged population have got the chance of schooling.
- IV) Thirteen technical and vocational schools and centres are providing training in different fields for 1 - 3 years in the region.
- V) In the region, there are also two teachers training colleges and three teachers training institutes that conduct training programs leading to certificate and diplomas as well as programs for kindergarten teachers and adult non-formal educationalists.
- VI) 153 community skill-training centres provide training on various skills for about 3,500 adults annually. There are more than 3,000 basic education centres for adults and out of school children.

Accordingly, the region has developed a five year plan known as Education Sector Development Program which is meant to approach the fundamental educational problems by bringing together the efforts of the government, private, community and donors (OEB, 1998). Thus, to achieve educational objectives, to improve access, equity, relevance/quality and efficiency, educational planning and management becomes central. Therefore, decentralized management system to support the region's educational objectives was the core for the reform process.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter deals with two parts. The first reports on the characteristics of the study population, which includes personal and professional characteristics. The second presents the analysis of the main features of decentralized educational management in five sections.

3.1. Characteristics of the Study Population

In order to maximize the diversity, different categories of respondents were involved in this study. This included policy and decision-makers, experts, supervisors, implementers and beneficiaries. Specifically, education officials, experts and supervisors at different administrative levels ranging from the central ministry of education to woreda education offices, principals and teachers of primary and secondary schools were targeted in responding to the questionnaire.

The respondents included in the study were considered relevant and key actors in the field by the virtue of their position and vested responsibilities in the management of the education system.

Accordingly, 297 copies of questionnaire prepared and distributed to be filled out and returned to the researcher. However, for various reasons the anticipated number of questionnaire was not completed and the rate of return was 80.13 percent. Of these, officials, experts and supervisors comprised 36.1 percent (86), and 63.9 percent (152) of the respondents were principals and teachers of primary and secondary public schools (Table 1).

Table 1: Respondents by Sex and Responsibility

Responsibility	Sex				Total
	M	%	F	%	
Officials	57	95	3	5	60
Experts/Supervisors	23	88.5	3	11.5	26
School Principals	24	100	--	--	24
Teachers	112	87.5	16	12.5	128
Total	216	90.8	22	9.2	238

Regarding the age structure and sex of the respondents, their ages range from 28 to 55 years. Sex wise as can be seen from Table 1, 90.8 percent (216) were males and 9.2 percent (22) were females.

Table 2: Respondents by Educational Level

Educational Level	N	%
M.A/M.Sc.	13	5.5
B.A/B.Sc.	48	20.2
12 + 3	18	7.6
Diploma /12 + 2	79	33.2
T.T.I.	68	28.5
Unspecified	12	5

Concerning the educational background, the data in Table 2 reveals that, of the total, 5.5 percent (13) had second degree, 20.2 percent (48) were first degree holders, 7.6 percent (18) had 12+3 or completed three years of higher education, 33.2 percent (79) were college diploma holders, 28.5 percent (68) were graduates of Teacher Training Institute, and 5 percent (12) of the respondents did not specify their educational level.

As regards to working experiences, 4.6 per cent (11) had services of 5 years and less, 8.4 percent (20) had served in the range of 6 to 10 years, and 87 percent (207) were with services ranging from 11 to 29 years. The majority of the

respondents who were working at different administrative levels of the education system indicated that they had special training of short and/ or long-term duration relevant to their position. Thus, they seem to have better knowledge and experiences on matters related to the research questions.

Key informant interviews were also held with four regional education bureau and zonal education department heads, and four woreda education officers using face to face and telephone conversation. In addition to this, to obtain the views, attitudes, knowledge or any other subjective orientations, the researcher held focus group discussion with sixteen informants. An interview guide was developed for use during the key informant interviews and focus group discussion.

For purposes of checks and balances, the researcher carried out case observations of on going practices. Checklist also used to be filled by school principals, experts and supervisors of education programs at woreda, zonal and regional levels.

Regarding sub-regional and school characteristics, the size and geographical location of the sub-regions were an important factors considered in the sampling of study areas. Zones and woredas with large number of student population and low enrolment rates were considered. With respect to school location, nearer schools to the government offices and those at the periphery were given a chance to be included in the study.

Schools were also categorized according to size as defined by enrolments. Thus about 52 percent of the primary schools were rural and all secondary schools were urban school type.

Therefore, it is believed that the responses and other relevant data were graded, organized and analyzed in such a way as to determine the outcome of the study.

3.2. Analysis of the Main Features of Decentralized Educational Management

3.2.1. Linking Decentralization and Educational Objectives

The decision to decentralize educational management was based on various reasons and it must be linked with a clear articulation of that purpose. Therefore, the extent to which the objectives and purposes are known and accepted by different groups help to prioritize the activities and direction for the reform. The success of decentralization depends on efforts made to clarify the purpose of decentralization and shared vision of what to be accomplished.

Thus, the intention of the researcher was to assess how educational objectives and purposes were known or effectively communicated to decision-makers and implementers.

The following responses were organized as objectives/purposes for educational decentralization in terms of priority. Officials, experts and school principals rated the priority as (1) high priority, (2) medium priority and (3) low priority.

Table 3: Responses on Objectives and Rationale

Objectives and Rationale for Educational Decentralization	Respondents													
	Ranking Priorities in Percent													
	Officials & Experts N = 86							School Principals N = 24						
	1		2		3		*	1		2		3		*
%	N	%	N	%	N	Weighted Index	%	N	%	N	%	N	Weighted Index	
1. To promote democracy	50	(43)	38.4	(33)	11.6	(10)	205	33.3	(8)	50	(12)	16.7	(4)	52
2. To solve problems of schools	44.2	(38)	41.8	(36)	14	(12)	198	62.5	(15)	16.7	(4)	20.8	(5)	58
3. To improve quality	48.8	(42)	31.4	(27)	19.8	(17)	197	70.8	(17)	16.7	(4)	12.5	(3)	62
4. To improve access & equity	51	(44)	22.1	(19)	26.7	(23)	193	50	(12)	33.3	(8)	16.7	(4)	56
5. To encourage parents, teachers & others in decision making, make contribution enhance sense of ownership	53.4	(46)	30.2	(26)	16.3	(14)	204	37.5	(9)	37.5	(9)	25	(6)	51
6. To solve problems of communication & procedures in decision-making	24.4	(21)	47.6	(41)	28	(24)	169	54.2	(13)	37.5	(9)	8.3	(2)	59
7. To improve management efficiency	46.5	(40)	43	(37)	10.4	(9)	203	62.5	(15)	20.8	(5)	16.7	(4)	59
8. To allow flexibility	57	(49)	30.2	(26)	12.8	(11)	210	66.7	(16)	29.2	(7)	4.1	(1)	63
9. To transfer responsibility	25.6	(22)	40.7	(35)	33.7	(29)	165	45.8	(11)	41.7	(10)	12.5	(3)	66
10. To raise required revenue, to reduce the burden of finance from the centre.	23.3	(20)	43	(37)	33.7	(29)	163	29.2	(7)	37.5	(9)	33.3	(8)	47

* *Weighted Index: The first, second and third priorities are combined to create an index in which the first priority is given 3, the second and the third priorities are given 2 and 1 respectively.*

- *Figures in parentheses are actual observations and represented by N. All other similar tables follow the same principle.*

As can be seen from Table 3, 50-59% of the respondents have indicated items (3), (4), (5), (7) and (8) as high priority in the management of decentralized education system, while the rest of the items were reported to be either of medium priority or low priority. However, all items were cited as high priorities in the policy documents. This implied that the objectives and purposes of decentralizing the management of education system were not well known or not accepted by decision-makers and implementers.

Most of the officials and experts (50-57%) thought that only items (1),(4),(5) and (8) were high priorities of the system, whereas 50-70.8% of the school principals accepted items (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), and (8) as high priorities in the decentralized education system.

It seems that there is a consensus on the purposes in items (4) and (8) of decentralization by both groups of respondents. On the other hand, officials and experts reported only four items as high priority of the system. From this, one can infer that officials and experts were not oriented or communicated around the purposes of decentralization or, were new to the position because of high turn over and thus knew little about it.

Discussion made with regional, zonal officials and senior experts indicated that the purpose of decentralized educational management was to promote participatory decision making, care for democratic values and leadership, ensuring efficiency by raising internal yield of the system, improving quality, equity and access issues as priority objectives. The overall priority is ensuring proper functioning of the system, which may include all items in Table 3.

On the other hand, according to the discussion made with some parents, the decentralization initiatives were not clear for them. In general, down the administrative levels there seems to be lack of clear vision and common understanding of objectives. In the absence of a unifying purpose, one can say that it is difficult to implement the policy of decentralization.

In general, the three highest priority of the objectives according to their weighted index as rated by officials and experts were to allow flexibility/ recognize local needs (210), to promote democracy (205), and to encourage parents, teachers, and others involvement in education (204). While the three top priorities areas using weighted index as ranked by school principals were transferring responsibility (66), allow flexibility (63), and improve quality (62).

In order to test the variance in responses between the two groups of respondents, further statistical analysis was used to test the similarity or differences in relationships in ranking the objectives & purposes in line of priority by using Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient:

$$\text{Thus } \Gamma_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum_{i=1}^n d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where, Γ_s = Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient

d_i = differences in ranking

n = number of observation (objectives)

Manipulating using the formula $\Gamma_s = 0.32$. Therefore, Γ_s is positive means there is similarity (agreement) between the opinions of the two groups of respondents. However the similarity is small in value, which is meant less perfection. The implication is that all respondents do not equally accept the objectives of decentralization. Therefore, clarifying the purposes of decentralization of educational management for widely acceptances among the actors seems very important for the success of the system.

3.2.2. Functionality of Decentralized Educational Management System

The process of decentralization is assumed to transfer power and create new responsibilities at the lower levels in order to reach the intended objectives. The prerequisites for the delivery of positive development values include the tasks of planning, implementation and sustaining the service. Achieving the goals of democracy and development also requires real devolution of decision-making power to the local governments and has to be supported with planning, management, monitoring and empowering of people.

In decentralized governance process, the indispensable and crucial functions to be maintained include decentralized planning, financial resources and participation of community (the stakeholders).

In light of these, some key decentralized educational management functions were framed and respondents were asked whether the intermediate level of educational administration to which power and responsibility had been transferred maintained these functions or not.

Table 4: Responses on Decentralized Educational Management

Key Management Functions	Respondents													
	Percent													
	Officials & Experts N = 86							School Principals N = 24						
	Yes		No		To some extent		Total	Yes		No		To some extent		Total %
%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1. Planning	29.1	(25)	25.3	(21)	46.5	(40)	100	37.5	(9)	12.5	(3)	50	(12)	100
2. Administration / Organization	28.2	(25)	32.6	(28)	38.4	(33)	100	20.8	(5)	33.3	(8)	45.8	(11)	100
3. Controlling /Supervision	22.1	(19)	48.8	(42)	29.1	(25)	100	25	(6)	37.5	(9)	37.5	(9)	100
4. Finance	27.9	(24)	29.1	(25)	43	(37)	100	25	(6)	29.2	(7)	45.8	(11)	100
5. Community participation	33.7	(29)	23.3	(20)	43	(37)	100	29.2	(7)	25	(6)	45.8	(11)	100

As can be seen from Table 4, 47% of the respondents (46.5% officials and experts and 50% school principals) have indicated that the planning function of decentralized educational management has been maintained at intermediate level of administration to some extent. About 30.9% (29.1% officials and experts and 37.5% school principals) responded positively and 21.8% (25.3% officials and experts and 12.5% school principals) of the total respondents replied negatively.

Since local governments are said to have responsibility of planning for their local development, absence of it may indicate the loss of major part of its objectives. Respondents' perceptions in the area of the scope and content of local level planning and its authority might have seen as the role of top managers, even if attempts were made to improve the planning capacity of this intermediate level management.

Discussions made with regional, zonal and woreda officials in the area of planning functions indicated that educational targets were defined centrally in the perspective plan, then the region translated it for local consumption.

Targets for zones and woredas emanate from the regional targets. This shows that the lower administrative tiers are much directed by upper hierarchy, which contradicts with the rationale for decentralization /bottom - up model of planning. It seems that the length of the chain from school to REB in a given time frame is not easy to have an aggregated bottom up plan in a consultative way. On the other hand, without knowing the available budget ceilings for bottom up request

is not feasible. Thus, with tight and rigid budget system it seems difficult to apply the principle.

In general, the planning function at local level might have been constrained by a number of factors like lack of technical skill, inadequate information, lack of mechanisms and facilities.

Table 4 also illustrates that the administration/organization function of decentralized educational management has been maintained at intermediate level to some extent as indicated by 40% of the respondents (38.4% officials and experts, and 45.8% school principals), while 32.7% (32.6% officials & experts and 33.3% school principals) and 27.3% (28.2% officials & experts and 20.8% school principals) of the total respondents replied negatively and positively respectively. This implies that the intermediate level of administration is not yet capable to articulate felt needs so as to formulate and implement plans. It might be due to lack of clarity of the tasks at the lower levels or there might be much involvement from the higher hierarchy in directing lower echelons.

The evidence from field observations and discussions made with some officials and experts of REB, ZED and WEO also showed that, the process of decentralization had created new responsibilities for unexperienced actors, although the requisite capacity needed and the existing institutions were not reinforced institutionally both in terms of materials, manpower and finance to the expected level. Thus, there is a need to revisit the various levels to make the system function effectively.

