

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICE OF EDUCATIONAL
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS IN THE WOREDAS OF
TIGRAY REGIONAL STATE**

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERISTY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT**

BY

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAU-	Addis Ababa University
CRDA-	Christian Relief Development Association
ESDP-	Education Sector Development Program
ETP-	Education and Training Policy
BA-	Bachelor of Arts
BED-	Bachelor of Education
BSC-	Bachelor of Science
DF-	Degree of Freedom
EFA-	Education for All
FDRE-	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GOs-	Government Organizations
MA-	Master of Arts
MED-	Master of Education
MOE-	Ministry of Education
MSC-	Master of Science
NGOs-	Non-Government Organizations
PTA-	Parents Teacher Association
WEO-	Woreda Education Offices
SWOT-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TREB-	Tigray Regional Education Bureau
UNESCO	United Nation Education, Science <i>and</i> Culture Organization

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand and assess the practice of educational strategic planning process in woredas of Tigray National Regional State with the intent of suggesting ways for improvement. To conduct this research descriptive survey method was employed. In this regard WEO heads, planners, experts, principals, department heads, supervisors, REB process owners and planners, and PSTA were used as primary sources of data for this study. To select WEO heads, performers and planners, PTA, principals, REB Planners and process owners were employed purposive and department heads and supervisors simple random sampling techniques. Likewise the collected data were analyzed quantitatively by using percentage, mean, chi-square test, and t-test. Questionnaire was the main data gathering instrument whereas interview and document analysis were employed to enrich the data gathered through questionnaires. The findings of the study mirror that the educational strategic plan practices in Tigray Region has been characterized by weak stakeholders involvement in the strategic planning activities, inadequacy budget, and poor utilization of resources, lack of competency of WEO heads to implement the strategies, inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems, poor motivational incentives given to the workers, and using inadequacy or unreliable data were the major problems that affect the successful implementation of the educational strategic plans in Tigray Region. Based on the major findings conclusions were drawn as: lack of meaningful participation of stake holders, relevant planners' knowledge and/or experience found to be weak, inadequacy of resources and there was inadequacy of plan monitoring and evaluation system in the selected woredas. Finally, it was recommended that increasing stake holders participation, expanding sources of resources, providing sustainable capacity building trainings for WEO heads and planners, creating an independent body for plan monitoring and evaluation by indicating what to be stressed for further studies.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This study deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study and definitions of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

The development of society is at present being strongly influenced by education, which results in scientific and technological progress (UNESCO, 1998). Thus, it seems that education has been recognized as an engine that largely derives the socioeconomic transformation of nations and facilitates personal success. However, it has to be borne in mind that education can serve the best interest of mankind if it is pursued in a planned environment. As Forojalla [1993] noted “the notion of development has come to be bounded with education and planning: as now days no sound development can occur in the absence of proper planning system and an equally sounded education system.” Similarly, Morphet, et.al. [1982] pointed that, administrators look ahead, predict events, prepare for contingencies, formulate directions, map out activities, and provide an orderly sequence for achieving goals through planning.

The causes and/or conditions for the beginning of educational planning as an instrument for striking development in both developed and developing nations can viewed in different perspectives. The most underlying reason for the developed world, particularly, of western nations to devise educational planning as one aspect of development-triggering activity is the firm belief they developed to heal the crises they confronted as a result the two big wars: World war I and World war II they fought. Attesting this reality, Forojalla (1993) writes that at around the end of the first world war, Soviet union managed to adopt educational planning and other economic planning activities in a modern sense, assists its development desire: and educational planning as a systemized body of knowledge with its own was conceived in western European countries begging the end of the second world war specially in the 1950s and 1960s.

The factors that engendered the inception of systematic educational planning in developing nations, nevertheless, are associated with their emancipation from the colonial rules. Elaborating this idea, Husen and Neville (1995) state that the 1950s and 1960s, were known for the liberalization of most

developing countries from the shackles of colonization and the consequent upsurge of educational planning in those countries for they came to realize that education is the only antidote to bridge the missing development gaps created as a result their being colonized by the colonial powers. Thus the developing world education system was suffering from series agonies with respect to educational planning, owing to the colonial rule, was a reality.

Ferrojalla (1993) point out that, "as no organization is free of change, which is often the result of education, effective planning ensures survival and growth. Hence, a fairly systematic preparing and implementing educational strategic plan need to be adopted in various educational organizations accordingly." Regarding to this issue, Cunningham (1982) indicate that, educators sometimes fail to reach the desired purposes, the fact that they are unable to deal with the complexities of planning making decisions and implement the change itself. This implies that educators need to plan in order to make better use of the changes and the results that will bring about.

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

According to the Education and Training Policy and Its Implementation (2008), the ETP is aimed at the cultivation of citizens with an all- rounded education capable of paying conscious and active role in the economic, social, and political life of the country at various levels. Though, the policy strategies focused on; Expanding educational opportunity and ensuring its equity, Linking education and training, Democratization of the administration and content of education, The administration of primary and secondary schools as well as junior colleges will be the responsibility of the Regions, and Provision of quality and relevance of educational service. Moreover, just as there are compensatory packages for assisting the less developed regions and women in the development schemes, these historically disadvantaged groups will receive special support in the education field.

On the other hand, Joint Review Mission (JRM, 2006) final draft in ESDP III, 2005/06 indicates that, with in the framework of 1994 Education and Training Policy (ETP), the Government of Ethiopia launched Educational Sector Development Programs [ESDP] in order to convert the education and training policy to programmatic actions. Over the years since the start of ESDP I in E.C.1990, the education policy and strategic framework has also become more explicitly linked to broader government development strategies in particular, the time covered by the ESDP II was deliberately shorten to 3 years so as to align the ESDP III with the government of Ethiopia's second poverty reduction strategy, which it finalized in the course of 1998 in the form of the plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End poverty by 2009/10. Hence, the main thrust of the ESDP III was to ensure universal primary education by 2015 (JRM, 2006).

On top of this, Tigray Regional Education Bureau is committed to improve educational quality, relevance, equity and expand access to education with special emphasis on primary education in rural and underserved areas, as well as the proportion of education for girls as first step to achieve primary education by 2015 (TESDP, 2006). So as to implement the plans accordingly, the Regional administration has further decentralized the power of decision making to Zones and weredas. However, the various units of planning practitioners, especially at wereda levels and schools were not seen while executing in their respective plans as desired.

In supporting this, MOE (2005) clearly indicated in its document that inadequate planning and management capacities at the lower level of the organizational structure were critical problems in realizing the goals of education. Skills to interpret polices, collect and analyzed appropriate data and enabling schools to take appropriate actions to meet the minimum quality standards defined for local situations are critically lacking at the lower levels of the organizational structure. Thus, this research may help to identify and fill the information gaps and indicates alternative solutions in relation to the practice of educational strategic planning process in weredas of Tigray Regional State.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Strategic planning is the overall planning that facilitates good management process. It provides big picture of clarity about what actually want to achieve and how to go in order to achieve it, rather than a plan of action for day-to-day operations. In the contemporary world, the need for strategic planning has significantly increase although there have been debates on its importance. For instance, scholars such as Napuk (1993) claim that, “We are far too busy doing the business to waste time on useless plans: they are never any good anyway, because they always change,” Similarly, Burch (1996)]showed his doubts on planning that is not as such important since every body exists as an individual in a purposeless universe.

However, according to Chandan (1997), despite these realities there have long been convincing evidences showing that organizations which practice strategic planning consistently perform better than those with none or limited strategic planning activities and can improve their performances over a period of time. This implies that, strategic planning facilitates the performance success of an organization depending on the capacity to put it in to action. On top of this, Mbua (2002) explains that many African countries now have educational plans however; the main difficult with most of these plans is that they too rarely get off paper and convert in to action. Therefore, this indicates implementation has become an obvious problem of educational plans.

Regarding educational strategies, the ETP (1994) document of the FDRE has identified three areas of priorities for a change as a strategy in education. These are curriculum reform and the preparation of learning resources: teacher affaires: and education planning and management. In realizing this, MOE of has devoted to put the policy and strategy in to practice and to identify the major problems of the education system, though with this regard, a number of improvements have been observed; however, these are with a number of problems and challenges.

Besides, the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP-II-2002 and ESDP-III) states that, lack of qualified teachers, low budget utilization, weak program management, and implementation capacity, lack of harmonization of donors and government procedures with respect to planning approving, implementing, procuring and reporting, and high turnover of professional personnel, inadequate planning and management capacity at lower levels of organizational structures (weredas),

and lack of text books and management systems were the observed critical problems in realizing educational objectives during the implementation of ESDPs I and II (1999-2004/05).

In addition, the Joint Review Mission report (JRM) (2004) in ESDPII (2005) states that,

In actual practice the concern given to quality was almost none. Much attention on the part of the government was given to access to quality inputs such as recruiting teachers, manageable class size, adequate text-books, sufficient supplies etc, and thereby to aggravate the prevailing reduction in educational quality and efficiency.

Likewise, Tigray Regional State Education Bureau (2007) on a topic "... a proposal prepared for discussion on an issue of School Improvement Program (SIP)" indicates that, there was a disorganized effort on the part of WEOs and schools of the region. Thus, the WEOs were not giving support to schools to enable them to organize school improvement program committees, failure to take immediate corrective measures, and many schools were not develop their own SIPs rather copying a plan prepared by other schools, some schools were led with out preparing three-year plans were among the problems of implementing plans in lower levels of the education structure". - Translation.

Further more, as to the knowledge of the researcher; studies made on the Educational Strategic planning process in Ethiopia are limited. Thus, researches conducted by Abawey (2010) and Chanie (2010) asserted that almost similar findings that is, the practice of strategic planning has faced different problems in the lower levels education. Hence, the global experiences indicated that the practice of strategic planning in education has to be assessed and it should be realized, as a device used to meet the organization needs by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the strategic planning process, and the ETP of 1994 also stresses the need to adopt quality education, access, equity, and democrat citizens, therefore, from this point of view, there is a need of study to carryout in the context of educational strategic planning process in Tigray National Regional State that addresses the educational problems of the region.

Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the Practice of Educational strategic planning process and tries to see some similar points raised by foregoing researches and some new issues which did not raised by the foregoing researches. These are the feasibility of goals, strategies, and the nature of the strategic planning implementation process to address policy prioritized educational problems in Tigray Region.

Indeed, it is based on the above backgrounds that, the researcher prompted to conduct his proposed study. Though, to do this study, the following basic research questions were employed.

1. To what extent the management of WEOs do have competency in the process of strategic planning?
2. To what extent were stakeholders involved in the educational strategic planning process?
3. How adequate well the resources available to implement the strategic plan and were they effectively utilized?
4. To what extent have been the monitoring and evaluation systems instituted for tracking formulation and implementation progress, to identify strengths and weaknesses for making corrections?
5. To What extent do the educational strategic plans focus on addressing major policy issues?
6. What are the major problems encountered while implementing educational strategic plans in the Region?

The overriding purpose of dealing with the research problem is with the view of addressing the following general and specific objectives.

1.3 Objectives of the study

General objective

The main purpose of this study is to assess the practice of educational strategic planning process in Tigray WEOs .

Specific objectives

In view the aforementioned general objectives, the following are specific objectives that the study aims to attain:

1. To assess the extent of readiness for strategic planning process.
2. To assess the extent of preparation made for strategic planning process.
3. To assess the degree of stakeholders participation.
4. To examine the extent of resource adequacy for implementation.
5. To examine the degree of implementation, monitoring and evaluation and achievement.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The Education and Training Policy advocates largely towards the achievement of EFA goals by including the implementation strategies of the three ESDPs as well as the planning strategies of Regions, Zones, Weredas and Schools. Therefore, the extensive information and research findings that will obtain from this study:

1. It may provide a better understanding and awareness on the practice of the educational strategic planning process in wereda educations.
2. It may create a better understanding and awareness on hindering factors which inhibit the achievement of educational strategic planning practices in Tigray weredas.
3. It may provide information on the practice of educational strategic planning process to decision makers.
4. It may aware upper echelon on how strategic plans are prepared and implemented at the lower levels of the education system.
5. It may give a glimpse for those who may develop interest to make further study on similar or related topics.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

. In Tigray Regional State, there are 7 Zones and 46 Weredas, taking in to account the resources required for the data collection process, the study covered 3 zones out of the seven and 7 wereda education offices out of fourteen weredas found in the three Zones and also 14 primary and secondary public schools found in these woredas.