As revealed in Table 4, the extent to which controlling/ supervision mechanisms had been put in place was responded to positively and to some extent by 22.7% (22.1% officials & experts and 25% school principals) and 30.9% (29.1% officials and experts and 37.5% school principals) of the respondents respectively, while 46.4% (48.8% officials and experts and 37.5% school principals) reacted negatively. It seems that, there is inadequacy of mechanisms, rules and procedures for regulating performances and the central ministry's might have loosened controls over the local levels for compliance with standards. Since the

ministry's role was confined to advisory and consultancy activities to regional governments (as per the proclamation), it might not render the service as required or it might be argued that the ministry itself does not have the necessary technical capacity to support the regional government.

With regard to finance, 43.6% of the respondents (43.3% officials and experts and 45.8% school principals) have reported that the intermediate levels of administration have undertaken key functions in the area of finance to some extent, while 29.1% (29.1% officials and experts and 29.2% school principals) and 27.3% (27.9% officials and experts and 25% school principals) of the total respondents have rejected and accepted, respectively. The local government might have little power to determine and raise the tax bases or no effort has been made to exercise the powers and responsibilities vested.

Community participation is vital in decentralized governance. Community can participate in development strategies, and have strong influence on the direction and execution of its own activities. However, as depicted in the above table, regarding community participation, 43.6% of the total respondents (43% officials and experts and 45.8% school principals) have indicated community participation to some extent, while 32.7% (33.7% officials and experts and 29.2% school principals) and 23.6% (23.3% officials and experts and 25% school principals) have reacted positively and negatively, respectively. This implies that there is a perceived recognition for community involvement in decentralized educational management.

However, the discussions made with teachers, principals and WEO officers reveals that community and other stakeholders' involvement in planning was very poor, and planning functions remained the responsibility of the civil servants or the personnel in the planning team.

Further statistical analysis was used to test significant differences in responses. Thus, the chi-square (X^2) test at 5% level of significance shows that, the calculated X^2 (1.1155) is less than the table X^2 (5.991), and it implies that, there is no significant differences in opinions of the two categories of respondents with

regard to the decentralized functions of educational management. In general, the consensus is that there is a gap between functions framed for intermediate administrative level and the actual performances of the system to maintain the expectations.

3.2.3. Decision-making Authority and Responsibility

The administrative structure of the public school system parallels the government organization structure. Decision-making ranges from the higher levels to the grass roots (school) level. This means all types of decisions cannot be taken in one place and must be distributed among all levels available.

This section looks at who should make what decision about education and the redistribution of responsibilities in selected areas of educational management. Since, the organization and the administration of primary and secondary education are decentralized, there is an assumption of redistribution of authority in decision-making and vested responsibility at all levels.

Respondents were asked which entity made each decision, at the national, region, zone, woreda or school concerning primary and secondary education system.

Table 5: Decision-making Authority and Responsibility

Key Areas of Decision Making	Respondents									
	Responses in Percent									
	Officials & Experts N = 86					School Principals and teachers N = 162				
	Decision-making Authority					Decision-making Authority				
	National	Region	Zone	Woreda	School	National	Region	Zone	Woreda	School
1. Salaries & Incentives	31.3	28.4	13.2	9.6	15.5	31.7	25.6	18.7	10	14
2. Personnel decisions	1.5	22.4	26.5	29.5	20.1	2	23.3	27.3	28.3	19.1
3. Pedagogy	20.4	26.5	16.6	15.3	21.2	22.7	26.5	16.5	15.7	18.6
4. School organization	45.1	30	9	6.7	9.2	45.6	23.6	11.6	7.2	12.8
5. Maintenance & Infrastructure	7	23.6	26.5	30.4	12.5	4.7	23	28.7	29.3	14.2
6. Administration	7.5	17.6	16.2	23.1	35.6	12	18.5	17.5	22.3	29.8

N.B. More than one decision making authority is possible in the same key areas at different level.

Table 5, above depicted respondents perception of decision making authority and responsibility at different levels. In the areas of salaries and incentives, 31.5% of the total respondents have showed that the major decisions are made at national level, while 9.8% of the respondents have indicated the least decisions are made at woreda level. This might have resulted from the fact that decisions in setting pay scales for teachers and administrative staff are decided at the national level in view of keeping uniformity and standard. The regional governments do also have mandate to establish pay structures especially in the areas of administrative staff and in some cases for the teachers (27.7%). Though the degree varies, the information gathered from discussions made and review of documents reveals the same fact and complement each other that all levels of the hierarchy have the authority in making some decisions in the areas of salaries and incentives to some extent. The assessments made to compare opinions of the two categories of respondents have also showed no significant differences.

Regarding personnel decisions, the decision-making authority is vested to the woreda, zone and region as reported by 29%, 27% and 22.5% of the total respondents respectively. Only few respondents reported the authority of decision making in the area of personnel to exist at the national level. They might have confused the right of setting minimum requirements and establishing standard norms with the actual administrative system of personnel decisions.

Policy documents reveal the fact that, key responsibility of hiring teachers and administrative staffs has been assigned to woreda education offices and zonal education departments up to specified salary scales in line with decentralization.

About 20% of the respondents have indicated the presence of school made personnel decisions. Those schools with prominent community involvement to raise school income have the right in decision-making to hire and dismiss personnel.

On the other hand, more than 70% of the respondents have cited that the authority of decision making in selecting, assigning and dismissing school principals was vested in woreda and school levels. It seems that there is a

provision for the local selection of principals by involving school teachers. However, there were divergent opinions among respondents in mechanism used to assign the principals. 49.4% of the respondents have argued for the need to assign school principals on merit bases. 31.8% of the respondents have showed their preferences that the staff has to elect the principal in a democratic way and the rest of respondents have opted the need for seeking other mechanisms of principal assignments.

With regard to pedagogical issues, 12 key areas were listed to have respondents' perceptions. Accordingly, 26.5%, 21.5% and 20% of the respondents have indicated that some key areas of pedagogical decisions were made at regional, national and school levels respectively. This might be due to the fact that the national has the authority and responsibility over choice and design of curriculum, determine standards to assess student learning, training of secondary teachers and setting national exams as per the policy. Similarly, the region has also authority and responsibility over primary school curriculum, teacher training and material provision. The data obtained also show that the decision making authority lies in the hands of schools in the areas of determining class size, developing or selecting alternative forms of assessment and evaluating teachers performances. On the other hand, 16.5% and 15.5% of the respondents reported that zone and woreda respectively have some authority and responsibility in the area of pedagogy. This might be related to activities like supervision, teachers' evaluation, and training.

Although schools are authorized to make instructional decisions like selecting appropriate methodologies, assessment of individual learners and selection of contents, defining education programs and plans seems to be the authority left for upper administrative levels. But school systems are expected to participate in planning, research, evaluation, innovation and other activities of educational programs and instructional plans to improve the program. The discussion made with some principals and teachers reveals that schools implement education within tight framework and uniformly with few decisions made by the schools in this sphere.

The other key area of decision-making authority was the school organization. As can be seen from table 5, more than 45% of the respondents have reported that major decisions are made at national level, while minor decisions are made at woreda level as reported by about 7% of the respondents in the area of school organization. This might be due to the fact that, as per the policy statement, the authority to decide on the components of school organization is vested by the federal level.

On the other hand, the data obtained reveal that, 30%, 27.6%, 23.3%, 13.3% of the respondents indicated that decision-making authority about maintenance and infrastructure development are redistributed among the woreda, zone, region and schools respectively. More than 55% of the respondents have the opinion that decision in the areas of maintaining the school is in the hands of schools and woredas. However, discussion made with zonal & woreda officers witnessed that practically no body is in charge of this function at woreda level. Some times the community maintained the school. So no clear directives in this respect. More than 80% of the respondents thought that decisions related to infrastructure development is made at regional, zonal and woreda level, while more than 70% of the respondents reported that zones and woredas are responsible to make decisions regarding location of schools.

With regard to the decision-making authority with respect to administration, 32.7% of the total respondents have shown that the major decisions are made at school level, while about 9.7% of the respondents have indicated the least decisions are made at the national level. However this does not disregard the decision-making authorities by the rest entities with varying degrees.

In general, statistically there is no significant difference between opinions of the two categories of respondents, since the chi-square (χ^2) test showed that for a degree of freedom at 5% level of significance, the calculated value of χ^2 (1.22) is less than the table value of χ^2 (5.991).

The following table presents the number of decisions made by each level of decision-making authority. For the purpose of comparison 37 areas of decision-making were selected and the responses were tabulated for further analysis.

Table 6: Number of Decisions Made at Each Level

Decision making Authority	Respondents Perception	
	Out of 37 decision making areas, number of decisions made	Percent of decisions made
National	7.2	19.5%
Regional	10.6	28.6%
Zone	7.1	19.3%
Woreda	6.56	17.7%
School	5.54	14.9%
Total	37	100%

Although some decisions overlapped and shared between different levels, Table 6 depicts a number of decisions made by each decision making authority out of 37 key decision making areas. According to the data presented, the highest number of decisions, 28.6% (10.6) were made at the regional level, while schools made the least number of decisions, 14.9% (5.54) out of 37 key decision-making areas. This implies that, decision-making power is concentrated at the regional level. Although it has been said that authority have been decentralized from centre to regions, still in the selected areas of decision-making the national level has a significant power to decide, whereas schools are the least decision making units.

In general, the data obtained shows that decisions about school organization are highly centralized, while decisions in the area of maintenance and infrastructure developments are highly decentralized. Although in decentralization greater school autonomy is encouraged, and the school autonomy is measured by the number of decisions made out of thirty seven decision making areas, however, the data witnessed that few decisions are made at school level.

In addition to these, responses were gathered to assess the extent to which decision making power has been pushed down to the lower administrative levels, then rated using the five point Likert type scale of very low (1), low (2), medium (3), high (4), very high (5). The mean scores from data analysis were interpreted as follows; 0.05-1.49 very low, 1.5-2.49 low, 2.5-3.49 medium, 3.5-4.49 high and above 4.5 very high.

Table 7: Rating on the Extent to Which the Decision Making Power Has Been Pushed Down

Functions	Respondents											
	Rating Scores											
	Officials & Experts N = 86						School Principals & Teachers N = 152					
	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}
1. Manpower planning & deployment	-	16	38	21	11	3.31	6	22	76	36	12	3.17
2. Capital budget planning & expenditure	16	23	35	12	-	2.39	39	32	63	18	-	2.39
3. Recurrent budget planning & expenditure	13	18	32	22	1	2.77	27	38	64	15	8	2.59
4. Teacher recruitment & compensation	-	11	30	35	10	3.51	5	20	50	47	30	3.5
5. Education service provision	5	11	35	26	9	3.27	15	32	57	27	21	3.05
Average mean score						3.05						2.94
Standard deviation						0.45						0.44

* \bar{x} is the mean value throughout similar tables.

As can be seen in Table 7, the mean scores for all functions listed, except item 2 lay above 2.5 for both categories of respondents. This means, the degree to which decision-making authority has been pushed down to the lower administrative levels or the extent to which decentralization has occurred seems medium or fair with mean scores ranging from 2.5 to 3.49 for items 1,3 and 5, while, for item 4 the weighted mean score was found to be 3.5 and thus only this function seems to be highly pushed down (decentralized).

The discussion made with zone and woreda officers reveals that except salaries which are planned at woreda level and upper echelons, the rest recurrent budget planning is prepared by schools and woredas. However, the upper hierarchy complains that some times what come up the system are wish-lists and thus,

opted to revise what they have received as a plan at least to minimize the mismatch between the physical planning targets and the budget. This might be due to the lower levels inadequate technical capacity and/or unaware of the available budget.

The decision-making authority in the area of teacher recruitment and compensation seems to be much pushed down, since the weighted mean scores (3.5) are relatively high (good) for both category of the respondents. As per the discussion made, key responsibility in recruitment of primary teachers and salary pay have been assigned to woredas, while hiring secondary teachers has been delegated to zones. Both levels exercise manpower planning and deployment. However, it seems that still this function is constrained by lack of capacity.

Regarding capital budget planning and expenditure the weighted mean score is 2.39, which is low. Discussions made with regional officials have indicated that the region determine regional capital expenditures and the priorities of zones and woredas are kept based on broad strategies agreed upon. It has been mentioned that the woredas identify priorities, and recommend school sites for construction. However, no capital expenditure is made at woreda level. There is financial limit for capital budget to be undertaken at zonal level and thus zones are delegated for capital expenditure in the area of primary education whereas, the region is responsible for secondary level capital expenditure. Thus, it seems that authority in this area retained at the regional and zonal level.

In order to test significant differences in responses, the mean scores were exposed for further statistical analysis. The test for differences between the two means showed that, at 5% level of significance, t- calculated (0.271) is less than that of t-table (2.132). This means, there is no significant differences between opinions of the two categories of respondents.

In general, responsibilities were transferred to the lower echelon as described in many documents but in practice the functions transferred were not commensurate with the authority. This might be due to lack of capacity at lower levels or from

the regional perspective decentralization seems to take power from the centre and assumes itself as centre of decentralization.

3.2.4 Assessing the Enabling Environment

Experience of some countries has shown that decentralization reforms have failed to fulfil the expectations, and has led to results far different from what sought. Therefore, for success and effective implementation, it is important to assess the enabling factors (conditions) that have affected the decentralization policies and plans in order to take corrective measures.

In this regard, the enabling environment for decentralization process related to policy issues and intervention includes political environment, stakeholders involvement, information system and administrative mechanisms.

Another factor which determines the success of decentralization policy is the local capacity. This is the institutional (organizational) strength in terms of administrative and technical capacity. Organizational strength can be described in terms of organizational settings, management and leadership, resource mobilization, communication and co-ordination, work practice and conflict resolution. In this case, the local capacity refers to the internal environments of educational administrative levels, with special emphasis to regional, zonal and woreda educational managements.

In order to assess both factors (enabling environments) responses were gathered using the five point likert type scale of very poor (1), poor (2), fair (3), good (4), very good (5).

The mean scores achieved from the data analysis were interpreted as, 0.05-1.49 very poor, 1.5-2.49 poor, 2.5-3.49 fair, 3.5-4.49 good and above 4.5 very good. Therefore, mean scores below 2.5 were taken as a weakness (threat) and above 2.5 were thought as strengths. The mean scores were used for further statistical analysis, for significant differences between the two independent means.

3.2.4.1 Policy Issues and Intervention

Table 8: Rating on Policy Issues and Interventions

Factors	Respondents											
	Rating Scores											
	Officials & Experts N = 86						School Principals N = 24					
	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{X}
1. Political environment	15	31	30	10	-	2.41	2	9	13	-	-	2.45
2. Stake-holders involvement	7	30	35	14	-	2.65	-	8	12	4	-	2.83
3. Information documentation & dissemination	12	30	28	16	-	2.56	-	12	8	4	-	2.64
4. Administrative mechanisms	8	9	39	30	-	3.05	-	4	14	4	-	2.83
Average mean score						2.67						2.69
Standard deviation						0.27						0.18

Table 8, illustrates that the political environment for the implementation of decentralized educational management was poor as rated by both groups of respondents and the weighted mean score was about 2.42.

Various issues under political environment were exposed to the respondents for their responses. The political will and commitment from political leaders and lower levels of administration seems to be fair and there were demonstrated government supports, and the commitment to allocate finance for main reform activities were viewed as one of the priority agenda in the development plans like ESDP (Review of the ESDP plan also reveals that the government is committed to finance about 73% of the education expenditure from its treasury and there is an intention to increase educational expenditures, which witnessed the government-demonstrated support and commitment). It seems that the government has realized developments in the field of education are likely to have an increasing effect on wider political trends and poverty alleviation. However, besides the existing will, the responses gathered and informal discussions made with some respondents showed that there is a complaint regarding top leaders and government officials for not fulfilling the promise. The provision of leadership for the system in the field of expertise, guidance, direction to the reform given from top-level to lower levels and its continuity was found to be very minimal. The

the standard error, $S.E. \bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 = \sqrt{\frac{\delta_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{\delta_2^2}{n_2}}$

the observed difference between the two means is 0.02 which is about 0.13 times the $S.E. \bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2$. Consequently there is little ground to doubt the hypothesis that the difference is due to sampling fluctuation and hence the difference is insignificant.

3.2.4.2 Local Capacity

Capacity of local government in managing their new responsibilities under decentralization process has been assessed as indicated below.

Table 9: Rating on Local Capacity.

Areas of Capacity	Respondents																							
	Rating Scores																							
	Officials & Experts, N = 86												School (Principals & Teachers), N=152											
	REB & ZED						WEO						REB & ZED						WEO					
	1	2	3	4	5	- x	1	2	3	4	5	- x	1	2	3	4	5	- x	1	2	3	4	5	- x
1. Organizational Settings	-	7	13	48	18	3.89	5	11	48	22	-	3	10	22	35	75	10	3.35	15	36	63	38	-	2.82
2. Leadership & Management	-	11	11	54	10	3.73	12	20	38	16	-	2.67	9	12	33	68	30	3.64	30	32	78	12	-	2.47
3. Resource Mobilization	-	11	19	43	13	3.7	10	21	44	11	-	2.65	12	26	38	76	-	3.3	28	48	70	6	-	2.35
4. Communication & Coordination	4	13	22	39	8	3.39	8	27	44	7	-	2.58	6	24	42	64	16	3.39	30	50	66	6	-	2.32
5. Work Practice	3	8	30	40	5	3.41	16	19	45	6	-	2.48	5	20	30	70	22	3.45	27	57	60	8	-	2.32
6. Conflict Resolution	6	15	21	43	1	3.2	16	27	40	3	-	2.35	10	18	59	55	10	3.24	36	54	46	10	6	2.32
Average mean value						3.55						2.62						3.37						2.43
Standard deviation						0.26						0.22						0.17						0.19

Table 9, presents capacity of REB & ZED and WEO in six selected areas of capacity as perceived by respondents. Organizational settings refer to clarity of organizational home (organizational structure for each component and each function), managerial accountability, adequacy of the organization for the work, and adequate delegation of authority. A response in table 9 item 1 reflects these issues as perceived by the respondents; and the weighted mean scores were found to be 3.62 and 2.91 for REB & ZED and WEO respectively. The data reveal that organizational settings for REB & ZED seem better and fairer than WEO.

However, review of the organizational structure shows that, there is no consistency of structure for some units and function. For example, the maintenance and construction function has no home at woreda level. Curriculum & instruction is organized as a department at the regional level, whereas down the hierarchy decisions in the area of curriculum are made in an adhoc fashion and thus schools report curriculum issues to educational programme supervision section. The project finance unit at regional level is organized under planning and project service, whereas no such unit exists at zonal and woreda level, and the function is carried out at zone by finance and administration unit. Project evaluation and NGO coordination units are splited among many units especially at zone and woreda levels. The difficulties in organizational structures observed in the education system might have arisen from little attention given to organizational structures or viewing the organization in structural rather than in functional terms. It seems difficult to fulfil a growing requirement for strategic planing capabilities, development of effective system performances, and specially to manage and implement technical programmes at zonal and woreda levels with the existing organizational structure.

Capacity in leadership refers to the level to which managerial and lead technical positions are filled, the presence of clear vision and objectives/ strategy to be translated into action, flexibility, openness and creativity, existence of terms of reference for each units, level of commitment in dealing with competing forces. The responses as indicated in table 9 of item 2, show the weighted mean score to be 3.68 (good) for RE B & ZED, and 2.57 (fair) for WEO. However, the data are in aggregated form and might have shadowed some elements of management

and leadership. Thus, it is important to look for further figures and facts using functional analysis to describe the issue under consideration.

Table- 10: Staffing Level of Management Functions in 18 Sample Woredas.

Management Functions	Required Management Position	Staffed Management Position	Staffed Position In Percent
1. Planning & program management (Educational Management & Information, Planning and Programming)	36	16	44.4%
2. Management & Administration (Personnel Management, Financial Management, Office Administration)	252	153	60.7%
3. Pedagogical Function (Curriculum Development and Research, Teacher Training, Educational Mass Media, Examination & Students service, Programmes Supervision, Textbook & Educational materials)	270	198	73.3%
Total	558	367	65.8%

The data show that 44.4% of planning and program management position, 60.7% of management and administration function, 73.3% of pedagogical functions and overall 65.8% of management functions in sampled woredas have been staffed. A notable absence of manpower in planning and program function is observed, which hampers the effort to improve the quality of information available to managers. The reasons might be underestimating of the function or lack of awareness. Even if the overall manpower assignment seem to be fair, some top management positions were either not staffed or were staffed with lower level managers in an acting position. In general, in quantitative terms manpower assignments seem to be fair for all levels though not qualified. Review of documents indicated that, 69.7%, 86%, and 71.2% positions have been staffed at regional, zonal and woreda levels respectively but this does not guarantee competence.

Table 9, item 3 also reflects the availability of resources (finance, material, human), capacity to mobilize users, and level of collaboration as a measure of management functions. The mean scores were found to be good for REB & ZED (weighted mean score 3.5) and fair for WEO (weighted mean score 2.5) as reported by respondents. For organizational effectiveness, efficiency of the staff

pattern, the fit between functions, workload and task requirement is critical. However, the evidence shows that there is incongruence between skills and staff functions. For example, qualifications of manpower assigned in sample woredas (WEO) were 4.6% with college diploma, 27.8% were graduates of TTI and 67.6% had primary and secondary level of education. Similarly, review of official document reveals that at the regional level about 38.1% of the positions were staffed with college diploma holders and above, at zonal level 48.8% of the posts were manned with diploma holders and above (majority are diploma holders), at woreda level only 3.3% of the positions were staffed by diploma holders. Thus, the staffing level of educational management as a means of coordinating manpower, material and financial resources for the fulfilment of the set objectives is in short of qualified man power. The personnel posted are constrained by an inexperience and most of the personnel lack the required managerial skills.

Effective managerial and leadership skills and competences are basis for the success of decentralization reforms. Reforms lacking effective and efficient management structure and leadership will not sustain (Nicholls, 1983). Similarly Glickman (1990) argues that without readiness, and realizing courage necessary to sustain, and without clear picture of the issue at stake, the reform is doomed to failure. In this respect leadership effectiveness for decentralization commitment at each administrative level has been presented in the following table.

Table 11: Leadership Effectiveness

Indicators	Respondents Responses, N = 238											
	Centre				Intermediate level of Administration REB & ZED				Grassroots level of Administration WEO & School			
	Low	Medium	High	Weigh. mean	Low	Medium	High	Weigh. mean	Low	Medium	High	Weigh. mean
1. Readiness for responsibility and courage to sustain	47(112)	37(88)	16(38)	1.85	23.1(55)	50.4(120)	26.5(63)	2.03	71.4(170)	20.2(48)	8.4(20)	1.34
2. Ability to delegate	39.1(93)	46.2(110)	14.7(35)	1.76	38(91)	37.8(90)	24(57)	1.86	58.8(140)	28.6(68)	12.6(30)	1.53
3. Maturity	23.1(55)	39.9(95)	36.9(88)	2.14	46(110)	37.8(90)	16(38)	1.70	60.5(144)	26(62)	13.4(32)	1.53
4. Interest & Motivation	38.6(92)	38.2(91)	23.1(55)	1.84	25.2(60)	41.2(98)	33.6(80)	2.08	77.7(185)	16.8(40)	5.4(3)	1.28
5. Readiness to transfer authority	67.2(160)	16.8(40)	16(38)	1.48	73.5(175)	16.8(40)	9.7(23)	1.35	55.5(132)	29.4(70)	15.1(36)	1.59
6. Knowledge and expertise in education	22.7(54)	39.9(95)	37.4(89)	2.15	24.4(58)	48.7(116)	26.9(64)	2.02	56.3(134)	29.4(70)	14.3(34)	1.58
Average means v				1.84				1.84				1.47
Standard deviation				0.21				0.21				0.22

Table 12 below presents managerial capacity of school principals, as rated by the respondents.

Table 12: Rating on School Principals (Managers) Capacity to Ensure Effective Operation of Schools

Measures	Respondents											
	Rating Scores											
	Officials & Experts, N=86						School Principals & Teachers, N = 152					
	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{x}	1	2	3	4	5	\bar{x}
1. Ability to facilitate greater collaboration	30	41	15	-	-	1.82	21	31	52	48	-	2.83
2. Knowledge of local condition	-	20	60	6	-	2.84	24	38	40	50	-	2.76
3. Clear picture of issues at stake	20	48	18	-	-	1.98	27	41	48	36	-	2.58
4. Simple research & planning skill	20	22	30	14	-	2.44	28	43	45	36	-	2.58
5. Attitudes and behaviour collegial environment	14	26	32	14	-	2.53	33	37	48	32	-	2.49
6. School management skills and ability to share ideas	20	36	21	9	-	2.22	33	43	46	30	-	2.48
7. Delegate responsibility	21	21	32	12	-	2.4	36	35	45	30	6	2.57
8. Human relation skill	19	21	31	11	-	2.3	37	40	50	20	5	2.45
9. Resource mobilization skill	19	20	35	12	-	2.46	32	41	40	20	13	2.49
10. Ability to animate and guide	20	33	33	-	-	2.15	35	34	60	20	3	2.49
Average mean value						2.31						2.58
Standard deviation						0.29						0.13

According to the data in Table 12, the weighted mean scores for the managerial capacity of school principals for items 2, 4 and 5 were found to be fair (2.5-2.8), whereas, for the rest items the weighted mean scores were poor (below 2.5). The overall average mean values fluctuate between 2.31 (poor) as rated by officials and experts and 2.58 (fair) as rated by school principals and teachers.

Responses from school level respondents show the existence of fair managerial capacity to run the schools. However, it is argued that the management capacity of the school principals was poor in the eyes of officials and experts. In order to observe the difference between the two independent means, the standard error test at 1% level of significance was used in the statistical analysis. Thus, it was found that;

$$S.E. \bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 = \sqrt{\frac{\delta_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{\delta_2^2}{n_2}} = 0.033$$

The observed difference between the two means is 0.27, which is about 8.18 times the standard error. Since the result is much greater than 3, the responses of the respondents were proved to differ significantly.

The local leadership effectiveness is the central element for success of decentralization efforts. The school leaderships are expected to provide supportive, professional coaching and closer supervision of the teaching learning process. However it seems that lack of skills & experience or pre occupied with administrative matters might have weakened school leadership and thus the school principals were not in a position to provide professional support for teachers. The data also revealed low capacity that may impedes the implementation.

As can be seen from table 9, regarding communication & coordination, the weighted mean scores of the respondents' were found to be 3.39, which is fair for REB & ZED, whereas, it was found to be poor for WEO with weighted mean score of 2.45. This might have resulted from weak management and organization practices that affect productivity which accounts for poor ratings, or lack of training to produce necessary skills and strengthening practices which improve the mix.

Local capacity in conflict resolution reflects the capacity in analyzing and solving local problems. In this regard the study showed that it was rated fair for REB & ZED with weighted mean score of 3.22, whereas, WEO rated as poor by respondents with weighted mean score of 2.33. This implies the inadequacy of the local capacity in this aspect.