Due to the existence of similarities among Zones, Weredas and the public schools of Tigray, the selected samples in the study would represent the whole population. Similarly the study was fixed to

the last three-years (2008-2010) of educational strategic planning period of the WEOs. Farther, the study is delimited to strategic planning formulation, strategic plan implementation and plan monitoring and evaluation

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Undertaking research requires the availability of sufficient and accurate data. Novice researchers like the student researcher however, could not get such all data sufficiently and accurately as expected and can not exhaustively put the different intervening factors under control. For this reason this research work is felt to have the following challenges.

- i) Getting the REB and PSTA to conduct interview was challenged
- ii) Because of financial and time limitations, different groups that have stake in the education activities such as Woreda Capacity Building and Woreda Cabinet were not involved in the study as respondents.
- iii) Dispersed Geographical locations of sample areas were challenged for transportation and data collection.

1.7 Operational Definition of Key Terms

ESDP: is an education sector development program launched by the Ethiopian Government in order to convert the education and Training policy to programmatic action, so as part of the twenty-year education indicating plan (MOE, 1997).

Implementation: is the realization of an application, or an execution of an organizations' plan or policy [McNamara, 2008].

Planning: is a continuous dynamic and transitional process, to realize the intended result which requires resource and becoming aware of the environment is important in the success of this process (Finlay, 2000).

Primary school: a school of eight grades for children of elementary school age that normally requires 8 years to complete the work provided (V.Goog, 1973).

Regional government: Regional State with authority provided by proclamation No.7/1992.

Secondary school: in Ethiopian context, a grade level which comprises from grade 9-grade 10.

Strategic planning: the process of developing objectives for the organization and its sub parts as well as developing and evaluating alternative course to reach these objectives: doing this in the basis of systematic evaluation of external threats and opportunities and internal audit of strengths and weaknesses (Ashebir, 1998).

Wereda: a division or area developed for administrative purpose with defined authority and responsibility representing a population size estimated up to 100,000 (proclamation No.7/1992).

Zone: an intermediate administrative level between Region and Woreda.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one deals with the problems and its settings, chapter two presents the review of related literature, chapter three deals with the methodology of the study. Similarly, Chapter four deals with the presentation and analysis of data, and finally, chapter five deals summary, conclusion and recommendations of the findings.

Chapter Two

2. Review of the Related Literature

This chapter mainly dealt with reviewing relevant literature of various scholars on the practice of educational strategic planning in relation to the concepts of: planning, strategic planning, strategic planning in education, process (steps) of strategic plan, importance of monitoring and evaluation, problems of educational strategic planning, making strategic plans effective and Ethiopian experience of educational strategic planning.

2.1 Planning: An Overview

According to Gamage (2006), planning is a process that precedes decision making. A plan can be defined as a decision with regard to a course of action. A course of action is a sequence of acts, which are mutually related and viewed as a unit. All successful organizations develop plans, however, there are some organizations or even countries that are not implement their developed plans. It must be implement to be successful, it is expected that, all organizational members follow the plan. Planning is an intelligent preparation for action. The planning process is differentiated from other pre-decision activities in that, it is systematic, deliberate, and continuous.

Further more, as to Stoner and others (2005) planning is a device for locating in advance the resource to be employed in the accomplishment of the goals off an organization by allotting specific tasks or activities to employees and conducting concrete follow up mechanisms that will allow the timely corrections of digressed performances.

A more elaborated definition that includes quite a great deal of on the term planning is the definition framed by Bears, et al. in (Bush and John, 1994) planning as to them is: a continuous process in administration which links goal setting, policy making, short-term and long-term planning, budgeting and evaluation in a manner which spans all levels the organization, secures appropriate involvement of people according to their responsibility for implementing plans as well as people with an interest or stake in the outcomes of those plans, and provide a frame work for the annual planning, budgeting evaluation cycle. The lessons to be drawn with respect to planning in general and educational planning in particular from the definitions treated here above is that, from the very out set, planning

is practiced to determine in advance the desired future destination of an organization and the possible routes through which this aspired condition is realized.

Planning involves a sequence of stages which are designed to link the formulation of basic policy goals with the design of specific projects or programs and to ensure that lessons learned from the implementation are feedback in to subsequent planning cycle. It is not a one- shoot occurrence. As described by Been Lakker in Conyers and Hills (1984), comprehensive plan involve s a continuous and cyclical process based on : appraisal of the current state of affaires, assessment of future direction for progress and preliminary priorities among directions, preliminary formulation of objective and estimation of available funds, consideration of alternative course of action, specification of objectives and sub-objectives, identification of alternative programs, projects, policies and strategies, search for the best solutions, derivation of evaluation criteria, application of evaluation criteria, and determination of action plan and budget.

On top of this, Mapoor in Talesra and others[2002] also suggested different planning stages in planning process: establishment of objectives, mission and goals, identification of problems and needs, assessment of resources, determination of priorities, formulation of plan, finalization of plan, work plan for implementation, monitoring and evaluation: and revision of plan.

Thus, the two aforementioned planning process models have no significant difference except sequence of each stages and specificity. But the Mapoor model is clear and seems appropriate for educational systems.

2.2 Types of planning

Most scholars share common understanding on what planning is and how it contributes to a given organizational success. But, when it comes to types, they differ based on various aspects. For instance, Kumar (2002) and others classified planning types in to:

Single use plans – are plans that incorporate objectives, strategies, programs, projects, and budgets.

Standing plans – which includes policies, procedures, methods and rules.

On the other hand, Lewis and others (1995) grouped planning types in to strategic and operational planning based on the time range and content they contain. In relation to this, Gamage (2006) also

identified two models of interrelated systematic planning: Strategic planning, and Management planning.

Weidling and others (1997) in Gamage (2006) defined **strategic planning** as a process of discovering effective and efficient ways of utilizing organizational resources for the attainment of a desired future. Strategic planning stresses evolutionary or rolling planning, where the plan itself is altered to adapt to changing circumstances. Strategic planning fosters and requires productive relations and linkages with public agencies and groups, other than those directly responsible for education. It involves the determination of policies and the establishment of new or revised goals. This concept should be of special interest to educational leaders, who have a major responsibility for developing and implementing plan, because it helps to ensure the commitment and support that is essential in facilitating needed changes. **Management planning**-is concerned with the effective and efficient attainment of the organizational objectives and goals that have been agreed upon and accepted. It can be conceptualized as those portions of the planning process that is implemented after the basic decisions relating to goals and policies have been determined. Further more, scholars like Koory and Medley (1987), classified it in a more comprehensive way as: strategic planning, tactical planning, and operational planning. Although experiencing the above variations of plan classifications could broaden our knowledge of planning types, the major ones that there are to discussed in the following sections are the strategic planning in detail and operational planning which is common to different institutions including educational organizations.

Moreover, Herbert (1999) and others in Gamage (2006) also identified as long-range and strategic planning and differentiate long-range planning from strategic planning in the following manner:

Long range-planning assumes that an organization is a closed system, with in which relatively accurate 3to5 year plans of action can be designed, while strategic planning assumes that an organization is an open system that is dynamic and perpetually changing, as it integrates the shifting situations.

Long-range planning is viewed as a separate function, while strategic planning is considered as an integral part of managing the operation of the organization.

Long-range planning tends to focus on the final plan and 3to5 years future organizational targets, while strategic planning focuses on process.

Long-range planning is a mere internal analysis, while strategic planning employs both internal and external analysis, to move toward the shared vision.

Long-range decisions about the future are based on the present data, while in strategic planning, current and future trends are considered in making current, not future decisions. The basic aim of strategic planning is to actively determine the nature of the character of the organization and to guide its directions. It identifies the mission and mandates of the organization and devises strategies for fulfilling its purposes educators discussed on the different features of strategic planning.

2.2.1 Strategic planning

According to Mintzberg (1994) the origin of strategic planning is in the business community in 1960s: strategic planning attempts to combine short term and long term planning. Organizations conducting strategic planning typically commit themselves to a formal process in which a group of “planners” articulate a mission statement, sets goals and objectives, audits the organization for internal strengths & weaknesses, assess the external environment for opportunities and threats, evaluates strategic options and there selects and operates an organizational strategy. The basic aim of strategic planning is to link daily organizational decisions with a vision of where the organization wants to be at some point in the future, usually five years hence.

On the other hand, Pearce and Robinson (2003) defined strategic planning as “...the set of decisions and actions resulting formulation and implementation of the strategies design to achieve the objectives of the organization.” Similarly, O’Brien (1999) and Griffin (2000) describe it as a general plan outlining decisions of resource allocation, priorities and action steps necessary to reach strategic goals. Its application to the education system seems to foster the emergence with, the strategies of autonomous action making it possible to narrow the gap between the procedures and the consumers of education or training products.

Hence, Strategic planning is a broad program for defining and achieving organizational objectives. If we find straying off course or if we encounter unforeseen contingencies, we can take corrective action by modifying our plan. This justifies that planning is not a single event with a clear beginning and end, but rather, it is ongoing process that reflects and adapts to changes in the environment surrounding the organization.

Generally speaking strategic planning is a type of planning which is set by the board of directors, stakeholders, and top management which has an extended time horizon: addresses questions of scope, resource development, and competitive advantage of the organizations. However, Even though there is widespread support for using strategic planning in education, there are those who do not see the value of its application. Mintzberg (1994), former president of the strategic management society, was one of the earliest critics of strategic planning. Although his criticisms of strategic planning were not directed specifically at education, his views can be applied to its use in schools.

According to Mintzberg (1994), one of the major weaknesses of strategic planning process lies in the fact that formal planning does not produce effective strategies. He argued “we have no evidence that any of the strategic planning system....no matter how elaborate....succeeded in capturing the messy informal processes by which strategies really do get developed”.

On the other hand (Mintzberg 1994) describes strategic planning as “... involved, complicated, and complex process that takes an organization in to the uncharted territory, it does not provide a ready to use prescription for success instead, it takes the organization through a journey and helps develop a framework and context within which the answers will emerge. Literature and research has documented extensively the possible problems that may arise during the process. Being aware of these issues and prepared to address them is essential to success: organizational strategic planning effort may fail if these potential pitfalls are ignored.” With regard inflexibility, strategic planning might inhibit changes, and discourage the organization from considering disruptive alternatives. Planning might inhibit creativity and does not easily handle truly creative idea, a conflict lies with a desire to retain the stability that planning brings to an organization...while enabling it to respond quickly to external changes in the environment (Mintzberg, 1994).

In the midst of this detailed overview of strategic planning, Mintzberg (1994) also asserts three critics of strategic planning.

Predictability- in this critic the assumption is that the world will “... still hold while a plan is being developed and then stay on the predicted course while that plan is being implemented.” In fact the environment with in which all organizations live, far from being predicted and static, keeps changing at an ever faster rate, meaning plans can quickly end up out of date or irrelevant, consider how little

of what we currently take for granted in technology, or in political, corporate, and social life was foreseeable five years ago. This risks reification the tendency for a plan to become an end itself that must be pursued even when unexpected changes in the environment invalidate the assumptions on which it was based.

Objectivity- the keys to strategy lie in objective measures of hard data, and the consequent ignoring of the soft data, beneath the hard data , even though this underbelly is often crucial to choosing the right direction for an organization.

Structure- closely related in the assumption that, structural systems and a rational sequence, from analysis through administrative procedure to eventual action are superior to human judgment. In practice, however, formalized procedures almost never forecast discontinuities...or create novel strategies. Rather they incline planners to concentrate on means rather than ends, on "...how to do things rather than why to do things", on"... better ways of pursuing current objectives rather than reconsidering which objectives should be pursued" (Mintzberg, 1994). In addition, Mintzberg (1998), Kauman and Herman(1991) point that, strategic planning is in danger of becoming just an educational fad and imitation or copy from other competitors-often with out a clear idea of what it is, what should deliver, and how to differ from other types of planning.

On the contrary of the above ideas, Kaufman (1995) point out that, the advantage of being strategic is that every one in the educational system knows:-The ideal vision for the society and the system: The mission objectives and all of the performance indicators for telling both direction and destination: The policies for decisions: and What each individual and group with in educational system has agreed to contribute.

Ekun (2005) also elaborated the following characteristics that are commonly associated with strategic planning: 1) Strategic planning emphasizes looking from the outside. Since many of the challenges and changes experienced by institutions are triggered by out side forces this emphasis on the external environment, monitoring major demographic, social, economic, political, and technological trends that may hold opportunities or threats for institution. While strategic planning also considers internal factors, it requires that they should be balanced by an assessment of external realities.2) Acknowledging the changeability of the external environment and the rapid growth of knowledge, strategic planning uses a 3-5 planning time frame.3) Because of the external environment undergoes

continues and often rapid change and because it is impossible to predict future conditions with certainty, strategic planning is a dynamic continuing process in which adoptions and/or deviations from the plan will be required and should be expected. For this reason, plans are reviewed and updated regularly.4) It stresses the importance of achieving a position for the institutions as a whole as well as for specific programs.

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

Additionally as to Smith and others (1991), strategic planning provides organizations with clear goals and direction, reduces the risks associated with environmental threats, helps relate a firm's decision making process to relevant environmental conditions, reduces resistance to change, enhance problem prevention capabilities, and helps to out performing, it makes to realize objectives, it makes easier to achieve goals, enables better control of life, and it makes a planned for future objectives.

Thus, all of these supporters of the strategic planning point out that there were many possible benefits of strategic planning. However, others also have noted that it is a complex process that requires leadership to ensure that it is carried out effectively. Herman and Kaufman (1991) conceded that "Most (strategic) planners encounter pitfall: perhaps a word to the wise can prepare those new to the process to side-step such errors. Avoiding major mistakes can mean the difference between creating just another dusty document and creating a revitalized educational system." In general, strategic planning is a far reaching guideline in which organizations operate and move for ward in order to attain their vision, mission, and objectives successfully.

2.2.2 Operational Planning

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

accomplishment of strategic objectives (Cunningham, 1982). It focuses on establishing specific and detailed procedures, budgets, and schedules of plan execution.

Operational planning is usually narrower in scope. Thus an organization's operating plan should help to explain how the organization will contribute to achieving the organization's over all strategic plan. Generally, operational planning is an expanded version of strategic planning and is generally more tangible and less conceptual.

Operational planning consists of making specific commitments to implement the objectives and policies established by strategic planning (Hampton, 1981). He continued by saying that, if strategic planning provides the "big picture", operational planning provides the details without which the big picture would remain a black outline. Here from Hampton's words, one can easily understand that operational planning is the final phase of planning process which is mainly put in the place as a strategy to successfully implement the strategic plan piece-by-piece. Besides, Cunningham (1982) also elaborated the strategic and operational plans as follows:

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

Further, Cunningham (1982) and Judson (1996) note that, for the planning process to work appropriately, strategic plans must be developed and made final preceding to developing and implementing operational plans and operational plans should not be developed first with the intent of imposing strategic plans on top, they argue that the best approach is first to develop strategic plan under the direction of top level administrators and then use these strategic plans to guide the efforts of operational personnel in the development of operational plans. However, despite of the

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

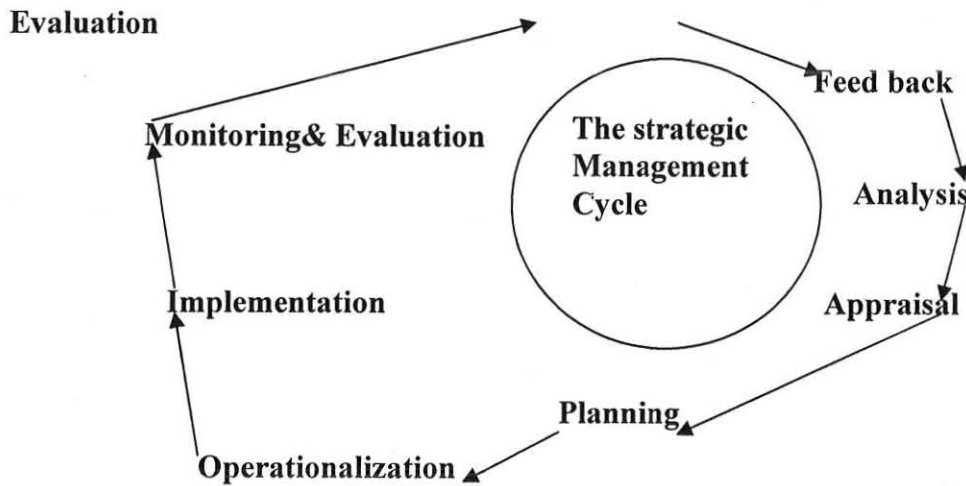
2.3 Strategic planning in Education

According to Gamage (2006), in the contemporary world, similar to other fields, education is undergoing unprecedented changes, due to the advancement of technology, globalization and changing expectations of the society. Educational leaders find it extremely difficult to face the challenges and to predict their future organizations. Strategic planning is a means by which it can establish and maintain a sense of direction. It is a continuous process by which an organization is kept on course, through making adjustments, when both the internal and external contexts change.

On the other hand, Chang (2006) stated that strategic planning in the education sector is the physical product of the strategic planning process and embodies the guiding orientation on how to run an education system with in larger national development perspectives, which is evolving by the nature and often involves constraints.

There are a variety of terminologies used in strategic management and a variety of approaches to carry out it. One can not say that there is a single perfect way to conducting strategic planning; each institution has its own particular interpretation of the approaches and activities in strategic management. However what are generic to strategic management are certain typical stages involving similar activities carried out in a similar sequence. Any management involves four basic stages: analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation. In a more sophisticated way, we can say that strategic management is a continuum of successive stages such as, critical analysis of a system, policy formulation and appraisal, action planning management and monitoring, review and evaluation. As a way of strategic management, education systems should be analyzed and thought out in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Figure1: The Strategic Management Cycle



Source: (Chang, 2006)

2.4 Approaches/ Components of Strategic Planning

Amico (1988) describes the elements and activities of strategic planning process as follows;

Planning to plan- It is a preliminary planning phase. In this phase the strategic planning process is being set up. Top management is coming up an understanding of the process and deciding who will be involved. There are creating work plans, setting timelines, and allocating financial and human resources to the task. They are defining roles and assessing responsibilities to planners.

Research phase-begins with the development of hypotheses about current status of and future possibilities. In its initial stages this research phase depends largely on the experiences, hunches, and “gut feelings” of the top managers and planners.

Mission statement phase-it is a rational which describes the organization’s purpose and activities. Usually it includes what the organization does, how it does, and why it does it. Once written the mission statements become a corner stone for the remaining strategic planning elements and activities.

Forecasting phase- is the development of several alternative predictions about the future. The predictions are called future scenarios, are extrapolations and educated guesses that strategic planners base on the research information they have collected and analyzed.

Contingency planning phase- using their alternative future scenarios, strategic planners “pay out” different ways their organization could respond to each alternative

Strategic planning phase- It is the last elements of strategic planning process. It is a description of the organization's mission and its most advantages of future scenario, along with the policies and tactics need to realize that future with in the context of the mission. Although fairly comprehensive, the strategic plan is not necessarily detailed.

On the other hand Hellriegel, et al (2002) recommended the steps that to be followed while preparing plans with particular reference to strategic plan. Hence, their models incorporate steps like developing mission and goals: assessing opportunities and threats: identifying strengths and weaknesses, developing strategies: preparing strategic plan: preparing tactical plans: controlling and assessing results: and continuing planning.

The following models of McNamara (2008) also provide a wide range options from which organizations might select an approach and begin to develop their own strategic planning process. Such as:

Basic Strategic Planning: this very basic process is typically followed by organizations that are extremely small, busy, and have not done much strategic before. The basic strategic planning includes: Identifying the purpose (Mission statement), selecting the goals the organization must reach, Identifying specific approaches or strategies that must be implemented to reach each goal, Identifying specific action plans to implement each strategy, and monitoring up dating. **Alignment Model: Alignment Model:** the overall purpose of the model is to ensure strong alignment among the organization's mission and its resources to effectively operate the institution. Overall steps include: first, the planning group outlines the organization's mission, programs, resources, and needed support. Second, identify how these adjustments should be made, and lastly, include the adjustments as strategies in the strategic plan. Further more; According to (Jeilu, 2009/10) planning can be targeted at three major client levels based on primary clients: **Mega level/type /society as client:** Planning where the primary client and beneficiary is the society and the community. The educational systems or system parts (such as schools, course activities, or programs) are a means to societal ends. The approach defines current and future societal opportunities, requirements, and problems, then identify educational requirements for contributing to the genuine societal need. **Macro level/type/Organization as a client:** Planning where the primary client and beneficiary is the organization it self. The organization survival is paramount and that all planning must deliver organizational continuity, wellbeing and growth. **And Micro level/type/ Individual or small group**

as a client: Planning where the primary client and beneficiary is an individual or small group. Individuals are the primary focus and beneficiary of planning. Educational organizations might target students and their course-level performance, teachers or programs.

2.5 Strategic planning Processes (Steps)

The process of strategic planning indicates the major steps that are undergone in strategic planning. The steps that strategic planning process follows can be shortened or extended depending on the size of the organization, complexity of the programs, budget, time, capability of the staff, availability of information, etc. Based on the specific planning frame work, some steps could be skipped or shorted or else added, if necessary, without eliminating the fundamental planning questions facing the organization (CRDA, 2001). Fidler (2002]) in Gamage (2006) asserts that, the process of strategic planning should involve three conceptual stages: a strategic analyses, strategic choice, and strategic implementation followed by three action steps to include: deciding how to plan, deciding how to choose, and deciding how to and implement. How ever, in developing strategic plan for schools, the school leaders need to embrace the key elements of the planning process. This involves the following five managerial tasks;

Developing a shared vision to determine where the school is heading: Setting objectives- converting the strategic vision in to specific performance outcomes to be realized: .Developing the strategies- to achieve the desired outcomes: Implementing the chosen strategies- efficiently and effectively: Monitoring and evaluating the performance- initiate corrective adjustments in the vision, long- term objectives and strategies, in the light of actual experience, change conditions relating to new opportunities, threats and new ideas.

Further Kaufman and Herman (1991) categorized the essential steps of educational strategic planning under four major clusters: scoping, Data collecting, Planning, Implementing and Evaluation. . In addition, they describe the steps of the planning process which are included under each cluster. They also noted that each of the four clusters of strategic planning relates to the basic themes of strategic planning. The discussion they made on themes of strategic planning, clusters and steps of the educational strategic planning process is summarized in the table below.

Table1: Essential Steps of Educational Strategic Plan

Themes of educational strategic planning	Clusters	Steps of the educational strategic planning process
Rethinking	Scope	1. select the type & scope of strategic planning from three alternatives (Mega, Macro, Micro) 2. Identify benefits & values
	Data collecting	1. Identify visions 2. Identify current visions 3. Identify needs
Restructuring	Planning	1. Identify match and mismatches: integrating vision, beliefs, needs & current missions. 2. Reconcile differences. 3. Identify and select preferred future. 4. Identify mission. 5. Identify SWOTs. 6. Derive decision rules. 7. Develop strategic action plan.
Revitalizing	Implementation and Evaluation	1. Put the strategic plan in to action.

Source: Summarized from Kaufman and Herman (1991)

However, Kaufman (1995) restates the issue by making some modification. He said strategic planning framework has a number of functions, or steps starting with decision concerning the primary focus, or frame of reference. The modification that he made as decreasing the clusters to three: scoping, planning, implementation and evaluation and a number of steps from thirteen to eight by merging some of them. In addition to this, Lewis et al (1995) condensed the steps with the prior models. Thus, this model involves strategic analysis (What is the current position of the organization?): Strategy formulation (Where is the organization wanted to be?): Strategy implementation (How will the organization get to where wants to be?): and Strategic control (How

will the organization know when it has arrived?). More comprehensively, although various models differ based on their approaches, most strategic planning methodologies include SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), GTSM (Goals, Targets, Strategies, Measures), and environmental scanning of the organization. Educators developed various models of strategic planning. Forrojalla (1993) condensed the strategic planning process (steps) into three broad categories namely: Formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Therefore, however diverse models of strategic planning process exist, treating Forrojalla's planning process would be more manageable and common to all.

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

2.5.1 Strategic plan Formulation/ Preparation

A strategic plan begins most of the time with a mission statement, and all the organization's goals should support this statement. Most authors recommend a less structured approach to the initial planning processes. Regarding to this Cook (1988) in Peterson (1989) states that, "the best planner is based more on the collective intuition of the planning team than on so-called hard data." He argues planning teams to meet for at least 30 hours over three days for a time-on-task concentration at intelligence, energy, and emotion." Similarly, Hurt (1988) in Peterson (1989) recommends using several small groups to begin the planning process. Within these groups participants discuss, combine, and rank their goals for the district. From this one can understand that strategic plans are typically comprehensive, hence they should include every essential to a district's mission, and every one concerned with public education should participate in the planning process.