3.2.5 Changes Under Decentralization Process

The impact of the decentralization on perceptions and reality can be seen from changes observed within the schools and the system as a whole. As, the process of decentralization is far from complete and it is an on going process, some of the repercussions are likely to be felt only over time. In this regard, the changes in school environment, changes in educational objectives and potential difficulties in the process of decentralization were assessed as indicated below.

3.2.5.1 Changes in School Environment

The perceptions of respondents were obtained using a five point Likert type of scale very low (1), low (2), medium (3), high (4), very high (5). Then for the purpose of interpretation 0.05-1.49 (very low), 1.5-2.49 (low), 2.5-3.49 (medium), 3.5-4.49 (high), and 4.5 and above very high have been used.

Table-13: Rating on Changes in School Environment

Items	Responses											
	Rating Scores											
	Officials & Experts, N = 86						School Principals & Teachers N = 152					
	1	2	3	4	5	- x	1	2	3	4	5	- x
1. Decision making in the hands of schools	9	37	25	5	-	2.07	25	67	40	19	-	2.34
2. The extent to which the roles and attitudes of traditional participants in public schools politics have been raised	10	36	22	16	-	2.51	25	35	60	32	-	2.65
3. The effect of decentralization on the provision of services and educational management	15	31	24	16	-	2.48	20	64	45	18	5	2.5
Average mean value						2.35						2.49
Standard deviation						0.25						0.16

Data in Table 13 for item 1 reveals that the weighted mean score of the responses was found to be low with a value of 2.2. This supports the data in table 6. If decision-making authority were in the hands of schools, as a result of decision making power, notable changes would have taken place. On the other way the data obtained also show, changes in school environment related to student benefits, increases in autonomy, responsiveness to curriculum and upskilling of teachers, raise in organizational performances, and involvement of parents, were found below the expectation. This might be resulted from minimal decision-making authority in the hands of schools, and thus schools were compelled to make few decisions.

Regarding changes in the roles and attitudes of traditional participants in public school politics they were found to be medium, as responded by respondents. The weighted mean score was 2.58. This implies that, the decentralization movement has affected the traditional participants and thus their roles in and attitudes to public school politics have been raised.

Effects of decentralization on service provision and educational management was found to be low. The responses in weighted mean score was rated 2.49. Items in this category such as, school discipline and internal yield of education system were rated low, while the effects of decentralization on educational management in closing the gap between schools and community, curriculum relevance, learner centred approach, classroom and school organizations were rated to be medium, although the weighted mean value was low. Thus, the overall changes in school environment could be said low (weighted mean score 2.42). This might be due to the fact that decentralization efforts have not been expanded from regional or woreda to individual schools, or schools were untouched by decentralization as anticipated or the enabling environment was not sufficient to promote changes in the schools, and the initiatives taken by the centre and the region, might have not been to the expected level.

In line of these, school effectiveness was also assessed using an observation checklist where 32 selected supervisors and experts from REB, ZED, WEO and 24 principals were involved. The following responses were tabulated based on whether factors associated with school effectiveness have been improved in the decentralization process or not.

Table-14: School Effectiveness

Factors	Responses in Percent, N =56						Total
	Yes		No		To some extent		
	%	N	%	N	%	N	
1. Parent & community support	50	(28)	12.5	(7)	37.5	(21)	100
2. Support from education system	52	(29)	23	(13)	25	(14)	100
3. More effective leadership	21.4	(12)	42.9	(24)	35.7	(20)	100
4. School climate	33.9	(19)	30.4	(17)	35.7	(20)	100
5. Teaching learning process	34.1	(18)	23.0	(13)	43.0	(24)	100
6. Greater capacity for organizational learning	35.7	(20)	28.6	(16)	35.7	(20)	100
7. Greater capacity to respond to the needs of stakeholders	23.2	(13)	46.4	(26)	30.4	(17)	100

As illustrated in Table 14, 50% of the respondents have reported that parents and community support was improved and 37.5% of the respondents have indicated the improvement was to some extent, while 12.5% of the respondents have cited that in the process of decentralization parents and community support has not changed.

Support from the education system is one of the factors that determine school effectiveness. In this regard, 52% of the respondents have suggested that in the decentralization process support from education system has been improved while about 25% of the respondents have replied that the support was to some extent. The support from the system might be delegation of authority to the schools, assisting the schools by supervision, provision of training and resources, monitoring and evaluation of school performances.

Effective leadership is said to be the one that gives emphasis to collaborative decision making, involving teachers in the planning and management in the process of creating capable teaching force. In this respect, 42.9% of the respondents have indicated that the process of decentralization did not improve the effectiveness of leadership, while 35.7% of the respondents have reported that the process of decentralization has stimulated the effectiveness of leadership to some extent. Only 21.4% of the respondents replied the presence of effective leadership.

School climate is another factor associated with school effectiveness. In this regard, 35.7% of the respondents have reported that school climates have been improved to some extent, and 33.9% of the respondents have indicated the improvement of the school climates, while 30.4% of the respondents have reacted negatively that, school climates were not improved in the process of decentralization.

With regard to the teaching learning in the process of decentralization 34.1% of the respondents indicated the improvement and this might show that schools have increased learning time or promoted active learning by using variety of techniques. On the other hand, 43% of the respondents have indicated the

change in this respect to some extent, while 23% of the respondents have reacted negatively.

About 35.7% of the respondents have supported the presence of improved capacity for organizational learning and also 35.7% have reported to some extent, while 28.6% of the respondents did not support the presence of greater capacity for organizational learning. Regarding the capacity of schools to respond to the need of stakeholders, 23.2% reacted positively and 30.4% of the respondents said to some extent, while 46.4% replied negatively. It seems that the decentralization process has not yet stimulated the school system to the expected level. This might be due to poor management and organization of the schools or commitment from leadership to make improvements, the involvement of stakeholders, additional resources and energy that can be directed to the system might have not been significant to improve the school effectiveness.

3.2.5.2 Achievements of Objectives

Informal discussions, interviews and group focus discussions held have helped to mirror the understanding between the interpretation of decision-makers and implementers. Some believed that decentralization had brought improvements. The use of local language, increased access to education, local selection of principals and teachers might be taken as positive changes. On the other hand contrasting views were also reported. Some parents and school committee members are unaware of the level of participation in school affairs. It seems also lower administrative level has continued to see the upper hierarchy as the high authority whose directives and guidance are to be followed.

Some teachers and school principals have complained the pressure put on teachers, like having to spend a full day teaching at school, teaching self-contained classes, and teachers' performance appraisal system. Thus, the responses given were an indication for changes in different dimensions.

Table-15: Responses on Achievement of Educational Objectives

Intended Objectives	Respondents responses in Percent, N =238						Total %
	Yes		No		To some extent		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1. Increased enrollments	153	64.3	22	9.2	63	26.5	100
2. Improved quality	50	21.0	134	56.3	54	22.6	100
3. Increased school finance	55	23.1	119	50.0	64	26.0	100
4. Improved equity	96	40.0	91	38.2	52	21.8	100
5. Improved administrative efficiency	60	25.0	104	44.0	74	31.0	100

As depicted in Table 15, positive management benefits stemming from decentralization were indicated by increased enrollments as supported by 64.3% of the respondents and 26.5% of the respondents have also accepted the improvement to some extent. Only 9.2% of the respondents have reported negatively. It seems that major effort has been made in the process of decentralization with regard to increasing enrollments. This might have resulted from better relations with users committees and parent associations, integrating the school more into the local community and providing information might have helped in increasing enrollments.

In addition to this, program performances for the last three years was assessed based on the data regarding schooling or percentages of children that the school system served. The gender balance and other indicators were also reviewed as illustrated in Table 16.

**Table-16: Trends in Student Participation of Sample Woredas.
1997/98 - 1999/2000**

Woreda	Year	Primary Education							Secondary Education						
		No of Schools	GER	%F	PTR	PSR	RR	DR	No of Schools	GER	%F	PTR	PSR	RR	DR
Tiyo	1997/98	24	75.2	49	29	60	12		2	66.1	42.5	38	61	18	
	1998/99	24	83.4	49	34	64	12		2	72.5	45.5	35	64	23	
	1999/2000	24	84.3	49	38	66	12	N.A	2	77.1	43	38	66	20	N.A.
Hetosa	1997/98	36	54.1	39	36	60	11		1	8.0	31.5	27	57	20	
	1998/99	36	67.9	41	46	66	11		1	8.9	33.8	26	60	14	
	1999/2000	36	72.8	42.3	50	68	11	N.A	1	9.9	35	27	62	12	N.A.
Digalu & Tiyo	1997/98	20	53.3	39	43	59	8		NSS	-	-	-	-	-	
	1998/99	20	67.1	41	56	65	7		-	-	-	-	-		
	1999/2000	20	76.7	44	60	68	7	N.A	-	-	-	-	-		
Adola & Wa.	1997/98	37	44.9	30	37	62	14		1	7.8	30.4	27	58	14	
	1998/99	38	46.2	30	38	62	13		1	7.0	30.4	24	55	26	
	1999/2000	42	52.5	31.5	39	63	12	N.A	1	9.1	28.3	25	62	18	19.5
Liben	1997/98	24	29.2	31	26	48	11		1	9.3	44.5	24	68	N.D	
	1998/99	26	36.7	32	28	49	11		1	9.3	40.8	24	60	8	
	1999/2000	28	43.7	32	31	50	10	N.A	1	4.2	39.2	27	60	15.2	20.2
Kombolcha	1997/98	21	50.9	22	56	64	20		1	2.6	32	25	67	0	
	1998/99	22	55.6	24	55	66	19		1	1.3	33.6	17	36	16	
	1999/2000	22	65.7	25.8	55	66	18	N.A	1	1.6	35.4	13	42	3.7	28.9
Haromaya	1997/98	39	45.8	23	58	65	12		1	5.3	30.7	27	54	21	
	1998/99	41	52.1	25	55	69	19		1	6.1	29.7	28	64	12	
	1999/2000	41	60.6	27	56	70	16	N.A	1	6.5	28	36	72	6.8	11.1
Meta	1997/98	38	31.1	22	58	65	11		1	2.6	28.9	21	53	8	
	1998/99	40	43.5	25	71	73	8		1	3.3	28.6	22	49	18	
	1999/2000	41	58	28.7	72	75	7	N.A	1	4.1	27.0	32	62	7.3	19.7
Chiro	1997/98	44	28	27	44	66	15		1	6.1	37.7	23	57	21	
	1998/99	44	32.1	28	51	74	15		1	6.7	40.5	25	65	20	
	1999/2000	47	33.6	28.1	54	76	14	N.A	1	7.0	40.1	30	72	19.4	16.1
Guba Anchar	1997/98	28	20.0	24	47	64	14		NSS	-	-	-	-	-	
	1998/99	28	24	26	54	71	14		-	-	-	-	-	-	
	1999/2000	29	28	28	58	73	14	N.A	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Gera	1997/98	23	30	28	34	43	18		NSS	-	-	-	-	-	
	1998/99	23	40	30	44	53	17		-	-	-	-	-	-	
	1999/2000	25	51.7	33	49	56	16	N.A	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Sokoru	1997/98	20	25.3	37	31	45	19		1	2.4	34.7	20	47	37	
	1998/99	20	31.7	39	40	52	18		1	2.7	37.8	20	50	16	
	1999/2000	21	37.4	41	45	55	18	N.A	1	2.4	39.0	21	55	7.5	17
Adama	1997/98	41	61.5	50	34	66	12		5	39.7	48.5	35	63	20	
	1998/99	42	67.3	50	37	69	11		5	44.8	49	42	73	18	
	1999/2000	52	73.0	49	40	70	10	N.A	5	51.0	47	42	73	18	N.A
Chaliya	1997/98	27	39.5	26	54	62	12		1	10.6	22.5	47	64	14	
	1998/99	29	42.5	28	56	63	11		1	12.4	22.1	54	77	13	
	1999/2000	31	47.8	31	59	65	11	N.A	1	13.8	23.1	56	76	13	N.A
Dandi	1997/98	20	27	29	50	67	9		1	6.3	30.4	32	60	16	
	1998/99	21	32.6	29	64	72	9		1	6.7	31	32	62	14	
	1999/2000	23	36.2	30.2	66	73	8	N.A	1	7.1	33	35	67	12.2	15.1
Kuyu	1997/98	16	40.9	31	53	68	8		1	16.5	33.8	73	89	9	
	1998/99	17	58.3	35	61	82	7		1	17.8	33.2	49	85	16	
	1999/2000	18	60.9	37	62	83	7	N.A	1	19.5	36	50	80	2.4	16
Girar-Jarso	1997/98	18	42.3	47	30	48	9		1	28.5	37.4	40	75	21	
	1998/99	18	48.8	47	36	48	4		1	30.8	40	44	72	19	
	1999/2000	18	54.8	46.3	36	48	4	N.A	1	35.1	56.1	48	76	7.2	15.4
Guto Wayu	1997/98	39	60.3	41	36	57	11		2	31.9	40	38	65	15	
	1998/99	42	63.8	42	35	56	13		2	31.9	40.7	38	65	12	
	1999/2000	42	65.7	42.5	36	56	12	N.A	2	32.1	42.3	38	65	12	N.A

N.A = Data not available

NSS = No Secondary School in the Woreda.