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

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

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

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

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

2.5.2 Strategic planning Implementation

Plan implementation is the process of transforming the plan in to action. Plan implementation is the true test of planning and also the difficulty party. The primary task of the wereda education planners/officials in the process of plan implementation is to organize an efficient system of information and

make the local communities aware of the objectives and strategy targets in order to obtain their support for the successful implementation of educational plans. They should also establish strategies for the implementation of the plan.

Regarding this, Forojalla (1993) state that, the administrative tasks in plan implementations are: public information, participation of other organizations, processes of implementation and plan elaboration. He also adds that plan elaboration mainly consists of reducing the plan in to competent units for action by carrying out activities such as programming, project identification, and formulation, and detailed time sequencing of project activities.

In supporting this idea, Pearce II and Robinson (1991) pointed out that, implementation of strategy involves the management activity of acquiring and allocating of financial resources in conjunction with the development of structures, and procedures necessary to put a strategy in to operation. Prior to implementation, strategies are only ideas. Principally, implementation involves the assessment of responsibility for the success of all or part of required resources. Implementation means put strategy in to action. According to Pearce and Robinson (1991), five variables are commonly considered to be critical features in the implementation of strategy: task, people, and structure, technology, and reward systems.

In addition, hurt (1988) in Peterson (1989) stated a strategic plan should be discussed and publicized before it is implemented. Thus: An opportunity to share the districts educational vision with the entire community: The plan also must find its way in to the district's budget and just its job description: The people responsible for carrying out the plan's various objectives should report their progress on at least a quarterly base.

Strategic plans should be for at least five years. They should be reviewed annually with a particular through reviewing at the end of the first year

A strategic plan after all, is not simply a document; it is a district's road map to the future .Its lines must always be true and clear.

The implementation stage is vital to the process of an organization. Regarding to this, Byars, et al (1996) argued that strategies that have been carefully formulated are little value if they can not be

successfully implemented. Thompson and Strickland (2001:2005) also confirmed that good strategy and good strategy execution are the most truthful signs of good management. Managers do not deserve a good star for designing a potentially brilliant strategy but failing to put the organizational means in place to carry out in higher- caliber fashion- weak implementation undermines the strategy's potential and overlays the way for short fall in customers' satisfaction and organizational performance.

Once of the best available alternatives has been selected, plan implementing bodies needs to be ready to make strategic plans to cope with requirements and problems that might be encountered in putting in to effect. While doing this, there are a number of preparation takes that should be carried out in order to make the successive procedures as smooth as possible. These pre-conditions of strategic plan implementation vary as scholars differ, for instance, Malan (1987) Stoner, et al (1995) identified the basic pre-conditions for implementation as: budgets, schedules, resources, and progress reports. Especially the later scholar has emphasized that plan and budget needs to be properly articulated in order for the plan to be implemented. This shows that, budget is essential to the planning process since the objectives and programs contained in the plan can not be implemented with out it.

On the other hand, Smith, et al. (1991) forwarded the following five rules as pre-conditions that organizations with successful implementation tracks records tend to follow:

The plans must be communicated to all employees whom it will affect: The idea/concept represented by the strategic decision must have a sound response and be a well formulated: Management must obtain commitment and involvement from employees: Management must provide sufficient resources for the strategic plan includes money, manpower, technical expertise, and time; and The management must develop an implementation strategic plan by setting goals and keeping a record of accomplishment.

Griffin (2000), on the other side, condensed the pre-conditions of strategic plan implementation as enhancing communication and ensuring consistency, revision, and updating: ensuring effective reward system and understanding the purposes and goals, and planning from this, it should be kept in mind that, everyone needs to understand that implementing strategic plan involves more than appropriate orders. Resources must be acquired and allocated as necessary before hand. Managers set up budgets and schedules for the actions they have decided up on, allowing them to measure progress in strategic

terms. They also assign responsibility for the specific tasks involved and set up procedure for progress reports and prepare to make corrections if deviations arise. In general, although the process of strategic plan implementation varies from organization to organization, the above models are found to be common and easily adaptable by many organizations.

2.5.3 Strategic planning Monitoring and Evaluation

According O'Brien and Dyson (2007), strategy evaluation is a complex socio-technical process involving high stakes, different type of uncertainty, multiple objectives and several stakeholders, with a significant amount of hard and soft data. Decision and Risk analysis is in our view, a powerful way of managing the complexities of strategy evaluation. It deals with both the content and process aspects of strategy evaluation.

Regarding to this Talesra (2002) stated that, a work plan schedule is the most effective instrument of continuous monitoring and feed back for implementation of plan. Regularly staff meeting should organize particularly to assess the implementation of the various as per the schedule. While evaluating the success of an instructional plan, it is not enough to evaluate it in terms of achievement of targets, but also in terms of participation of the various groups' creation of enthusiasm all round. It is said that "planning is permanent," a plan is not. If a plan is not generating anticipated results, it should be modified or discarded, if nothing emerges out of it. In the light of experienced gained the plans should be revised, modified and this much flexibility should be inbuilt in the plan mechanisms.

Evaluation is defined as "a process of analysis and control design to determine the relevance, effectiveness, significance and impact of specific activities and the degree of efficiency with which they are carried out" (Miron and Chinapah, 1990). This shows that, evaluation is an exercise to assess the success and/or failure of the planned objectives, program impact, and cost effectiveness. Monitoring on the other hand, is "...process where by the progress of activities is regularly and continuously observed and analyzed in order to ensure that the expected result is achieved". He also recommended that monitoring and evaluation could be carried out both by insiders (those belongs to the same organizations as the program managers) outsiders (external evaluators) in order to help decision makers and the other stakeholders to learn lessons and apply them in future programs.

2.5.3.1 Components of Monitoring and Evaluation system

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

2.5.3.2 Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation

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

Besides Glickman (1990) states that, a comprehensive evaluation can provide information regarding the success of instructional programs, but evaluation outcomes vary and it is important to recognize that the outcomes will determine which type of evaluation will be implemented. Glickman (1990) outlines the functions of three kinds of evaluation. The fidelity or implementation evaluation basically examines where the program took place as planned: the product or outcome evaluation determines achievement of objectives: and the serendipitous evaluation examines unforeseen consequences. It is important to select instruments that will measure what it is that you want to assess. Keeping in mind that decisions regarding instructional change should be made using multiple source of data.

As a whole, one can generalize that monitoring and evaluation consists measuring the status of an object or activity against an expected target that allows judgment or comparison by continuous collection and analysis of information. Once we have agreed upon the importance of monitoring and evaluation with the intent of assuring smooth implementation of plans by gathering empirical feedback to avoid problems that may arise latter on, the next question is who. What, how and when to monitor and evaluate plans.

Generally, we can understand that, monitoring and evaluation is fundamental in strategic planning process to know the status of the strategic plans and make the necessary adjustments if any. In addition, the unit has to be equipped with the necessary facilities and personnel so that it can provide reliable and immediate information to stakeholders. Finally, the documents should be carefully documented and distributed to the bodies timely.

2.6 Strategic Planning Cycle

Deferent writers and organizations use various approaches in their strategic planning process. The very first problem of strategic planning and management starts from the perception that strategic planning is a one-time process. Different people in different areas perceive that once the document is formulated it will work its own way to the implementation. But this is not so. Strategic planning is definitely a process involving a series of functions to take in to account.

The process of strategic planning and management follows its own path from the preparation of the plan to time where the strategy is implemented. Before an organization can develop a plan for change, it must first determine whether it currently stands and what opportunities for change exist.

According to Arizona (1998) model of strategic planning, institutions employ the planning steps as: through a process of asking and answering where the institution is currently, where the institution want to be how the institution will monitor its progress internally and externally. Similarly, Glueck (1998) employed the planning steps as: use the results of the internal and external analysis and customer identification to formulate the mission, vision, principal goals and objectives of the strategic planning is very vital consideration in the process of strategic planning.

Regarding to this, the Arizona model of strategic planning (1998), process elaborated as follows:

Developing vision: vision is a compelling conceptual image of the desired future, creating a vision help state agencies redefine how services are provided and prepare the organization to meet the demands of the future.

Developing Mission statement: Mission is a brief, comprehensive of statement of purpose of an agency of program or sub-program. The mission is part of the organization's identity, is all encompassing and rarely changes, is the ultimate rationale for the existence of the agency, program, or sub-program (Kuber&Milan, 1996).

Developing Organizational values

According to the Arizona model of strategic planning (1998), values are factors that drive the conduct of an organization and guide the development and implementation of all policies and actions. Values also service as criteria to guide decision-making at all levels of the agency, express common values that can be embraced by the whole organization.

Identification of strategic issues

Strategic issues are issues that should be addressed in the strategic period. Strategic issues do not necessary fall neatly with in the boundaries of a particular program: instead they often impact several programs or entire agency.

Developing strategic plan goals and objectives

Creating a strategy for any organization involves defining goals and intermediate and short-term objectives. Objectives flow naturally from goals- Be clear on the goals and out puts, make the "SMART" [specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic, and time-specific]. Goals are broad results wish to achieve over the long term. Goals provide a frame work for more detailed levels of planning and are more specific than the mission statement, but remain general enough to stimulate creativity and innovative. Goals describe the "to be" state (Louse, 1990).

On the other hand Lipton (1996) in O'Brien and Dyson (2007) define vision as, a combination of mission, strategy, and culture. Mission also defined as, the purpose of the organization, strategy as the base approach to achieving the mission, and culture as the value of the organization that support the purpose and strategy. Collins and Porras (1998) in O'Brien and Dyson (2007) also define two components of vision: 'Core identity' that consists of core values and core purposes, and 'Envisioned future' that consists of a vivid description of the organization, and a "Big Hairy Audacious Goal".

On top of these, the following steps/ issues of strategic planning processes: Vision, Mission, values, Strategy, and Goals, objectives and targets were employed that have common understanding by most of the authors' definitions in the planning processes.

2.7 Problems of educational strategic plan

Planning problems are easily left every where in the organization and distort organizational status quos. Problems in plan preparation highly affect successful plan execution. Educational strategic planning in developing nations is constrained by various factors which hold its success back. Farrel (1997) and Forojella (1993) identified the major problems of educational strategic planning as highly centralized (not participative), Lack of healthy communication, Command oriented, Lack of knowledge and understanding of planning by most of the officials, limited and short time given to prepare plans, Lack of adequate experiences, and inadequate arrangement for coordination. In addition, other researchers (Kumar,2002;Terry & Franklin,2002) found that the main obstacles of planning like inflexibility of the plans, lack of accurate information, resistance to change, lack of commitment, ambiguous objectives, reliance on the past happenings, lack of management support, lack of controlling technique, and time as cost factors as the major factors to effective educational strategic planning.

In the same manner, Griffin (2000), Koory and Medley (1987) discovered the major drawbacks of strategic planning as: it fails to anticipate emergencies, unexpected conditions may inhibit plan implementation, it can be so theoretical that political values are lost, reluctance to establish appropriate goals, less qualification of the implementing bodies, improper reward system, and dynamic and complex environment which they thought are planning problems of affecting quality of strategic planning in education in general. More comprehensive, problems of educational strategic planning as Dixon (1993) can be the result of lack of commitment to the planning process particularly among an organization's senior management: failure to set meaningful, verifiable targets and absence of clear aims for the organization as whole: resistance to change among middle and junior management and among the ordinary workforce: over reliance on past experience: poor and inflexible control techniques, lack of clear delegation in the organization: and lack clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult.