As indicated in Table 16, gross enrolment ratio(GER) for the past three years in primary education has increased in the range of 21.5%. That is, maximum increase in Meta woreda of East Hararge (26.9%) and the minimum increase is for Gutu Wayo of East Wolega (5.4%). Regarding secondary education, increase in GER has been recorded, except in few woredas where decreasing trend was observed. The situation for female students was slightly different. That is, the number of female students has been raised, but the gender parity index has been increased from 0.46-0.54 and from 0.59-0.60 for primary and secondary schooling respectively. In some woredas like Adama and Girarjarso there was a decrease in number of female students for unknown reasons. In general the number of girls coming to schools is less than that of boys'. This might be attributed to the socio-cultural and economic factors existing in the society. Review of the documents has shown that at regional level students population has increased by 16.8% and 12.8% in absolute terms over the past three years at primary and secondary levels respectively. From the responses and the data obtained it can be said that the process of decentralization has greatly contributed to increase enrollments.

Regarding the change in quality, 56.3% of the respondents think that no improvements in quality of education and 22.6% of the respondents have reported the improvement to some extent, while 21% of the respondents have replied yes. This might be due to lack of adequate inputs to the system and less attention might have given to it.

In line with the above points, whether quality is getting improved or not in the process of the reform it can be assessed in terms of what mix of inputs are brought into the educational process. Thus, the relative magnitude, teachers, classrooms, textbooks materials, training, curriculum, supervision have been taken as measures of quality as summerized in Table 17.

Table-17: Quality Improvements

Sample Schools	Quality Indicators				
	Percent of teachers meeting qualification standard	Pupil Section Ratio	Pupil Teacher Ratio	Textbook per Student in Core Subject	Availability of Supportive Learning Materials
16 Primary Schools	96% for lower primary and 15% for upper primary	67	40	80% (1:3) 20% (1:5)	52% (poor) 35% (fair)
13 Secondary Schools	32.7%	66	32	1:1&1:2 (9,10) 1:2&1:3(11,12)	13% (No response)

The staff mix and educational qualification are very important for betterment of quality. In the light of qualified teachers assigned in the sample schools, 15% of the teachers have met the required qualification standard (college diploma and above) at upper primary schools. This figure is greater than the regional average for the same level by 1%. About 32.7% of the teachers in the sample secondary schools meet the required qualification. In both cases the majority of the teachers assigned were found to be below the standard required for that level.

The amount and quality of knowledge imparted to the students will also be affected by class size. Larger class sizes hinder effective communication between teachers and students. A policy guideline promotes students centred learning, participatory and active learning approaches, whereas, the pupil section ratios (PSR) in both the primary and secondary schools have been found to be greater than the set standard (50 and 40 per class at primary and secondary respectively). This makes it difficult to apply the principles in real classroom situation and its implication on the quality of education is self-evident.

As illustrated in Table 17, pupil teacher ratio (PTR) was below the standard. This means teachers are not efficiently utilized (inefficiency) which may also incur high cost.

Regarding textbook provision in secondary schools, the distribution seems good, while at the primary level it was found to be poor. This might be due to lack of

information from school to levels of the system or inadequacy of the resources that has hindered sufficient number of textbooks for the students. Uneven distribution of textbooks across woredas and schools might have also contributed to the scarcity. It has also been reported by more than half of the respondents that unavailability of supportive learning materials exist in the schools.

By means of supervision schools receive technical assistance and ensure the implementation of new policies. In an assessment made to find out how frequently schools are supported by supervision, 21.8% of the respondents thought that no supervision services are being given to schools, and 22.7% have the opinion that schools receive supervision regularly, while 55.5% of the respondents have reported the presence of occasional supervision.

Teachers and principals pointed out that they are not receiving technical assistance as expected because most of the supervisors sent to schools lack technical and professional capacity to provide the necessary support. On the other hand regional, zonal and woreda officials have reported the reasons, for not visiting (supervising) schools to the level of expectation. These were lack of logistics, manpower and budget. It seems that there is a consensus around lack of capacity to assist schools from system level and implementers.

Table-18: Results of Grade 8 National Exam for the Last Three Years (1997/1998-1999/2000)

Number of Sample Schools with Grade 8	Year	Enrolment	Drop out Rate	Repetition Rate	Pass Rate	Remark
15 Schools	1997/98	4213	6.9%	37.5%	55.6%	66.9%
	1998/99	3972	8.8%	32.2%	59%	71.4%
	1999/2000	3557	7.3%	31.6%	61.1%	78.8%

Pass rate in national exam is also one of the quality indicators that have been reviewed. As seen from Table 18, the pass rate in grade 8 national exam has increased from 1997/98 to 1999/2000. A number of factors may have contributed

to improvements in this aspect and that need further investigation. However, factors like the use of local language as a medium of instruction and for curriculum development as well as the management system might have facilitated the improvement.

The other important objective to be achieved in the process of decentralization was changes in school finance. About half of the respondents have reported no change in school finance, while 50% thought that there was a notable change in school finance.

In this regard, it is important to revisit how education was financed in the last three years. The following table presents the share of primary and secondary education recurrent expenditures channelled to the sector.

Table-19: Primary and Secondary Education Expenditures in Birr for 1997/98-1999/2000

Education Level	Year	Recurrent Expenditure '000	Percent Share of Recurrent Educational Expenditure	Expenditure per Student	Cost Ratio	Percent Share of Education in Regional Public Expenditure
Primary Education	1997/98	270.172	75.7	151.9	0.56	32.2
	1998/99	323.278	77.8	161.8	0.67	33.9
	1999/2000	327.247	79.0	139.8	0.64	37.1
Secondary Education	1997/98	38.602	10.8	282.1	1.78	
	1998/99	37.392	8.9	243.6	1.5	
	1999/2000	32.867	7.9	217.9	1.55	

As illustrated in Table 19, the share of education expenditure increased by 4.9% over the past three years. At the same time, the share of primary education is about 8.4 folds than that of secondary education. It seems that the major finance was delivered to primary education and this might witness the commitment of the government for education with prior attention to primary level.

In line with this, the expenditure allocation and disbursement procedures were the central issue for focus group discussion and interviews made at different levels.

The education officials have stated that they receive budget from their respective finance offices and then disbursed the money to cover their expenditures. The allocation criteria used and mechanisms suggested include, number of students (enrollments), school with particular program, pupil specific allocation (special education), and level of development of infrastructure. However, in reality only a very small portion of the expenditure they control is disbursed. Since, over 86% of the recurrent expenditure constituted teachers' salaries, it seems that expenditure decentralization gave them some authority only over that portion of the budget utilized as operating cost.

According to the data obtained regarding what operating budgets schools do receive, 46.6% of the respondents were with the opinion that schools receive less than 50% of the operating budgets allocated for them and 38.3% of the respondents assume no operating budget transfer to schools from upper hierarchy, while 15% of the respondents have reported that 50-65% of operating budgets go to schools. However, it seems that the majority of the respondents think that very little amount or some basic requirements in kind were transferred or none go to schools and thus, schools run out of finance for many of the activities planned. This might be resulted from the fact that, ZED and WEO cut some of the school shares and retained with them to run those activities with the shortage of finance. Another reason for not transferring the operating budget to schools might be due to the fact that higher levels of administration had a fear and belief that schools were not capable of managing finance in a responsible way or absence of strong administrative system (structural deficiency at school) for implementation.

Regarding the time of budget allocation and deployment to various units and schools, more than 65% of the respondents have reported that the budget reaches woredas and schools in the second quarter of the fiscal year. About 20% of the respondents have indicated that the budget reaches schools & woredas in the third quarter of the fiscal year. The rest respondents said that the arrival time was the first quarter of the fiscal year. Beside differences in arrival period, all responses have witnessed the delay of budget disbursement. This might have arisen from procedural rigidity, which involves all level of administration.

The data in Table 19 with respect to the cost per student shows a decreasing trend for both primary and secondary education (except for primary education in year 1998/99). In absolute terms the budget allocated had increased, and was supported by 50% of respondents (Table 15) with opinion that school budget increased, whereas the official data showed that the cost per student decreased from year to year with increasing number of enrollments and decreased in expenditure per student meant inadequate allocation.

In theory, decentralization of educational management at school level can rationally allocate resources for effective school performances, and the principal of the school will generally be capable of managing a budget in a much better position and knows how best to spread. However the assignment of expenditures was not left for the schools, and priorities were rationalized by WEO or ZED. The data obtained and the discussion made also reveal that the allocated budget was not sufficient to cover the expenditure. This might be resulted from the fact that the financial capacity of the region is not yet developed. Thus, according to the official document, the regional revenue raised over the past years had a capacity to cover about 40.5% of the regional recurrent expenditures. This means after more than 7 years of devolution act the region still receives about 60% of its revenue from the central government grant.

On the other hand, the policy of decentralized management encourages schools income-generating schemes to support educational expenditures and cost sharing mechanisms starting from upper secondary education. This was boldly advocated. It has also been declared to utilize finance generated by schools being budgeted in the annual plan, which seems difficult to cope with school schedules. There might also be a negative attitudes among teachers and school community towards the money raised at school level due to lack of motivation and incentives, and that might harm the school system. On top of this, parents and community might lack financial capacity to support school activities. Thus, it is said that school autonomy without supplementing it with finance does not improve the performances, rather it erodes the support for decentralization.

The other objectives to be achieved in the decentralization process as depicted in Table 15 was improved equity and administrative efficiency. Regarding equity the data show that the decentralization of management has helped in improving educational equity and it was supported by 40% of the respondents, while about 38.2% of the respondents thought that equity remained as previous and about 21.8% of the respondents have replied that they have seen improvement to some extent. The responses of officials and experts were more positive than that of teachers and principals. In addition to this, table 16 witnessed that equity is getting improved, where proportion of female students was increasing. The same table also shows GER for Liben, Chiro, Guba Anchar, Sokorru, Dandi woredas were below 30 while after three years visible changes in GER has been recorded and there might have been efforts made to narrow the gender gap and rural//urban disparities in GER.

Regarding administrative efficiency, only 25% of the respondents have reported that there was an improvement in administrative efficiency as a result of exercising decentralized management, while, 44% of the respondents thought that no changes have been made and 31% of the respondents have reacted that there were changes in administrative efficiency to some extent. On the other hand, there was unavailability of information on dropouts in sample woredas. However, regional level data shows that there is an increasing trend in dropouts and repetition rates, which contribute to the inefficiency of the system. This might be resulted from lack of management capacity and organizational strength.

3.2.5.3 Potential Difficulties

In the following Table, potential difficulties were listed to be rated using the five point Likert type scale of extremely serious (1), very serious (2), somewhat serious (3), observed but not serious (4), not observed (5). Respondents were also asked for additional choices that have been left to be added if they felt the list is incomplete. For the purpose of analysis, the responses were rated as 0.05-1.49 (extremely serious), 1.5-2.49 (very serious), 2.5 - 3.49 (somewhat serious), 3.5-4.49 (observed but not serious), and 4.5 and above not observed.

Table-20: Rating on Potential Difficulties

Difficulty	Respondents											
	Rating Scores											
	Officials & Experts, N=86						School Principals & Teachers, N = 152					
	1	2	3	4	5	- x	1	2	3	4	5	- x
1. Delegating authority to those socialized in a centralized system to mean a loss of power prestige.	10	46	21	9	-	1.91	30	66	56	-	-	2.17
2. Lack of readiness by local levels to accept the responsibilities.	14	30	21	13	13	2.47	30	48	51	23	-	2.44
3. Lack of interest by political leaders.	16	31	23	16	-	2.45	37	50	43	20	2	2.34
4. Lack of good communication inadequate information system & choice.	16	31	23	16	-	2.46	33	65	44	10	-	2.2
5. An inefficient financial management	13	21	39	13	-	2.6	34	40	50	28	-	2.47
6. In adequacy of financial support from the centre & financial aid from outside.	22	37	22	5	-	2.11	30	63	47	12	-	2.26
7. There was lack of clear lines of authority & decision-making.	16	34	29	7	-	2.3	30	45	40	37	-	2.55
8. Lack of planning and budgeting capacity	28	25	28	5	-	2.11	40	63	49	-	-	2.05
9. There was too much decentralization of decision-making.	-	10	14	32	30	3.9	-	16	46	74	16	3.59
10. There was much centralization of decision-making.	30	34	22	-	-	1.9	42	66	44	-	-	2.01
11. A poor logistical system, especially for maintenance of infrastructure and equipment distribution.	20	25	26	15	-	2.42	54	58	40	-	-	1.9
12. There was lack of technical assistance.	15	30	41	-	-	2.3	40	67	35	10	-	2.09
13. There was lack of skilled manpower & effective practice to implement as planned.	28	40	18	-	-	1.88	31	79	42	-	-	2.07
14. There was lack of commitment and initiation.	30	30	20	6	-	2.02	44	42	50	16	-	2.25
15. Cultural norms.	8	11	30	20	17	3.3	24	35	49	37	7	2.78
16. Disagreement & opposition to the principle.	17	27	24	18	-	2.5	32	51	47	20	2	2.4
17. Time demands for decentralization	30	33	23	-	-	1.9	46	40	46	20	-	2.26
Average means values						2.38						2.34
Standard Deviation						0.52						0.38

The barriers to decentralized management of education as listed in table 20 can be grouped as, socio-cultural, items 1 and 15; Administrative or procedural, items 2,4,7,8,9,10,11,12,13 and 17; Economic, items 5 and 6; political items 3 and 16 and personal, item14.

According to the weighted mean scores, 14 items (9 administrative, items 2,4,7,8,10,11,12,13,17; 2 political, items 3,16; 1 economic, item 6; 1 personal, item 14; 1 socio-cultural, item 1) from the list were rated as very serious difficulties, 2 items (1 economic, item 5, and 1 socio-cultural, item 15) were rated to be somewhat serious, and 1 item (administrative, item 9) was observed as difficulty but not serious.