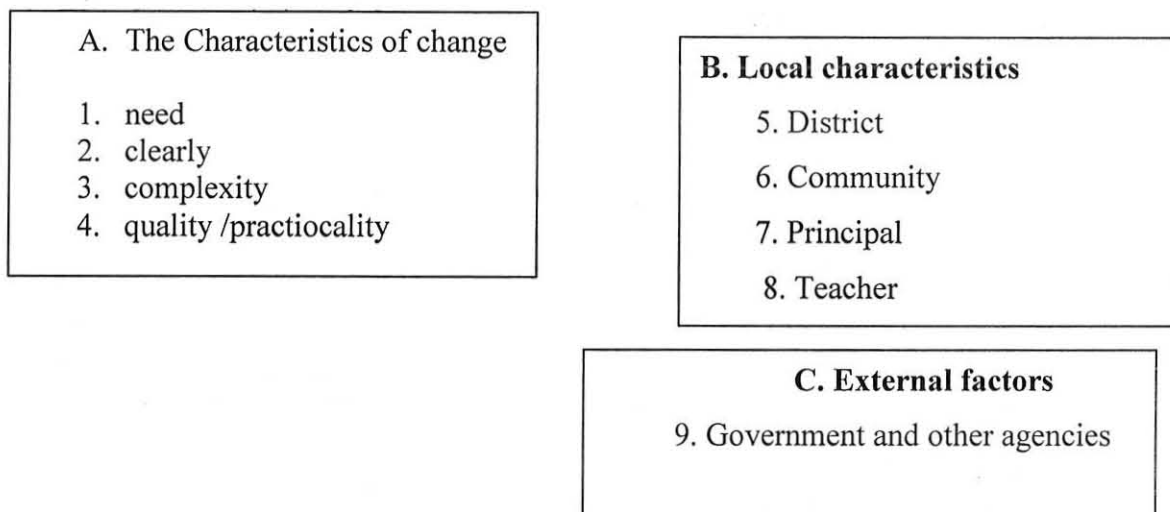
Problems in strategic plan preparation, which is the primary, set up of strategic planning process, is immediately felt in the subsequent phases of planning process. Hence, identifying the most common and frequently appearing problems will help to take immediate actions to minimize the risk from the successive stages. Problems in this area are multi in nature. In this regard, for instance (Forrojalla, 1993) Pointed that, economic, political, and administrative problems are the major factors affecting strategic plan preparation. In addition to this, Mussazi (1998) in Berara (2008) forwarded the main strategic planning problems as lack of skilled man power: attitudinal problem: inadequate and unreliable statistical data, and tendencies towards inflexibility and pressure of other works on the planners in addition to the priority mentioned problems, their to wind up, lack of in strategic planning, and the amount and kind of training that the planners have received and strong bearing on the strategic plan preparation.

Thus, although strategic planning problems are not limited only to these aforementioned ones, they are believed to be commonly felt problems particularly in educational organizations. Hence, the fact that identifying the symptom is part of healing the disease, taking intervention mechanisms to the already spelled out problems will highly simplify the consequences that could be brought about as a result of problems in strategic plan preparation. Mbua (2002) also argued that the failure to implement plans can result from variety of causes. These includes: shortage of financial resources, unanticipated bottlenecks in teacher supply or facilities, un foreseen imbalances between the flow of students and the educational capacity at different levels, and lack of political commitment will to implement the plan.

Moreover, regarding why planning failed, Fullan (1991) pointed that, understanding why most attempts at educational reform fail goes far beyond the identification of specific technical problems such as lack of good materials, ineffective in-service training, or minimal administrative support. According to Fullan, in most fundamental terms, educational change fails because of the assumption of planners and partly because of some” problems” are inherently unsolvable. One of the initial sources the problem is the commitment of reformers to see a particular desired change implemented. Commitment to what should be changed often varies inversely with knowledge about how to work through a process of change.

Fullan [1991] identifies three key factors that affect implementation as follows:

Figure2: Factors that Affect Implementation



Source: Fullan (1991)

On the other hand, Kaufman (1995) stated that, educational problems are persist and the same solutions seems to be reappear at a regular intervals is not because of amazing once we realize that in the past and in spite of good intentions, but we have failed to because of:

Link educational plan to the mega level: Plan on the bases of ends, not means: Integrate all the three levels [mega----macro----micro]: and Accept old ground rules and boundaries as changed to a new paradigm from a means to an ends orientation

2.8 Making strategic planning Effective

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

On top of this Talesra [2002] pointed out that, for an institutional plan to be effective, it is necessary to take in to account certain factors at various stages of implementation, thus are best utilization of existing resources, participatory planning, project approach, and realistic and practicality.

According to Kaufman [1992] a strategic plan is futile if not used. When educators, citizens, parents, stakeholders and learners feel they are not part of planning, the results usually will be ignored or thwarted. And the planners grow frustrated seeing their product sit on shelves. Every one those who will be affected by any changes and those who will influence them have to be part of strategic thinking and planning. This indicates that, the formal inclusion of all educational partners will help as to be responsive and responsible and to create a better future for tomorrow's child.

In addition Forojalla (1993) point out that, the main obstacles to the implementation of such a process of participatory planning in most African countries however, is the level of educational qualification and experience of local and institutional administrators. Local government councilors and officials are more often than not with out any concept of rudiments of planned national development, although this is rapidly improving. Nevertheless, a number of measures can be taken to guide planning at those lower levels.

Familiarizing all administrators with the essential concepts and techniques of planning

Providing a careful definition of functions, authority and responsibility of each planning organization

Preparing and issuing clear-cut terms of references and guide lines especially in relation to national objective and limitation of resources, and the detailed formulation of programs and projects as a bass for planning at the local level. It is by the use of hierarchy of planning, organizations can cop with the wide objectives of education.

Smith and others (1991) added the following measures to ensure the effectiveness of planning process: review objectives, environments: evaluate, adjust, and commits resources; develop organizational structure; introduce the changes; and re-evaluate the plan.

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

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

Among the various issues requiring higher attention and which are believed to enhance the effectiveness of strategic plan preparation and implementation: creating conducive environment to the different stakeholders take part in the process, and the strategic plan to be prepared by professionals with special skills and their experience, have strong acceptance on the quality of strategic plans (Bharadwaj & Balchandran, 1988). By participation, we mean that, the lower level implementers could effectively incorporate their needs in the plan and commit them for its successful implementation. Parkinson, et al. (1984) expressed the importance of participation in the strategic planning practices as: When a person participates, when he makes suggestions, when his views are given importance, he feels important. His self respect is enhanced. He, then, naturally, exerts himself in the best possible manners when members of group participate in its activities: the group devices the benefit of their combined knowledge, experience and skill, unnecessary conflict is avoided and the task are performed with maximum efficiency.

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

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

planning enables the planning process to focus on the commonly felt needs of the society through group involvement and eases effective strategic plan execution.

In addition to this, Forrojalla (1993), (Bharadwaj and Balchandran (1988) witnessed that effective practice of the preparation the strategic planning require relevant knowledge and/or experiences of planners. This implies that planners who have received good amount and kind of training in planning area could design varieties of techniques in order to address the most pressing needs of the society through effective and efficient strategic planning process. In clear terms, highly trained and specialized planning personnel are significantly important for effective strategic plan preparation and implementation, logically speaking, more experienced planners know the most common and frequently felt needs which should be addressed by the plan and problems encountered in this regard. This helps them to internalize the situations and design effective intervention mechanism from the very start to the last phase of strategic planning process.

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

2.9 Ethiopian Experience of Educational Strategic plan

Ethiopia emerged from civil war 1991. The government that replaced the communist regime introduces a new constitution 1994 to formalize the creation of a federal structure of government and organized the county's fist multipart election 1995. These momentous political reforms were accompanied by major changes in economic management policy whose impact has been reverse more than two decades of persistent decline in the real per capita gross demos tic product. The country's profound transformation creates promising condition for social progress. The optimism today about the country's future is probable, the government has made reduction the centerpiece of its development strategy and it has continued to advance the reform of governmental structure, function, and finances.

These contextual factors are highly pertinent for education. The Ethiopia's Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) is equivalent to what is in some other countries called a

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) envisions a key role for the education sector, placing on it the following expectations: progress to ward universal primary education; improvement in the quality of services through out the system: and the production of a trained work force that is responsive , in quantity and skills mix, to demand for educated labor in the country's modernizing economy. At the same time, governmental decentralization is opining the way for regional and local governments [and through them, local communities] to take greater responsibility, financial and otherwise, for managing their own affaires, including the delivery of social services such as education [Document of World Bank, 2005].

Regarding the history Ethiopian education, Seyoum (1996) stated that, any study in the educational system and educational plan implementation is time bound. Failure to use the results of study on time and impeding plan implementation would have negative consequence on the provision of education and attempts to reform. Sometimes, this leads to as attempts so far made at Ethiopia education reform, treating symptom rather than the root causes of the problem of education system.

In solving the education problem in terms of efficiency, access, quality and relevance of the education and training policy launched in 1994 incorporated a number of issues at different educational systems in general.

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

With this regard, a number of improvements have been observed. However these are with a number of problems and challenges, especially in the provision of secondary school education.

According to the Education Sector Development Program (ESDPII,2002) and (ESDP,III :25-27) lack of qualified teachers, low budget utilization, weak program management, and implementation capacity, lack of harmonization of donor and government procedures with respect to planning approving, implementing, procuring and reporting, high turnover of professional personals,

inadequate planning and management capacity at lower levels of organizational structures (weredas) and lack of text books of management systems were the observed critical problems in realizing educational objectives during the implementation of ESDPs I and II (1999-2004/05).

In addition, the rapid increase of students' enrolment in secondary schools brought another challenges to the attempt to improve access to quality education. Maintain the above issues, Ayalew (2000) stated that, "...social demand had exceeded supply and resources were being distrusted over a large population. The quantitative expansion was being achieved at the expense of quality."

Therefore, as aforementioned about the experience of Ethiopian education system reforms in the response to the questions of the system, there have been a number of challenges that hampered the implementation of educational plans and realization of its objectives. In light of this, socio economic structure and the extent of available resources in general have played a great role in delaying and constraining to solve the problems of the education system in Ethiopia.

Chapter Three

3. Research Design and Method

This section of the thesis dealt with research methods, sources of data, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, procedures of data collection, pilot-test, and methods of data analysis.

3.1 The research Method

This research employed descriptive because it enables to get the entire picture of the practice of strategic planning process. In relation to this, Seyoum and Ayalew (1989) assert that the descriptive survey method is more appropriate to gather several kinds of data of such a broad size. In addition Singh [2007] has pointed that, descriptive survey design is appropriate for it enables to identify the present conditions and points out the immediate states of a phenomenon.

As a result, the rationale for the selection of this research method is that, it is an appropriate method in obtaining information about the strengths and weaknesses of the current practice of strategic planning process and it enabled to find possible solutions through the analysis of variable relationships.

3.2 Sources of Data

In this study, the sources of data were REB, WEOs, Schools and PSTA. Though, both primary and secondary sources of data were employed to obtain information about the practice of educational strategic planning process in Tigray.

Primary Sources: were sources that help to collect first hand information concerning the practice of educational strategic planning process. Thus, REB (Core process owners, planners and experts), WEO (heads, Process Performers, Planners, and Experts), School Principals, Department Heads and cluster supervisors, and Parent Student Teacher Association (PSTA) representatives of the community.

Secondary sources; were help to strengthen the primary sources. Hence, strategic plan documents, implementation reports, operational plan documents, and statistical data of the research areas were the major source of the study.

3.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Out of the total 7 Zones of Tigray, the study comprise 3 Zones (these: Southern Zone, South-Eastern Zone, and Mekelle Zone), 7(50%) Woredas out of 14 (these : South Wereda (Mekelle), Hintalo-Wejerat, Enderta, Maichew, Raya-Azebo, Korem, and Alamata), and 7 secondary & 7 primary schools out of 26 and 522 secondary and primary schools respectively (2 schools from each Wereda) that are found in the sampled zones.

The three sample zones and fourteen schools were selected using simple random technique because almost all of the zones and schools of the Region have similar characteristics in their respective zones and schools. Moreover, the seven sample weredas were selected using stratified sampling technique (i.e. towns and semi-towns). Thus, South Wereda (Mekelle), Maichew, Korem, and Alamata) referred as towns and Hintalo-Wejerat, Enderta, and Raya-Azebo referred as semi-towns. This stratified sampling technique helps in the assumption that, access of resources, experienced personnel, access of facilities etc will may make it difference between towns and semi- towns.

In order to make the study more comprehensive and gather data from different sources, the study employed different respondents. Hence, 3 Core process owners and 2 planners and experts from TREB, 7 WEO Heads, 21 Process performers (3 from each Wereda) and 14 planners and EMIS experts from WEOS, 14 school principals & 7 PSTA representatives of the community has employed using purposive (judgmental) sampling technique, based on the general consideration that they would have adequate information about the practice of educational Strategic Planning process in their respected weredas.

Further more, 42 (60%) 6 from each Secondary school, 21(4.2%) 3 from each primary school Department heads, 21 staff members of the WEO and 20 cluster supervisors were employed in the study using simple random sampling technique. This simple random sampling technique has chosen, because it provides an equal chance for each respondent from the target population to be selected as a sample of the study.

Generally, 172 respondents were employed in this study (i.e., 12 for interview and 160 for questionnaire).