As indicated in the table, among those 14 very serious difficulties, much centralization of decision-making was rated as the most, with weighted mean score of 1.95. As far as the policy of decentralization is concerned most of the decision making powers in the area of primary and secondary education have been transferred to regions. It seems that the current practice also shows the influence of the centre in this aspect is little, and thus the power is somewhat concentrated at the regional level, complementing the findings of table 6. The claim is that the decision making power is not close to the community or to the schools. Decisions are made at the region and the bottom implements. After decentralization act, it seems the regional bureau became the centre of change (reproducing the centre).

Lack of skilled manpower and effective practice to implement as planned was also found to be a very serious barrier to implement the decentralized management, with weighted mean score of 1.97as rated by the respondents. Lack of planning and budgeting capacity was also rated as a very serious problem with weighted mean scores of 2.08. In context of decentralization to perform a new set of roles, skilled manpower has either to exist or be provided. Otherwise the policies and the plans cannot be implemented and the management becomes difficult. This problem might be related to the concern that policy makers and planners in education sector themselves lack the skill and capabilities required for implementation. Problems like staff turnover, lack of incentives, increased demand

of manpower (with expansion of facilities) might have been contributed to it and lack of effective experience might also constrain the implementation. Time demand for decentralization was also reported as a very serious difficulty, rated with a weighted mean score of 2.08.

Delegating authority to those socialized in a centralized system appear to mean a loss of power prestige and rated as a very serious difficulty, with a weighted mean scores of 2.04 by the respondents. This may be resulted from the fact that the experience among the bureaucrats and others were a tradition of centralized command, lack of other modalities of organization and management system, or the fear to delegate authority. It seems that officials assumed themselves as the one who know best or transferring authority leads to chaos or fear to be threatened. However, transfer of authority might free officials in the upper hierarchy from routine decision making and would give them more time for other important issues.

Inadequacy of financial support was also rated as a very serious problem observed in the process of decentralization with a weighted mean scores of 2.08. Although there was a commitment from the government, there might have been a difficulty in meeting the financial requirements. This supports what has been reported as inadequate budget transferred to zones and woredas to cover educational expenditures. Though an inefficient financial management system was rated as somewhat serious as responded, under this circumstance in efficiency is one aspect of lack of capacity, which was a serious problem. It is said that financial problems are the main factors for decentralization, and thus lack of mechanisms designed to inject more finance for educational expenditures, flexibility and transparency in planning and implementation of decentralized management system might have affected the success.

Other important problems rated as a very serious by respondents include disagreement & opposition to the principle, poor logistic system in maintenance of infrastructure, equipment and its distribution, lack of technical assistance, lack of good communication and inadequate information system and choice, lack of interest by political leaders, lack of clarity of authority & decision making, lack of

readiness by local levels to accept the responsibility were rated with weighted mean scores ranging from 2.13 to 2.45. The rest were rated as some what serious and observed but not serious difficulties.

In general the difficulties listed were observed in the decentralization process and further statistical analysis using the t- test has shown that t-calculated (0.1389) is less than t- table (1.746) thus, there is no significant difference between the responses of the two category of the respondents.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was aimed at assessing the actual practice of the present decentralized educational management system in Oromia Regional State, with the following purposes in mind:

- i) To assess the extent to which the objectives/purposes of educational decentralization have been known to each administrative levels;
- ii) To assess the overall enabling environment, local capacity in terms of organizational structures, leadership and management capacity of the local administrative levels in planning and implementing the decentralized policy;
- iii) To examine the extent and scope of decentralized management functions at local levels of the system;
- iv) To assess the extent to which decision making authority and responsibility have been decentralized from the centre to schools in key areas of pedagogy, administration, human and financial resources;
- v) To identify major constraints in the management of education in decentralized system;
- vi) To assess changes/ improvements made to achieve educational objectives of the region;
- vii) To scan policy interventions and management strategies that enable the management of education system to be more efficient, effective and responsive.

To meet the above objectives the study was guided by the following six basic research questions:

- i) What are the priorities of the decentralized educational management?
- ii) What are the basic features of educational decentralization in terms of management/ administration and planning functions?
- iii) What decision-making authority and responsibility in key areas of education functions are decentralized?
- iv) Is the management of decentralized education system supported by:

- a) adequate organizational structure, adequate staffing and management capacities and financial resources?
- b) guidelines available to effect the management of educational decentralization, which define the roles of each layer?
- v) What barriers do exist?
- vi) To what extent has decentralized management of education contributed to improve the overall changes in the education system?

It is the belief of the researcher that there might be limitations in the management of this new system and there is also a considerable room to make arrangements to achieve the purposes. Therefore, in this regard the findings will be of paramount importance to scratch the problem, and generate valuable information for planners, decision-makers and implementers of the policy. Furthermore, it may encourage others for detailed investigation.

In dealing with the research questions, related literature was reviewed. As information sources, questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion, checklists, field observations and document review were used. The total number of respondents responding to the study questionnaire were 238, embracing officials, experts, and supervisors at different educational administrative levels, school principals, teachers, and other 24 additional respondents were involved in the interviews and focus group discussions.

4.1 Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings is presented below under five sections.

4.1.1. Linking Decentralization and Educational Objectives

- a) Among a list of 10 objectives/purposes of educational decentralization to be addressed as priorities, the majority (50-59%) of the respondents have indicated only 5 items, such as improving quality, improving access and equity, encouraging parents, teachers and others to take part in decision making,

improving management efficiency and allowing flexibility as the highest pressing educational objectives of the system.

- b) In the context of the study, the respondents have cited different priorities. Officials and experts have cited promoting democracy, encouraging parents, teachers and others to be involved decision-making as the highest priority. On the other hand, school principals reported the transfer of responsibility to lower levels and improving quality as the most pressing educational objectives of the system.

4.1.2. Functionality of Decentralized Educational Management

- a) Regarding the maintainance of planning function at the intermediate level of administration, 47% of the respondents have reported planning function was maintained to some extent, while 30.9% and 21.8% of the respondents have reacted positively and negatively respectively. From this, one can infer that the capacities of regional, zonal and woreda administrative levels were not yet developed to the expected level to articulate felt needs, to formulate and implement the decentralized plans.
- b) It has been found that the upper level authority directs the lower administrative levels in planning and thus, bottom-up planning system seems to be highly affected.
- c) The central ministry loosely controls the local level for compliance with standards, and the evidence tend to show the existence of control either to some extent or none existence of control/supervision mechanisms put in place in the decentralized management system.
- d) It was reported that community involvement in decentralized educational management has been recognized at the intermediate administrative level, however, the role played at the grassroots level is said to be minimal.

4.1.3. Decision-making Authority and Responsibility

Regarding decision-making authority and responsibility of the five entities (national, regional, zonal, woreda and school) in the given key areas of decision-making, the study showed that:

- a) Major decisions in the area of salary setting, incentives and school organizations were reported as the authority of the national level.

- b) The authority of hiring, posting, promoting and deploying teachers and administrative personnel was reported as the authority vested upon woreda, zone and region.
- c) School principals' selection, assignment and dismissal were indicated as the authority of woreda and schools.
- d) Decision-making authority and responsibility with regard to pedagogical issues, administration, school maintenance and infrastructure development rested upon the region, zone, woreda and schools.
- e) Out of 37 key areas of decision-making authority about 10.6 (28.6%) were made by the region, while school made decisions were found to be the least and only in 5.54 (14.9%) key areas. Thus, decision-making power was concentrated at the region and less authority was vested upon the school level.
- f) The degree to which decision making authority has been pushed down to the lower level of administration (level of decentralization) in the area of man power planning and deployment, recurrent budget planning and expenditure, and education service provision was found to be medium (fair) (mean scores of 2.5-3.49) and teacher recruitment and compensation were highly decentralized (weighted mean score of 3.5), while capital budget planning and expenditure was the least decentralized (weighted mean score of 2.39).

4.1.4. Enabling Environment for Decentralization

The evidence available so far shows that several conditions need to be met for educational management functions to be effectively decentralized. Among which,

- a) The enabling environment practiced in the area of policy issues and interventions were rated 2.68 (weighted mean score) by the respondents which is said to be fair as existence of favorable conditions for implementation. Nevertheless, the study also showed that, the political climate and the extent to which stakeholders were open to changes rated poor (weighted mean score 2.42).
- b) Local capacity in terms of institutional framework for the REB and ZED was rated fair (weighted mean score 3.46), while it was rated poor for WEO (weighted mean score 2.49).

The profile of the staff assigned at different levels revealed that 3.3% of the staff assigned to WEO were college diploma holders, and the majority were graduates of teachers training institutes and secondary education, while 38.1% and 48.1% of the staffs assigned to REB and ZED respectively were holders of college diploma and above.

- c) The existing organizational structure and quality of manpower specially at WEO could not enable the woreda to carryout the task adequately
- d) Management and leadership effectiveness for decentralization commitment was found to be medium (weighted mean 1.84) at upper hierarchy and low (weighted mean 1.47) at lower hierarchy. Readiness to transfer authority (share of power) at upper hierarchy was found to be low (weighted mean 1.4) and at the same time the lower administrative units' (WEO and schools) readiness to accept responsibility and motivation was also found to be low (weighted mean 1.34 and 1.28 respectively).
- e) School principals managerial capacity to ensure effective operations of schools were also reported to be poor (weighted mean score 2.48).
- f) Financial capacity to cover educational expenditures was rated low and the main source of the revenue was found to be the central government's subsidy.
- g) Operational guidelines; there were roles delineated for the REB, ZED, WEO and schools by the region in addition to centrally produced directives. These include authorities given to each level by proclamations. There are also regionally produced guidelines in the area of administration, personnel and financial management.

4.1.5. Changes Taking Place under the Decentralization Process

1) Changes in School Environment

Although decentralization of educational management as a model of action enables to raise the school performances,

- a) the changes regarding the decision making authority or school level autonomy, the roles of and attitudes to traditional participants in public schools, effects of decentralization on service provision and educational management were found to be low with weighted mean score of 2.42. This implies that no significant change has taken place in the school environment.
- b) regarding school effectiveness, the data obtained reveal that, there is slight improvement in factors like support from the education system, parent and community involvement, while effective leadership, school climate, teaching learning process, capacity for organizational learning and responding to the needs of stake holders were not significantly improved.

2) Achievement of Objectives

- a) As indicated by 64.3% of the respondents, there is an increase in enrolments.
- b) However, 50% and 56.3% of the respondents have reported no improvement in quality and school finance respectively in the process of decentralization.
- c) 40% of the respondents have reported that there is an improvement in equity while 38.2% of the respondents have replied negatively.
- d) Regarding the improvement in administrative efficiency, 44% of the respondents have responded no, while 31% of the respondents have replied the improvement to some extent.

In general, in the process of decentralization of educational management, student participation (GER) has increased. Although efforts were made to improve equity and efficiency, the internal efficiency was found to be poor and the disparities (gender gap, rural/urban) were getting wider. With respect to quality the data show that resources (input) were poorly delivered to the system. Concerning

- a) adequate organizational structure, adequate staffing and management capacities and financial resources?
- b) guidelines available to effect the management of educational decentralization, which define the roles of each layer?
- v) What barriers do exist?
- vi) To what extent has decentralized management of education contributed to improve the overall changes in the education system?

It is the belief of the researcher that there might be limitations in the management of this new system and there is also a considerable room to make arrangements to achieve the purposes. Therefore, in this regard the findings will be of paramount importance to scratch the problem, and generate valuable information for planners, decision-makers and implementers of the policy. Furthermore, it may encourage others for detailed investigation.

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education finance, there is an increased educational expenditure in absolute terms; however, the cost per student shows a decreasing trend.

3) Potential Difficulties

Among 17 assumed potential difficulties in the decentralization process;

- i) 82.3% were identified as very serious difficulties with weighted mean scores ranging from 1.95-2.45. These were: much centralization of decision making, lack of capacity (skilled manpower, practice, poor logistic, communication and information, planning and budgeting, technical, finance.), time demand of decentralization, loss of power and prestige, disagreement to the principle, lack of clear line of authority, lack of interest by political leaders and lack of readiness.
- ii) Somewhat serious difficulties reported were: cultural norms and an inefficient financial management (about 11%).

4.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings the following conclusions can be drawn.

- 1) The purpose of decentralization was not widely articulated and the objectives are not well known among decision-makers and implementers. Thus, absence of common vision or unifying purpose constrains the implementation and risks the chance of success. From this it can be concluded that consensus building activities around the objectives was not done well in advance.
- 2) The intermediate level of administration to the expected level did not maintain decentralized key management functions in the context of the study. Thus, the existence of the gap implies that the system doesn't function effectively and hence lose of major part of its objectives.
- 3) Decentralization of educational management has occurred to region, zone, woreda and school with varying degrees. Authorities in areas like salary and incentives, personnel, administration, pedagogy, school organization, school maintenance and infrastructure development have been distributed among the administrative levels. However,

- i) it seems that power is concentrated at the regional level and decentralization didn't go below the regional level very well. Thus, decision-making power is not close to schools and no clear mechanisms have been designed to realized decentralization of school management.
 - ii) at woreda level the power appears to be limited and confined to administration and personnel issues of day-to-day activities, but no authority over capital budget expenditures, finance allocations and target settings. Thus, the intensity of decentralized educational management is more of deconcentration type with little devolution.
- 4) Although efforts have been made to fulfil the enabling environment for decentralization of educational management, interventions in the area of policy issues were not exercised to the optimum level. On the other hand, the local capacities in terms of organizational structures, managerial capacity and leadership, education management information system, manpower and finance were observed as a mix of poor and fair. This implies that the enabling environment (policy interventions and local capacity) to create the momentum, pass it and implement decentralization reform is weak.