Table 2: Sample of Zones & Woredas

No	Sample Zones	Total no .of Woredas in the sample Zones	No. of sample Woredas taken from the sample Zones	Name of sample Woredas taken from the sample Zones	No. of sample Schools taken from sample weredas	No.of WEOs Respondents	No. of Respondents from sample schools		
							Principals	Dept. Heads	Supervisors
1	Mekele Zone	2	1	- Dehub Woreda	2	9	2	9	2
2	South-East Zone	4	2	- Enderta	2	9	2	9	4
				- Hitali-Wejerat	2	9	2	9	4
3	Southern Zone	8	4	- Maichew	2	9	2	9	2
				- Raya-Azebo	2	9	2	9	4
				- Korem	2	9	2	9	2
				- Alamata	2	9	2	9	2
Total	3	14	7		14	63	14	63	20

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

For this study the instruments used to gather data were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. With respect to this, Creswell (2003) states that employing multiple data collection instruments help the researcher to combine, strengthen and amend some of the inadequacies and for triangulation of the data. Thus, questionnaires were used as the main data gathering instruments where as semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used to enrich the data obtained through questionnaires. Further, in order to make it clear for the respondents, both the questionnaires and interviews were first prepared in English and then they have translated in to Tigrigna language

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Most of the time questionnaire is used to gather data for descriptive survey method. Though in order to gather appropriate information about the strategic planning processes of Tigray National Regional

State, the researcher employed questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument because, according to Koul (2008), it is easier and simple for respondents to answer within short period of time and allows responding to questions confidentially. Hence both closed ended and few open ended items were set for WEOs and school administrators having five points of Likert scale alternative responses ranging from very poor to very good. The five rating scale points were helped respondents to choose one option from the given alternatives that best interest with their view. The open ended items were also enabling to the respondents and opportunity to explain their opinions, perceptions, problems, and to suggest solutions related to the practice of strategic planning process.

3.4.2 Interviews

In order to gather information regarding the participation of stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of educational strategic plans, semi- structured interviews were employed for REB and PSTA.

3.4.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis were employed to gather necessary information about the practice of strategic planning process to strengthen the data obtained through questionnaires .Accordingly, strategic plan documents, implementation reports, operational plan documents, statistical data and other related materials were employed. With respect to this, Best and Kahn (1989) point out that document analysis were important and relevant sources of data and useful in yielding information and exploring educational practices.

3.5 Procedure of Data Collection

Before the actual data gathering process was carried out, a pilot test was employed on Adigudem Woreda .The purpose of this pilot test was to make some necessary modification on the items that could help to collect data for the actual research and to test the degree to which instruments actually measure what they were supposed to measure (content validity) and internal consistency (reliability). In order to check the validity of the questionnaire items, firs the thesis advisor was commented and then two MA colleagues were also commented to validate the items. Hence some corrections were made based on the comments. Similarly, to measure the reliability, the questionnaires were distributed to 8 WEO officials and 12 school administrators randomly. Thus, some corrections and modifications were made particularly to school respondents' questionnaires with regard to monitoring and evaluation. Based on the feed backs obtained, four questions which lacked clarity for

respondents were improved, two questions that were redundant were withdrawn, and two relevant new questions were added.

The reliability of the questionnaires was finally checked by using Guttman split-half technique of internal consistency. The questionnaires designed to be filled by WEO and School respondents have got reliability coefficient of 0.86 and 0.79 respectively. Hence, in both cases the results indicate high reliability of the questionnaires.

Furthermore, before the actual questionnaires were distributed for data collection in the sample woredas, in order to get permission and support for the study, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and how to fill the questionnaires by themselves. Next the researcher arranged time and place for the distribution and collection of questionnaire papers, conducts of interviews and for check document analysis.

Hence, the questionnaire papers were distributed to respondents by the researcher himself at their respective offices and after four days stay, the researcher have got permission to collect the feedbacks of the questionnaire papers. On the other hand the researcher was conducted interviews with REB Process owners and planners and PSTA until the questionnaires were filled by respondents. Then the researcher has collected the questionnaire papers and finally, the researcher carried out an investigation of the WEOs strategic plan documents.

3.5.1 Ethical consideration

Efforts were made in order to make the research process professionally ethical. Thus, the researcher had tried to clearly inform the respondents that the purpose of the study is purely academic and confirmed that respondents' responses would be protected. In addition, respondents were talked about any of their responses were not personalize during data analysis and interpretation.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

In this study, percentage, weighted mean, chi-square test and t-test were used as statistical tools followed by discussion of the most important points. After the questionnaires were collected, first tallied and then tabulated in tables and structured so as to make it manageable for analysis by using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The questionnaires were containing 68 items for WEOs and School administrator respondents and these items were measured more of attitude based concepts by using likert scale from “Strongly agree (5)” to “Strongly disagree (1)” and “Very serious (5)” to “Not observe at all (1)”.

The researcher also employed interviews for REB Process owners and planners and PSTAs having 13 items. Moreover, the data gathered through open –ended items, interviews, and document investigations were analyze through descriptive narration for the purpose of triangulation.

According to Kumar (1996), percentages were used to analyze the frequency of individual responses that were gathered with the help of different question items. Hence percentages play important role when two or more responses of samples are being compared. Moreover, the researcher was employed chi-square (χ^2) when the data were presented in counts and frequencies and appear to be nominal and ordinal in nature whereas, for these measured at interval t-test was used. Hence, Chi-square and t-test are used to test statistical differences in the perceptions of different groups of respondents at 0.05 significance levels or 95 confidence levels.

In order to make the interpretation easier, and to avoid unnecessary complexities, the response categories having five scale (5 to 1) were rated to four levels these were: very poor (0.00-1.25), poor (1.26-2.50), good (2.51-3.75), very good (3.76-5.00) for Chi-square tests.

Similarly, for the t-test analysis, not at all observed (0.00-1.25), observed but not serious (1.26-2.50), very serious (2.51-3.75), and extremely serious (3.76-5.00) were employed. This was done it is because.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION

This chapter covers presentation and analysis of data obtained from various respondents regarding the practice of educational strategic plan in Tigray National Regional State.

4.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Although planning is mainly a managerial activity, individuals who were assumed to have direct and/or indirect exposure to planning activities in addition to the managers, were data sources of the study. These sources included WEO (Heads, Process performers, Planners & Experts) and school administrators (Principals, Department Heads and Supervisors) of Secondary and Primary schools. In order to gather the necessary information for the study, 160 copies (97 for school respondents and 63 for WEO respondents) of questionnaire items were distributed. However, all the distributed questionnaire items were not fully filled in and returned to the researches, though the total rate of return was 152 (95%). Specifically, among the 97 questionnaire items distributed for school respondents, 92 (94.84%) and among 63 for WEOs 60 (95.23%) was collected.

As can be seen from Table 3, among the total respondents involved in the study, 134 (88.16%) and 18 (11.84%) of the respondents were males and females respectively. It can also be observed that the degree of female participation decreases as we move up to REB the region. This shows that there is still gender gap which is common problem in almost all levels of the education centers.

Table3: Characteristics of Respondents

No	ITEMS		RESPONDENTS							
			WEOs		School Respondents					
					Principals		Dep Heads		Super Visors	
f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%			
1	Sex	Male	50	83.33	11	78.57	53	91.37	20	100
		Female	10	16.66	3	21.42	5	8.62	-	-
		Total	60	100	14	100	58	100	20	100
2	Age interval	<25	-	-	-	-	1	1.72	-	-
		26-38	34	56.66	6	42.85	32	55.17	10	50
		39-45	16	26.66	3	21.42	18	31.03	6	30
		46-55	8	13.33	2	14.28	6	10.34	4	20
		>55	2	3.33	3	21.42	1	1.72	-	-
		Total	60	100	14	100	58	100	20	100
3	Educational qualifications	MA/MSC/MED	1	1.66	1	7.14	-	-	-	-
		BA/BSC/BED	46	76.66	13	92.85	42	72.41	20	100
		Diploma	13	21.66	-	-	13	22.41	-	-
		Certificate	-	-	-	-	3	5.17	-	-
		Total	60	100	14	100	58	100	20	100
4	Field of Specialization	Edu. Planning	4	6.66	10	71.42	-	-	-	-
		Pedagogy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Curriculum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Others*	56	93.3	4	28.58	58	100	20	100
		Total	60	100	14	100	58	100	20	100
5	Total Year of Service	1-5	4	6.66	2	14.28	3	5.17	3	15
		6-10	8	13.33	2	14.28	10	17.24	3	15
		11-15	16	26.66	8	57.14	9	15.51	6	30
		16-20	14	23.33	1	7.14	15	25.86	4	20
		>20	18	30	1	7.14	21	36.2	4	20
		Total	60	100	14	100	58	100	20	100

As shown in Table 3, the involvement of females in WEOs was only 10 (16.66%), likewise in schools only 3 (21.42%) Principals and 5 (8.62%) Department heads were females and there was no female supervisor. This shows that the participation of females were almost insignificant even in the front line implementers of educational plans.

However, lack of meaningful participation of females in various decision making positions is not a surprise in countries like Ethiopia where there has been male dominating culture, and where educational opportunities have relatively been accessible more to males. In supporting this, Emebet

(2003) and MOE (2005) witnessed that, “participation of females in Ethiopian Education had been low resulting in their lower rate of employment which could be due to serious economic deprivations, unreasonable load of house hold chores, school distance, early marriage, by abduction and pregnancy”. To this effect, lack of female participation could result in failing to incorporate their needs in the plans that would help to address the major issues of entire female population of the potential stakeholders.

Regarding to the age limits of respondents, a large proportion was found in the age interval of 26-38 years and above although there were few in the age below 25 years. Statistically, 56.66% WEOs, 42.85% principals, 55.17% Department heads, and 50% supervisors were found in between 26-38 years. This implies that the managerial officials in the WEOs and schools of Tigray Region State seem to have been occupied by well experienced individuals who could do their best for the preparation and implementation of educational strategic plans.

From this one can infer that the main plan implementers (principals, department heads, and supervisors) and WEOs officials were found in the age group of 26-38 years which would show that the majority of the strategic plan implementers were in the productive age level that could highly help effective strategic plan preparation and implementation if properly coordinated.

On top of this, Table 3 revealed that, only 1 (7.14%) secondary school principals and 1 (1.66%) WEO officials were second degree holders whereas 46(76.66%) of WEOs officials, 13 (92.85%) secondary school principals, 42 (72.41%) department heads, and 20 (100%) supervisors were first degree holders. More over, 13 (21.66%) of WEO officials and 13 (22.41%) department heads were diploma holders. Thus, from these data one can infer that the majority of educational planners and experts did not have the qualification expected to the position. More importantly, no respondent in the study had certificate.

Further, regarding respondents' field of specialization, the data shows that 56 (93.3) of WEO officials, 4(28.58%) principals, 58(100%) department heads and 100% supervisors of the respondents' field of study was not related to the position they were assigned. It was indicated that they were not attended in either educational administration, pedagogical science or curriculum rather they were attended fields like Geography, Physics, Biology, Mathematics, English, Chemistry,

Amharic, History, Physical Education and Sports and so forth that were not have related close relations with their current positions. This may show that educational leaders, planners, experts did not have the required knowledge and skill how to manage organizations and lead employees in preparing and implementing the strategic plans.

Besides, as shown in table3, the total service of years of the majority WEOs officials, 18 (30%), and 21(36.2%) of department heads were above 20 years service. From this, it can be interred that the largest proportion falls in the relatively highest years of services (>20 years).

Hence, it seems that TREB has good number of well experienced officials that could have better understanding on how to prepare and/or implement the educational strategic plans effectively.

On the other hand, the data indicates that, majority of 8(57.14%) principals and 6 (30%) of supervisors were in the range of 11-15 years.

4.2: Analysis of the Practice of Educational Strategic plan in Tigray Region

This part of the chapter presents the analysis of the data obtained from questionnaires, interviews, and document inspections. The analysis has been done between two groups these were WEOs as one group and School administrators as the other group.

The analysis has also categorized under six major categories for discussion such as: commitment of WEO heads, stakeholders' participation, adequacy and utilization of resources, competency of WEO heads and planners, plan monitoring and evaluation, and major challenges that encountered in strategic planning processes.

4.2.1: Preconditions of the Success of strategic planning Process

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

In order to examine the availability and adequacy of there basic pre-conditions in various levels of the region, responses were obtained using the five point of Likert type scale ranging as very poor (1), poor (2), medium (3), good (4) and very good (5). Following this the mean value for t- test and percentage for chi-square test for every item were calculated and made ready for interpretation. In order to test the statistical differences between the two independent groups of respondents, WEO (heads, planners, process performers, experts) and school respondents (principals, head departments and supervisors) at alpha 0.05 level of significance was employed.

4.2.1.1 Commitment Of WEO heads in the Practice of Strategic Planning

Leadership is common thread which runs through the entire process of translation of strategy in to action process or performance resulting actions. Motivational leaderships concentrate on achieving goals that can recognizes human dynamics.

Table4: Responses on Commitment of WEOs in the Practice Strategic Planning

No	Items	Rating scale											X ²
		Woreda=60						School=92					
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Degree Of WEO heads to take prime initiative	f	-	18	22	14	6	6	30	12	22	22	17.62
		%	-	30	36.7	23.3	10	6.5	32.6	13	23.9	23.9	
2	Availability of planning team	f	8	30	10	10	2	16	38	25	10	3	3.63
		%	13.3	50	16.7	16.7	3.3	17.4	41.3	27.2	10.9	3.3	
3	The institution has had strategic planning practices	f	2	10	20	20	8	6	30	28	24	4	8.63
		%	3.3	16.7	33.3	33.3	13.3	6.5	32.6	30.4	26.1	4.3	
4	Promotion have been given to the planning team	f	6	22	16	14	2	14	45	15	15	3	4.81
		%	10	36.7	26.7	23.3	3.3	15.2	48.9	16.3	16.3	3.3	
5	Participation of stakeholders and professionals	f	8	28	14	8	2	18	34	21	16	3	2.01
		%	13.3	46.7	23.3	13.3	3.3	19.6	37	22.8	17.4	3.3	
6	Training have been given to planners	f	9	24	18	7	2	20	42	20	8	2	2.66
		%	15	40	30	11.7	3.3	21.7	45.7	21.7	8.7	2.2	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square D f= 4 Value = 0, 05 χ^2 CV=9.49

In table 4 item 1 depicts, 22 (36.7%) office respondents revealed the commitment of the WEO heads in the practice of strategic plan is medium whereas of school respondents scored as poor. In order to test the statistical difference among the responses of respondents, chi-square test (χ^2) is applied. The calculated chi-square test (χ^2) is 17.62, which is greater than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, which shows there is a statistically significant difference between the responses of respondents. However, the interviews confirmed that the WEO heads are not as such as committed in dealing with strategic planning activities.

From this it is safe to conclude that the top management of the WEOs was not committed in the practice of strategic planning as required. It is known that with out commitment of leaders, strategic plan preparation and implementation is unimaginable.

Similarly regarding the availability of effective planning team (item 2) majority of the respondents confirmed as poor thus, 30 (50%) and 38 (41.30%) of office and school respondents respectively proved that there was no effective planning team in the WEOs. In order to test the significance difference among the responses of respondents, chi-square test (χ^2) is applied. The calculated chi-square test (χ^2) is 3.63, which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, there was no significance of difference between the responses of respondents.

Therefore, this finding of the study is in agreement with MOE (2005) in that: at the regional level and even more so at zone and wereda levels, capacity has been a serious problem with a shortage of qualified manpower resource and high turnover and staff posts left unfilled, and with the situation being much more serious in the less developed regions. Efforts to develop staff capacity have meet with the problem of trained staff leaving their posts since training enabled them to secure more attractive employment to a different place. Furthermore, Thompson and Strickland (2001) argued that, for effective strategic plan preparation and implementation, staffing the organization is paramount. This includes putting together a storing management team, and recruiting and retaining employees with the need, experience, technical skills, and intellectual capital. This may affect the whole process of the strategic planning.

On the other hand regarding the practice or trend of strategic planning (item3), 20 (33.3%) of office respondents revealed as good and medium, and 28 (30.4%) and 30 (32.6%) school respondents confirmed as medium and poor respectively. The calculate chi-square test (χ^2) is 8.63, which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, there is no significance of difference between the responses of respondents. More over, the responses of interviews and analysis of strategic plan documents revealed that all the WEOs under the study had developed five years strategic plans. This implies, in the WEOs there is a practice and trend of formulating strategic plan.

Regarding Stakeholders and professionals participation (items 4), the extent of training has been given to educational planners (item 5), and the extent of motivation has been given to the planning

team (item 6), majority of both of the respondents confirmed as poor. Statically, 22(36.7%) office and 45 (48.9%) school: 28(46.7%) office and 34 (37.0%) school; and 24 (40%) office and 42 (45.7%) school respondents revealed that it was poor for the items 4, 5, and 6 respectively. The calculated chi-square test (χ^2) is also indicated from 2.01- 4.81 which all are less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, this shows there was no significance of difference among the opinions of respondents.

Thus, stakeholders and professionals did not participate/consulted in the practice of strategic plan; educational planners had not got training ahead how to prepare strategic plans and were not promoted to realize the plans effectively. This implies that, the woreda education heads are not committed or ready enough in the practice of strategic planning.

4.2.1.2 Competence of WEO Heads and Planners in the Preparation of Strategic Plan

The competence of WEO heads and planners in the effective preparation of strategic plans is an essential element in planning process. If educational leaders having no or little commitment, their strategies may not be able to achieve the organization's objectives as it intended and it is less likely that the educational strategic plans successfully prepared unless the educational leaders are highly committed to its preparation. Therefore, this part deals with the competence of WEO heads' thinking in the preparation of educational strategic plans.

Table 5: Responses on the WEOs and Planners Competency in the preparation of strategic plan

No	Items	Rating scale											X ²
		Woreda=60					School=92						
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Competency of WE heads and/or planners to absorb new information	f	12	24	14	8	2	8	48	28	5	3	7.93
		%	20	40	23.3	13.3	3.3	8.7	52.2	30.4	5.4	3.3	
2	Ability of WE heads to create new strategies to move in new direction	f	4	34	10	10	2	10	46	12	22	2	2.37
		%	6.7	56.7	16.7	16.7	3.3	10.9	50	13.0	23.9	2.2	
3	The strategic plan preparation starts with SWOT analysis	f	2	26	12	10	10	4	53	17	13	5	6.31
		%	3.3	43.3	20	16.7	16.7	4.3	57.6	18.5	14.1	5.43	
4	Extent of action plans that contains a time frame for completion of plans	f	4	6	12	18	20	4	16	38	24	10	16.17
		%	6.7	10	20	30	33.3	4.3	17.4	41.3	26.1	10.86	
5	Extent of action plans that indicates responsible body	f	4	6	10	20	20	5	12	33	33	9	15.71
		%	6.7	10	16.7	33.3	33.3	5.4	13.0	35.9	35.9	9.8	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square df= 4 Value = 0, 05 χ^2 CV=9.49

In Table 5 item 1, the majority 24(40%) of office and 48 (52.2%) of school respondents expressed that WEO heads have poor competence to absorb new information. Similarly, Since the calculated chi-square value ($\chi^2=7.93$) is less than the critical value, there is no statistical difference between the opinions of the office and school respondents regarding the capability in absorbing new information. Besides the interviews also confirmed that, educational leaders of the WEOs couldn't absorb any new information that it could involve employees, rather they repeat

the past experiences. Hence, this finding is in favor of the assumption of Davis Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) that, strategic leadership occurs in an environment embedded in ambiguity, complexity and information overload. It is important strategic leaders to recognize new information analyze it and apply it to new of comes: leaders need the ability to learn.

Similarly, as it indicates in item 2, majority office and school respondents reported that, WEO heads have poor competence to create new strategies to move in new direction. Statistically, 34(56.7%) office and 46 (50%) school respondents confirmed it poor. And the calculated chi-square ($\chi^2=2.37$) value was not exceed the critical value, there was no significant of difference observed between the respondents. Hence we can conclude that the opinions of office and school respondents were the same in that the competence of WEO heads to create new strategies in order to move in to new direction is weak.

On the other hand regarding SWOT analysis (item3), majority of 26(43.3%) office and 53(57.6%) school respondents confirmed that, strategic plan preparation was not started with the clear SWOT analysis, thus, it is poor. The calculated chi- square value ($\chi^2=6.31$) which is less than the critical value also indicates that, there is no significant of difference observed from the data. Thus, it shows the opinion of both respondents was the same.

Finally, regarding the extent of action plans that contains a specific time frame for completion of the plans (item4) and the extent of action plans that indicates the responsibility of the implementers (item5), majority of the respondents revealed that very good and medium for (items 4, 5 respectively). The calculated chi- square value (χ^2) indicates 16.17 and 15.71 for items 4 and 5 respectively which are greater than the critical value that describes there is a significant of difference observed from the data. As far as there is a difference among the opinions of respondents in the chi-square, however, one can infer that the respondents agreed on the range of very good to medium. Thus, the action plans contains a specific time frame for completion of the plans and indicates the responsibility of the implementers.

4.2.1.3 Competency of WEO Heads to Communicate with stakeholders in implementing educational strategic plans

Each stage of the planning process has to be seen in the mirror of implementation: meaning to say plan formulation and regulatory activities for its implementation ability have to go side-by-side if there is a desire for increasing the probability of realizing intentions through plans: plans should emerge from a comprehensive understanding and analyzing of the situation at an organization is operating and this is possible with the help of reliable, relevant and up-to-date information. Information relation to the status of an organization in relation to its performance, its communication with stakeholders etc, shows the track where the organization is found and the problems that are pervading this organization.

In Table 6 below, data with regarding communication of WEO heads with stakeholders were present: and consequently, discussions were made according to the procedures undergone in previous sections.

Table 6: Responses on the communication of stakeholders in the preparation of strategic plan

No	Items	Rating scale										X ²	
		Woreda=60					School=92						
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4		5
1	Awareness of the local communities to the goals, and strategies of strategic plans	f	6	15	24	13	2	14	40	32	6	-	14.17
		%	10	25	40	21.7	3.3	15.2	43.5	34.8	6.5	-	
2	Degree to translate strategies in to action plan	f	4	2	28	16	10	4	33	25	26	4	26.98
		%	6.7	3.3	46.7	26.7	16.7	4.3	35.9	27.2	28.3	4.3	
3	Degree of communication to every direction(top – down, bottom etc	f	6	11	18	20	5	12	36	25	19	-	15.39
		%	10	18.3	30	33.3	8.3	13.0	39.1	27.2	20.7	-	
4	Degree to align people and organization	f	4	32	18	4	2	15	41	29	6	1	4.19
		%	6.7	53.3	30	6.7	3.3	16.3	44.6	31.5	6.5	1.1	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square df= 4 Value = 0, 05 χ^2 CV=9.49

Item1, in Table 6, majority of office respondents 24 (40%) confirmed that, the local communities' awareness about the WEOs goals, strategies, and targets for the successful implementation of strategic plans was medium. On the contrary, majority of school respondents 40 (43.5%) expressed that, local communities awareness about the WEOs goals, strategies, and targets for the successful implementation of strategic plans was poor. Though, the observed chi-square value ($\chi^2=14.17$) is greater than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) the opinion of the respondents was not the same.

Furthermore, the interviews confirmed that local communities have not enough knowledge about the strategies and objectives of WEOS. Therefore, this indicates the local communities' awareness about the goals, strategies, and targets were weak for the successful implementation of strategic plans.

Regarding the competence of WEO heads to translate strategies to action plans (item 2), 4 (4.7%) office and 4 (4.3%) of school respondents asserted that they have very poor competence. However, Majority of office and school respondents asserted that as medium and good.

To test the significance difference between the two groups, chi-square test was applied. Thus the calculated chi-square value ($\chi^2=26.98$) exceeds the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$), this implies there is statistical difference among the opinions of respondents. The interviews also confirmed that after strategic plans were prepared regardless its quality, an effort has made to translate them in to actions.

Therefore, the response of the respondents regarding the competence of WEO heads to translate strategies in to action is accepted. Hence, the finding of this study is in agree with the assumptions of Davis, Ellison and Bowring-Carr (2005) that strategic leaders need to translate strategies in to action by converting it in to operational terms. This is a process that involves identifying a series of projects that need to be undertaken to move the organization from its current to its future state.

Item 3, in Table 6 indicates, majority 20 (33.3%) office approved that communication in every direction was good. On the other hand, 36 (39.1%) school respondents expressed that, communication in every direction was poor. Since the observed chi-square value ($\chi^2=3.383$) is not

greater than the critical value, there is no a statistical significant difference. Therefore, the responses regarding to the extent of communication in every direction: top-down, bottom-up, and across each sectors and department lines is rejected. Hence we can conclude that the opinions of the respondents are the same, however, by the open-ended questions respondents expressed that the communication to every direction was not as expected, that mostly top-down communication was more practiced.

Further respondents were asked whether the WEO heads have the competence in aligning people and organization (item 4). Accordingly, 32 (53.3%) and 41 (44.6%) of office and school respondents respectively revealed that, WEO heads have poor communication in aligning people and organization. The chi-square test ($\chi^2=4.19$) which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the opinions of office and school respondents. Thus, the finding of this study contradicts with the assumption of Davis Ellison and Bowring –Carr (2005) that, strategic leaders have the ability to align people and organizations. This means leaders should have the competence to encourage commitment through shared values need to understand themselves and the values they hold and be able to nurture quality communication.