4.3 Recommendations

Management of education under decentralized system is a continuous effort that needs to be strengthened through research, innovative ideas, resource, committed management and leadership. Thus, in support of the findings of the study the following are recommended.

- i. The study showed that there was lack of consensus around objectives/ purposes of decentralization among decision-makers and implementers. However, decentralization needs clear understanding of the principle, the purpose, communicating the goals to be accomplished, the methods by affected parties to reduce resistance and to mobilize the needed energies. The existence of shared vision and clarity among the top and lower levels of administration as well as implementers facilitate the implementation.

Therefore, orientation programmes like conferences, workshops, and seminars should be organized to sensitize decision makers and implementers at all levels, in order to enhance the understanding of the principle, the purpose of decentralization and build strong support. Publicizing through mass media, publications and public discussion (dialogue) forums organized at national, regional, zonal, woreda levels including schools can be used as a means to an end. Then, feed back from discussions has to be used for planning and implementation of effective decentralization.

- ii. Though the REB has developed a guideline that clearly demarcated the functions and powers of different levels of educational management, sharing of authority and delegation of responsibility to manage public education were insignificant all the way down to grassroots level, and the guidelines did not delineate the responsibilities of other partners in education. Thus,
 - a. The duties and responsibilities of REB, ZED, WEO and the schools have to be communicated to decision-makers and implementors through educational conferences and workshops. In addition to the above, REB should spell out the joint responsibilities of different partners/stakeholders in education.
 - b. Schools should be given greater autonomy over their own affairs to respond more effectively to local situations and be encouraged to develop plans and manage their resources, by designing strategies that support schools and developing appropriate training programmes with the involvement of principals, local education officials, community and other concerned parties.
 - c. Respect the role of various actors in educational management. There should be room for lower levels to plan and execute. Political leaders should respect and allow educators to make decisions by themselves, and decrease strong political interference at all levels by building consensus through training and clear delineation of authority, responsibility and accountability.

- d. REB has to assist the lower levels (ZED, WEO) and schools in developing capacity (manpower, finance, material). Similarly the MOE has to equip itself so as to play and reinforce its roles as the supporter and promoter of decentralizations by providing technical assistance to regions and control linkages as anticipated in the policy.
- iii. Decentralized educational management functions must coincide with the capacity for execution and sustaining the reform at the level to which responsibilities are transferred. However, the study has indicated the existence of problems in the areas of local capacities to manage the decentralization reform. This includes inadequate organizational structure, lack of trained manpower (in numbers and quality), lack of management and leadership skills, poor information flow and inadequate resources.
- Therefore, it is advisable to formulate strategies for capacity building at all levels. This includes,
- a. creating sound organizational structure that meet the growing requirement for planning capabilities, management and administrative functions at regional, zonal and woreda levels by restructuring the existing ones.
 - b. meeting manpower demand geared to specific areas like planning and management functions using staff arrangements and deployment that are clearly set up to provide facilitation and support.
 - c. developing a long and short term programme in management training and retraining for local education officials and school principals. This entails organizing continuous programmes either by attaching to teachers' training institutions or self development programmes or planning to make use of higher educational institutions. This will help in improving the vision and commitment of the leadership and management by providing the necessary skills and building confidence and stability in leadership at all levels.
 - d. Increasing resources by developing strategies, which help to mobilize funds locally by involving individuals, community and NGOs

- in the educational sector; improving financial management procedures which hamper educational processes at school level; and encouraging schools to develop plan of their own for the management of resources (internal revenue and the like)
- e. empowering communities through training in order to enable them to support and take the responsibility for running the schools. The school has to work closely with the local community so as to create sense of ownership that ensures sustainability and continuity.
 - f. reviewing strategies to improve quality and efficiency by continuously conducting action oriented research and the research results should be communicated to implementers and administrators.
 - g. diversifying and improving timeliness of information and its management system. This could be done by incorporating information like that of student performance data, financial management, qualification of educational personnel, capacity building outputs and developing mechanisms for higher levels to obtain regular information about the status of the schools.
- iv. Although decentralization policy was promulgated some seven years back, yet it takes time to broaden and establish lasting changes, which affect the long-standing beliefs and attitudes. It takes a long time to observe the impact, too. However, it is not difficult to guess that in situations with weak local capacity (finance, skilled manpower and material) and poor enabling environment decentralization of educational management may be eroded. More systematic monitoring and evaluation of the process, impact and outcome of decentralization is required and thus, there is a need for further research and careful analysis of the problems in order to develop strategies to improve the education management system of the region.

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ANNEX A

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Management & Planning

General Instructions:

FORM A: Questionnaire to be filled by Education Officials, Education Specialists, Supervisors, Principals, and Teachers.

Ethiopia is experiencing a decentralized educational management system whose foundation was laid by proclamations issued by the government and as a result of which the 1994 education and training policy has been implemented for the last seven years. Therefore, this Questionnaire is designed to collect information about the decentralized Educational Management system. Analysis of the relevant documents and field data collection are an important component to assess the actual practice of the present educational management system, in order to see, compare and contrast the notions with the existing reality.

The purpose of this study is purely academic and in no way affects you personally or organizationally. So, your genuine, frank and timely responses are quite vital to determine the success of this study. The findings may serve to diagnose the educational management problems and will help to develop plans of actions in the future. Therefore, I kindly request your contribution in filling the questionnaire honestly and responsibly.

- N.B.**
1. No need of writing your name
 2. Mark your response in the space provided by putting "X" mark.
 3. For any additional opinion or explanation, you are kindly requested to write briefly as much as possible in the space provided.
 4. The Questionnaire consists of nine sections; sections with (*) marks are excluded for teachers.

Please follow the specific instruction at the beginning of each section and try to read each before attempting to complete it. It may help you to respond as accurately as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Section I. Personal Information

1.1. Name of your Organization/School _____
 Your Current Position _____ Woreda _____
 Zone _____

1.2.

Sex		Age	Educational Level	Field of Specialization	Relevant Special Training Attended	Total Years of Service	
M	F					In the area of Edu. Mgt.	other

1.3. School Type & Level (to be filled by School Principals only)

- Government 1-4 1-8 9-12 1-12
- Non-Government 1-4 1-8 9-12 1-12

* Section II. Objectives and Rationale

2.1. In your opinion, which of the following do you think are the major objectives/ purposes for educational decentralization? Please indicate in terms of priority by rating them as, 1 for high priority, 2 medium priority and 3 for low priority.

S.N	Objectives	1	2	3	Remark
1.	To promote democracy through popular participation				
2.	To solve problems of schools				
3.	To improve quality of education				
4.	To improve access and equity				
5.	To encourage parents, teachers, other members of the community to support the school,				
	◆ in decision-making				
	◆ enhance sense of ownership				
	◆ provide more careful monitoring of the expenses				

S.N	Objectives	1	2	3	Remark
	◆ make contributions				
6.	To solve problems of transportation communication, and procedures in decision-making				
7.	To improve management efficiency				
8.	To allow flexibility/ recognize local needs				
9.	To transfer responsibility to the most capable level of government				
10.	To raise required revenue, to reduce the burden of education finance from the center				

*Section III. Policy Issues and Intervention

3.1. A number of situations (factors) may cause success/failure of decentralized educational management. The attempts made to fulfill such conditions (enabling environment) favor decentralization of educational management. Please rate these factors, as being practiced currently. (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = fair, 4 = good, 5 = very good).

S.N	Factors	Items	Rating Scale				
			1	2	3	4	5
1.	Political Environment	• Political will and commitment from political leaders and lower levels of administration.					
		• Top-level leadership support expertise, guidance, and technical assistance to the lower levels.					
		• Political leaders have confidence in the officials or advisers who are doing the detailed work.					
		• Staff turnover/ maintenance.					
		• Demonstrated government support.					
		• Policies and programs are appropriately designed & organized.					
2.	Stakeholders involvement	• Careful analysis of all individuals and groups who have stake in education.					
		• Respect and level of fostering the role of various actors.					
		• Autonomous & access to decision-making.					
		• Involvement in planning and implementation of the programs.					
		• Self-reliance in local communities.					
		• Existence of factors that lead society to encourage changes/ enabling environment					

S.N	Factors	Items	Rating Scale				
			1	2	3	4	5
3.	Information Documentation & Dissemination	• Existence of information gathering and dissemination system.					
		• Policy dialogue/Communicating reform efforts to affected entities.					
		• Organize public discussion, to share vision of what is to be accomplished.					
		• Planners use feedback or analysis carried out by various actors in education.					
		• Change the behavior, attitudes and culture of the local and central level administrators and officials.					
		• Transparency in decision-making.					
4.	Administrative Mechanisms	• Linkage between central and local governance strategies to translate national policies.					
		• Increase the access of people living in previously neglected rural regions and local communities to central government resources					
		• Continuous process of actions based on feedback.					
		• Existence of legislation & operational manuals.					
		• Establishment of performance indicators.					
		• Allow for mistakes/ flexibility.					
		• Inject extra funding and increase autonomous financial responsibility.					
		• Adequacy of human and material resources.					
		• Existence of structures of authority and power.					

Section IV. Decision-Making Authority

4.1. Which level of the government (entity) is responsible in making decisions in the following key areas concerning primary & secondary education system?

S.N	Areas of Decision-Making	Decision-Making Authority				
		National	Regional	Zonal	Woreda	School
1	Salaries and Incentives					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting salaries • Establishing incentives for teachers, students and administrative staff 					

S.N	Areas of Decision-Making	Decision-Making Authority				
		National	Regional	Zonal	Woreda	School
2	Personnel Decisions					
	• Postings & promotions of teachers					
	• Posting and promotion of administrative personnel					
	• Selecting, assigning and dismissing the directors					
	• Hiring and dismissing administrative personnel/teachers.					
3	Pedagogy					
	• Determining class size					
	• Determining school size					
	• Choice and design of curriculum					
	• Selecting textbooks					
	• Developing or selecting alternative forms of assessment.					
	• Determine standards to assess student learning					
	• Defining educational programs and plans					
	▪ Pedagogical supervision					
	▪ Evaluating teachers					
	• Training school teachers					
	▪ Educational management training					
	▪ Setting and operation of national exams.					
4	School Organization					
	• Determine student admission policy					
	• Establish structure of schooling					
	• Determine years of education provided					

S.N	Areas of Decision-Making	Decision-Making Authority				
		National	Regional	Zonal	Woreda	School
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine level of education Provided. 					
5	Maintenance and Infrastructure					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining the schools 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing infrastructure projects 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine location of schools. 					
6	Administration					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting goals for the school 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulating school rules and regulation 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and preparing school budget 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing academic freedom 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining school hours 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting the school calendar 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget allocation and control 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accrediting new schools 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish relations with teachers' union 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of parents, teachers association 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing the community about the school activities 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues of school welfare. 					

4.2. What authority or decisions are now delegated (that were not previously in practice) to the lower level in the areas of;

1. Planning

2. Organization

3. Finance

4. Administration

4.3 To what degree has decision-making been pushed down to the lowest management layers in terms of the following functions?
Please rate as indicated below.

Functions	Rating Scale				
	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Man power Planning & Deployment					
2. Capital budget planning & expenditure					
3. Recurrent budget planning & expenditure					
4. Teacher Recruitment & Compensation					
5. Education service provision					

***Section V. Functionality of the Decentralized Educational Management System**

5.1 Some key functions are framed below. How do you judge the function listed below in relation to decentralized educational management system at the intermediate level of administration?

S.N	Key Management Functions	Responses		
		Yes	No	To Some Extent
1.	Planning			
	◆ the scope and content of local level planning is defined			
	◆ local planners are provided with training/attempt made to train			
	◆ local planning authority has been defined			
	◆ educational targets at the local level exist			
	◆ local planning capacity has been created			
	◆ educational targets at the local level exist			
	◆ standard formats are used in planning			
	◆ bottom-up model of planning is encouraged			
	◆ existence of data base at local level			
	◆ monitoring and evaluation units exist at local level			
	◆ partial integration of multi sectional planning at local level			
	◆ projects are formulated at local level			
	◆ There is a possibility of readjusting, modifying plans, project costs to a certain extent during implementation			
2	Administration/ Organization			
	◆ local planning capacity has been created			
	◆ decentralized planning and implementation procedures have been put in place			
	◆ accountability of civil servant to local level authority			
	◆ staff performance evaluation is made at local level			
	◆ organizational structures are designed to discharge the new responsibilities			

S.N	Key Management Functions	Responses		
		Yes	No	To Some Extent
	♦ appropriate institutional arrangements have been developed			
	♦ incentives to initiatives and innovation is encouraged.			
3	Controlling/supervision			
	♦ mechanisms to control the implementation of policy and achievement of goals have been created			
	♦ the central ministry will exercise strong control over the local levels for compliance with standards.			
	♦ increased organizational control			
4	Finance			
	♦ resources are earmarked as per the policy			
	♦ funds allocated at local level			
	♦ norms/criteria/have been established for fund allocation at local levels			
	♦ financial accountability of government officers to local authority			
	♦ generate local financial sources			
	♦ more rational, efficient spending decision is made			
5.	Community Participation			
	♦ the planning process involves the stakeholders			
	♦ there are actions to promote community and others participation			
	♦ community participate in education in terms of management			
	♦ community participate by labor, finance			

Section VI. Assessing local capacity

6.1. How do you judge (in rating scale) the capacity of the local educational management (REB& ZED, WEO) (organizational strengths) in managing their new responsibilities and organize themselves to perform routine and development tasks to provide service to their residents?(Very poor = 1, Poor = 2, Fair = 3, Good = 4, Very good = 5)

S.N	Areas of Capacity	Items	Rating Scale									
			REB& ZED					WEO				
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	Organizational Settings	• Clarity of organization home and function										
		• Clarity of managerial accountability (Who will do the work), organizational structure, line of authority & responsibility from top to grassroots.										
		• Adequacy of the organization for the work										
		• Adequate delegation of authority.										
2	Leadership	• Management position staffed										
		• The presence of clear vision, objectives and strategy.										
		• Flexibility, openness and creativity										
		• Existence of terms of reference for each units										
		• Level of commitment, capability, skillfulness in dealing with competing forces										
3	Resources Mobilization	• Adequacy of operational funds, for Maintaining and sustaining the services.										
		• Planning to mobilize communities or to cover costs from the users. (People, system, budget in place)										

S.N	Areas of Capacity	Items	Rating Scale									
			REB& ZED					WEO				
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of workload to assess financial requirements. • Availability of material resources & the skill required carry out the task. • Level of collaboration, technical and financial cooperation. • Efficient utilization of resources 										
4	Communication & Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing local and political support for programs • Provide adequate training/enabling participants to take roles and responsibilities. • Bureaucratic and infrastructure development for information exchange. • Initiate local governments, parents in decision-making. • Reporting system to monitor activities /expenditure. Reporting system to monitor activities /expenditure. 										
5	Work Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The choice and mix of resources. • Efficiency, the way things are done to increase efficiency and reduce the need for additional resources. • Attractiveness of job environment and rewarding systems. • Existence of clear rules and procedures. 										
6	Conflict Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and solving local problems. 										