4.2.1.4 Meaningful participation of stakeholders

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

More importantly, meaningful participation of the concerned stakeholders in the strategic planning enables the planning processes to focus on the commonly felt needs of the stakeholders through group involvement, and facilitates smooth strategic plan implementation with fewer resources but maximum efficiency.

Thus, under this section, discussions were made regarding the trend of meaningful involvement of potential stakeholders in the practice of educational strategic planning, by attaching the literary works of various scholars and studies made before in similar areas.

Table 7: Responses on the stakeholders' participation in strategic plan preparation

No	Item	Rating scale												Average mean	t-value
		Woreda=60						School=92							
		1	2	3	4	5	X̄	1	2	3	4	5	X̄		
1	Degree of stakeholders' (NGOs, GOs, private sectors, etc) participation	9	24	18	7	2	2.48	14	37	30	10	1	2.42	2.45	0.375
2	Involvement of school administrators in the WE' strategic plan	6	18	18	15	3	2.85	18	32	29	13	-	2.29	2.57	3.375
3	Degree of discussion made on the draft of strategic plan by the education sector community.	12	24	14	8	2	2.4	22	30	26	14	-	2.34	2.37	0.17
4	Stakeholders' feed backs are taken for improvement of the plan	6	22	18	10	4	2.73	12	38	30	12	-	2.45	2.59	2.137
5	Degree of understanding to all stakeholders about the goals of the plan	4	21	18	14	3	2.85	15	40	25	11	1	2.38	2.61	2.919

❖ = statistically significant at PValue = 0.05 ;x= the mean value, Df= 150, T-table value = 1.960

As indicates in Table7, item 1 is dealing with the involvement of external stakeholders (NGOs, GOs, Private sectors, Community) in the strategic planning preparation, both of the

office and school respondents confirmed that, the participation of external stakeholders was poor by indicating mean score values of 2.48 office and 2.42 of School.

. In order to test the significance of difference between the responses of the two groups, t-test was applied. The calculated t-test value is 0.375 which is less than the table value (1.960) at 0.05 alpha level and 150 degree of freedom that describes there is no significant difference between the mean score of the two independent groups. This indicates the office respondents have supported the ideas of school respondents on the participation of external stakeholders. Thus, the practice of strategic planning in Tigray Region lacks active involvement of external stakeholders (NGOs, GOs, Private sectors, Community etc).

Additionally, most interviewees (75%) have stated that the role of external stakeholders in the strategic plan preparation was so high but not encouraged through out its process: the fact that, their participation has almost been given less attention. However, (25%) of the interviewees have stated that there is participation of external stakeholders in strategic plan preparation.

Despite of this, the interviewees have recommended that participation should be to the optimum levels since involvement of concerned bodies could highly facilitate strategic plan implementation. In support of this view, Parkison et al. (1984) forwarded the following on the significance of participation in the planning processes as: When a person participates, when he makes suggestions, when his views are given importance, he feels important. His self respect is enhanced. He then, naturally exerts himself in the best possible manner when members of group participate in its activities: unnecessary conflict is avoided and the task is performed with maximum efficiency.

Generally, in spite of the realities behind the benefits of stakeholders' participation in the strategic planning practices that have to be, it is possible to imagine that, from the discussion made above, external stakeholders involvement in the planning practices of various levels in Tigray Region has been reported poor by both respondents. This implies that, both the respondent groups have agreed that participation of external stakeholders in the educational strategic planning practices of Tigray Region was not to the level of expected although their views vary to some degree.

On the other hand item 2 in the same Table, regarding the involvement of school respondents (Principals, Department heads, Supervisors and Teachers) in preparing and implementing educational strategic plan, the office respondents showed that it was good by indicating the mean score value of 2.85, on the contrary school respondents confirmed that it was poor with the mean score value of 2.29. In order to test the significance of difference between the responses of the two groups t-test was applied. The calculated t-test value is 3.373 which is greater than the table value (1.960) at 0.05alpha level and 150 degree of freedom which describes there is significant difference between the mean score of the two independent groups. However, the data obtained from the interviews revealed that school administrators did not participate in the preparation of WEO strategic plans. Thus, although commitment is vital element in order to execute the strategic plans as effectively as possible, Tigray Region seems to lack it to varied degrees.

Regarding the draft of strategic plans that were brought for public discussion (item 3), the respondents were confirmed as it was poor with mean score of 2.4 by office and 2.34 by school. The calculated t-test value is indicated 0.17 which is less than the table value (1.960) at 0.05alpha level and 150 degree of freedom that describes there is no significant difference between the mean score of the two independent groups. This implies there was lack of local community involvement and less attention was given to these stakeholders.

(Item4) indicates, the incorporation of stakeholders' feedbacks for the improvement of the strategic plan, the office respondents indicated as good with the mean value of 2.73 where as the school respondents indicates as poor with the mean value of 2.45.

The calculated t-test value is indicated 2.137 which is greater than the table value (1.960) at 0.05alpha level and 150 degree of freedom which describes there is significant difference between the mean score of the two independent groups. The interviews also confirmed that in the weredas, stakeholders' involvement in the practice of strategic planning was inadequate. Thus, this finding is in agreement with the idea of Cunningham (1982) which stresses that there has been lesser participation of the concerned stakeholders in the educational practices of various levels in developing countries.

Moreover (in item5), respondents were asked to give their responses about, the extent of goals/objectives of the plans are understood to all stakeholders: thus, the office respondents showed that it was good by indicating a mean value of 2.85, whereas the school respondents were indicates that it was poor showing a mean value of 2.38.

The calculated t-test value indicates 2.919 which is greater than the table value (1.960) at 0.05 alpha level and 150 degree of freedom that describes there is significant differences between the mean score of the two independent groups.

Furthermore, the interviewees also confirmed that, the orientations were provided for stakeholders to make clear all this issues. Besides the researcher also observed that the vision, mission and goals of the REB and WEOs while posted in the place where any one interest can read. This shows that an effort was made to understand the strategic plans to different stakeholders. This may bring some contribution in the effective implementation of the strategic plans. Moreover, the responses of the interviewees and analysis of the strategic plan document revealed that all organizations have developed five years strategic plans for their organizations.

4.2.1.5 Adequacy and Utilization of Resources

Nowadays, almost all governments of developing nations have prioritized the education sector believing that it could bring overall nations' socio- economic developments. A brilliant strategic plan that is not supported by adequate and relevant resources may not be implemented at the expected quality and time frame. Likewise, the current Ethiopian government has given greater to the education sector. In order to run this prioritized program as effectively as possible, the necessary resource should adequately be available for their successful implementation. Resources in this context refer to the human resource, financial resource, and material resources which all together push the program forward.

Thus, this section presents whether or not the required resources were available both in quality and quantity and utilize properly for the smooth functioning of the strategic plans. Therefore, Table 8 reveals the adequacy and utilization of resources that the data obtained from various respondents.

Table 8: Responses on the Adequacy and Utilization of resources in the implementation of strategic plan

No	Items	Rating scale										X ²	
		Woreda=60					School=92						
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4		5
1	Adequacy of qualified manpower in wereda educations	f	4	28	17	7	4	12	44	20	15	1	6.00
		%	6.7	46.7	28.3	11.7	6.7	13.0	47.9	21.7	16.3	1.1	
2	Availability of material resources	f	4	26	20	10	-	11	42	25	14	-	1.55
		%	6.7	43.3	33.3	16.7	-	12.0	45.7	27.1	15.2	-	
3	Effective utilization of available resources	f	-	12	23	21	4	8	26	31	25	2	9.07
		%	-	20	38.3	35	6.7	8.7	28.3	33.7	27.1	2.1	
4	Amount of fund to implement the plans	f	8	26	19	5	2	10	32	30	17	3	3.44
		%	13.3	43.3	31.6	8.3	3.3	10.9	34.8	32.6	18.5	3.3	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square df= 4, χ^2 CV=9.49

Concerning the availability of qualified manpower resource (item 1), 28 (46.7%) office respondents and 44(47.8%) school respondents revealed that, the availability of qualified manpower resources were poor. The chi-square test(χ^2) was applied to test the significance difference of the variables. Since the calculated chi-square value(χ^2) is 6.00, which is less than the table value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, there is no a statistical difference among the responses of the two groups. Therefore the responses regarding the adequacy of qualified manpower resource is accepted. From this one can infer that, with out competent and qualified manpower resource in the education system it was very difficult to implement the strategic plans effectively and efficiently.

Regarding the availability of necessary material resources as it can be seen in (item2) of the above table, 20 (33.3%) and 25 (27.2%) of office and school respondents respectively proved that the amount of availability of material resources to implement the strategic plan were medium. On

the contrary, majority of 26 (43.3%) office and 42 (45.7%) of school respondents reported that availability of material resource to implement the strategic plan was poor. The calculated chi-square value (χ^2) is 1.55 which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels. This implies that, there is no statistically significant difference between the options of the respondents.

Hence, it was indicated that in the WEOs of Tigray region it was difficult to implement strategic plans due to scarcity of material resources.

However in reality, resources are the basic preconditions for every development project /plan and serving as a fuel for their successful accomplishments. In supporting this, Mala (1987), Smith and others (1991) describe that, every development program/plan should be provided with sufficient and proper resources including budget, manpower, materials, technical assistance and time in organizations need to attain successful implementation track record for their goals and objectives.

Regarding the effective utilization of resources (item3), 21(35%) of office and 25 (27.2%) of school respondents confirmed as good and 23 (38.3%) office 31 (33.7%) of school respondents responded that, the utilization of available resources in the WEOs was medium. Besides, the chi-square test value (χ^2) is 9.07 which is less than the critical value indicates there is no statistical significant difference between the respondents. Hence, we can conclude that, the opinions of WEOs and school administrators are the same regarding the effective utilization of available resources.

However, in relation to the effective utilization of available resources, for the preparation and implementation of the strategic plans the majority of interviewees said that, there is no serious problem in the resource allocation rather the utilization of available resources efficiently, thus, there was no proper utilization of resources such as budgets, facilities, human resources at the expected quality and quantity:

Finally, Concerning the availability of adequate fund or budget (item 4), majority of office 26(43.3%) and school 32 (34.8%) respondents confirmed that the availability of adequate amount of budget to implement the strategy was poor.

The calculated chi-square value (χ^2) is 3.44 which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$), that indicates there is no statistical significant difference between the opinions of the office and school respondents. Hence, the majority of the respondents indicate that the availability of adequacy of

budget was poor; this may affect the performance of the education sector to implement the strategic plans of the wereda educations, as Mbua (2002) argued that, shortage of finance is one of the causes of plan failures.

In sum from the above discussions, it can be felt that, the necessary resources (human, financial and material) are accurate shortages in the WEOs. Although resources are the most important elements, with out which plans are left as on paper document and lose their practical values. However, MOE (2005) promoted about financial utilization that contradicts with the finding of this study that financial planning and implementation has been improved from time to time.

Generally, we can understand from this study is that, resources (budget, effective planning teams) which are very essential for the effective implementation of the strategic plans were not as supposed to be. .Hence, it is less likely to realize the desired strategic goals in the worda education sectors unless the required resources are provided to the implementers at the right time.

4.2.1.6 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

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

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

In order to gather the necessary information on the actual practice of strategic plan monitoring and evaluation, respondents were asked questions on the extent to which the results of monitoring and evaluation be used to take corrective measures, and related issues as presented in Table 9 below.

As clearly depicted in Table 9, items 1, 2, 6, and 7 were rated as poor. Specifically, 34 (56.6%) office and 41 (44.56%) school respondents confirmed that, the result of plan monitoring and evaluation used to take corrective measures is poor (item 1).

Likewise, 22 (36.7%) office and 40 (43.5%) school respondents agreed that, the involvement of external evaluators in plan monitoring and evaluation was less (item 2). Similarly regarding item 6, 37 (61.7%) office and 55 (59.8%) school respondents revealed that, the monitoring and evaluation that carried out was not evaluate the impact that the strategic plan brought about. In other words both respondents confirmed that the monitoring and evaluation system was poor.

Regarding item (7), respondents were asked about the extent of monitoring and evaluation that evaluates the whole system of the education system. Accordingly, majority of the respondents confirmed as poor with 38 (63.3%) of office and 43 (46.7%) of school.

In order to test the significance difference among the responses of respondents, chi-square test (χ^