6.2. In your view, how do you evaluate the leadership effectiveness for decentralization commitment at each level? (L= Low, M= Medium, H= High).

S. N	Indicators	Central Ministry Level			Regional and Zonal Level			Grass-roots Level (Woreda & School)		
		L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H
1.	Readiness for responsibility & courage to sustain									
2.	Ability to delegate									
3.	Maturity									
4.	Interest and motivation									
5.	Readiness to transfer authority									
6.	Knowledge and expertise in education.									

6.3. In your opinion, how do you rate the school managers' capacity in ensuring the effective operation of schools?

S.N	Measures	Rating Scale				
		Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Ability to facilitate greater collaboration within, across the schools and within communities					
2	Knowledge of local condition (economic, cultural, political)					
3	Clear picture of issues at stake					
4	Simple research and planning skill to plan at school level					
5	Attitudes and behavior; presence of open, transparent, collegial environment					
6	School management skills and ability to share ideas participate in decision-making, encourage teachers to adapt curriculum to local environment etc.					
7	Delegate responsibility					
8	Human relation skills, ability to gain trust of parents NGOs, to encourage activities that promote student welfare					
9	Resource mobilization skill					
10	Ability to animate and guide.					

Section VII. Impact of Decentralization

7.1. The following statements/ideas/ represent what policy makers intended to observe at the school level. Please rate your position as you observe practically. (1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = medium, 4 = high, 5 = very high)

	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Decision-making in the hands of schools:					
	• Decision-making within the schools benefited the students.					
	• Organizational structure changes increased school autonomy					
	• Schools are able to make more rapid response provision of curriculum resources & up skilling teachers.					
	• Schools raise their organizational performance -Teachers committed to pedagogical improvement -Gains in student learning					
	• Parents integrated into school administration and development					
	• Resources are allocated more efficiently within the schools					
	• Additional financial resources mobilized locally					
	• Improved administrative and accountability.					
2.	The extent to which the roles and attitudes of traditional participants in public school politics have been raised					
	• The school committee					
	• Bureaucracies					
	• Teacher associations					
	• Parent association					
	• Political parties					
	• State officials					
• Civil right groups.						
3.	The effect of decentralization on the provision of services and educational management:					
	• Closing the gap between the school and the community					
	• Improving school discipline					
	• Increasing curriculum relevance					
	• Raising the internal yield of the education system					
	• Parents satisfied with their children education					
	• Learning is learner centered /program learning					
• Improving classroom organization.						

7.2. In your opinion, are their changes regarding the following educational objectives in the process of decentralization?

	Yes	No	to some extent
a) Increased enrollment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Improved quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Increased school finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Improved equity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Improved administrative efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.3. Has the greater autonomy intended for school principals enable to make better decisions? Yes No to some extent

7.4. Do you agree that educational plans produced at local levels get approval with some modifications at higher level?
Yes No to some extent

7.5. In your opinion what percent of school operating budgets approximately go to schools?
less than 50% between 50% - 65% greater than 65%
none go to school

7.6. If your response to Q7.5 is none go to schools, what are the reasons?

7.7. From your experience, at what time of the plan year allocated budget reaches woreda or school?

First quarter second quarter third quarter

7.8. Teacher and material provision **(to be filled by school principals)**

a) What is the teacher-student ratio?

b) What is the textbook-student ratio in core subjects?

c) Availability of supportive learning materials

Poor Fair Good

7.9. Achievements/learning acquisition (pass rate) for grades 4,8 & 12 in the last three years.

(to be filled by school principals)

Grades	1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000		Remark
	enrollment	Pass rate	enrollment	Pass rate	enrollment	Pass rate	
4							
8							
12							GPA 2.00 & above

7.10. Changes in enrollment, dropout & repetition rates in the past three years.

(To be filled by school principals)

Grades	1997/98			1998/99			1999/2000		
	Enroll.	Drop out rate	Repetition rate	Enroll	Drop out rate	Repetition rate	Enroll.	Drop out rate	Repetition rate
1-4									
1-8									
9-12									

7.11. What support does school principal receive from top level management to fulfill his/ her roles in school improvements, with respect to;

receive regularly not receive some times

- Management training
- Supervision
- Others

7.12. What is your suggestion with respect to school principal selection?

- Should be elected by staff
- Assign by decision-makers on merit base
- Other means

Please state if any _____

Section VIII. Potential Difficulties

8.1. Potential difficulties in the implementation of decentralization are given below. In your opinion, judge the potential seriousness of each of these difficulties by checking the appropriate space after each item.

S. N	Difficulty	Extremely Serious	Very Serious	Some What Serious	Observed But Not Serious	Not Observed
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Delegating authority to those socialized in a centralized system appear to mean a loss of power prestige.					
2	Lack of readiness by local levels to accept the responsibilities					
3	Lack of interest by political leaders					
4	Lack of good communication, inadequate information system & choice					
5	An inefficient financial management system					
6	In adequacy of financial support from the center & financial aid from outside.					
7	There was lack of clear lines of authority & decision-making					
8	Lack of planning and budgeting capacity					
9	There was too much decentralization of decision-making					
10	There was much centralization of decision-making					
11	A poor logistical system, especially for maintenance of infrastructure and equipment distribution.					
12	There was lack of technical assistance.					
13	There was lack of skilled manpower & effective practice to implement as planned.					
14	There was lack of commitment and initiation.					
15	Cultural norms.					
16	Disagreement & opposition to the principle					
17	Time demands for decentralization					

18. Please list down if any major problems are left out:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Section IX. Comment and Opinion

9.1. Please list any comment, opinion, or views with respect to decentralization of educational management in Oromia if any,

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

9.2. What conclusion, recommendations would you like to suggest?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

ANNEX B

FORM B: INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE (For Officials & Experts)

The purpose is to identify the perception of officials & experts, regarding decentralization of educational management

Guiding Questions:

- 1) Why decentralization?
- 2) What mechanisms have been in place to implement educational decentralization?
- 3) What is your opinion concerning the structural changes taking place to implement the decentralized process?
- 4) What support do you provide to the lower level?
- 5) How can the education system emphasize its support of schools?
- 6) What are the major benefits and problems associated with decentralized educational management?
- 7) How to improve decentralized educational management?
- 8) Any opinion, concerns, suggestions and recommendation you would like to give.

Thank you!

ANNEX C

FORM C: INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE (For School Level Actors)

The purpose is to identify the perception of school level players regarding the school management under the reform.

Actors: - Parents, school committee, Teachers, Principals, Students

Guiding Questions:

- 1) How school level actors understood and responded to the government decentralization initiation?
- 2) How they understood and viewed the decentralization process inside their school?
- 3) Decentralization for what?
- 4) How they interpreted school autonomy?
- 5) What is the level of their participation and representation in decision-making process?
- 6) What support received with respect to training and through supervisors?
- 7) What level of information acquired by parents, teachers?
- 8) Did the intended reform lead to changes in the school (positive or negative)?

N.B. Intended changes designed by MOE, REB

- Vesting authority in the new arrangements, Involving more teachers in school wide decision-making, broadening parental involvement, increased resources (funds), Expanding staff development opportunities, Changes in students academic performance.
- 9) What are the major benefits and problems associated with school management (Autonomy)?
 - 10) How to improve decentralized school management?
 - 11) Any opinion, suggestions and recommendations you would like to give

Thank you!

ANNEX D

FORM D: CHECKLIST

An Assessment of school effectiveness:

Several factors are associated with school effectiveness. Did the following factors improved in the decentralization process?

No.	Factors	Responses		
		No	Yes	To Some Extent
1.	Parent and Community Support			
	• Financial and material support.			
	• Increased communication between school staff and parents.			
	• Community/parents have role in school governance.			
2.	Support from education system.			
	• The Authority and responsibility are clearly defined by policy that is delegated to schools.			
	• There is a performance standard set.			
	• Educational leaders communicate the school frequently.			
	• Supervisors assist the school.			
	• There is a continuing advice and training for school managers and teachers.			
	• School principals are evaluated regularly based on their roles.			
	• School performances will be assessed.			
	• There is adequate material support.			
3.	More effective leadership			
	• More collaborative decision-making.			
	• Highly motivated, professionally oriented and capable teams (teaching force).			
	• Flexibility and autonomy.			
4.	School climate.			
	• Greater goal clarity concerning the educational purposes of the school.			
	• Positive teachers attitudes.			
	• Well-organized school.			
	• Organized curricula.			
	• Clear academic standards.			
	• Academic success is recognized.			
5.	Teaching-learning process.			
	• Maximized school learning time.			
	• Active learning is promoted.			
	• Frequent student assessment and feedback.			
6.	Greater capacity for organizational learning.			
	• Increased student participation.			
	• Increased completion rate.			
	• Decreased dropout and repetition rates.			
	• Improved academic achievement.			
7.	Greater capacity to respond to the needs of stakeholders.			

ANNEX E

FORM E: CHECK LIST

MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

(To be filled at REB, ZED, WEO)

Region _____ Zone _____ Woreda _____ Name of Office _____

Available & Needed Staff by Qualification & Position

Name of the Department/ Division/Section	Educational Levels of the Personnel									
	Primary		Secondary		Diploma		BA/BSC		MA/MSc or above	
	Available	Required	Available	Required	Available	Required	Available	Required	Available	Required
1. Planning & Project Management ▪ Educa. Manag. Information (EMI) ▪ Planning & programming ▪ Project Management										
2. Pedagogical Functions ▪ Curriculum Devpt. & Research ▪ Teacher Training ▪ Examination and Student Ev. ▪ Educational Programs Superv. (Formal + Non-formal) ▪ Textbook and Educational materials management.										
3. Management and Administration ▪ Office Administration (General Service) ▪ Personnel Management (Administration) ▪ Budget & Financial Management (Budget, controlling, Audit)										

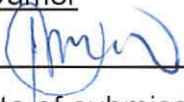
ANNEX F
LIST OF THE SAMPLE SCHOOLS

<u>Name of the School</u>	<u>Woreda</u>	<u>Administrative Zone</u>
1. Gonde (Primary)	Hetosa	Arsi
2. Waji Bilalo (Primary)	Tiyo	Arsi
3. Adola (Primary)	Adola & Wadera	Borena
4. Adola (Secondary)	Adola & wadera	Borena
5. Gumi Gayo (Primary)	Liben	Borena
6. Negelle (Secondary)	Liben	Borena
7. Fendisha (Primary)	Haramaya	East Hararge
8. Haramaya (Secondary)	Haramaya	East Hararge
9. Chelenko (Secondary)	Meta	East Hararge
10. Nicolas (Primary)	Kombolcha	East Hararge
11. Kombolcha (Secondary)	Kombolcha	East Hararge
12. Chiroo Lak. 1. (Primary)	Chiro	West Hararge
13. Chiro (Secondary)	Chiro	West Hararge
14. Dindin (Primary)	Tulo	West Hararge
15. Hirna (Secondary)	Tulo	West Hararge
16. Gera (Primary)	Gera	Jimma
17. Sokoru (Secondary)	Sokoru	Jimma
18. Dejene Seme (Primary)	Ada Liben	East Shewa
19. Adama (Secondary)	Ada Liben	East Shewa
20. Gedo Dire Guddina (Primary)	Chaliya	West Shewa
21. Gedo (Secondary)	Chaliya	West Shewa
22. Ginchi (Secondary)	Dandi	West Shewa
23. Abiyot Fire (Primary)	Girar Jarso	North Shewa
24. Feche Lak. 2 (Primary)	Girar Jarso	North Shewa
25. Feche (Secondary)	Girar Jarso	North Shewa
26. Gebra Guracha Lak. 2 (Primary)	Kuyu	North shewa
27. Gebra Guracha Lak. 3 (Primary)	Kuyu	North Shewa
28. Gebra Guracha (Secondary)	Kuyu	North Shewa
29. Gute (Primary)	Guto wayu	East Wollega

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been fully acknowledged.

Name Jeilu Oumer

Signature 

Place and date of submission AAU, May 2000.

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY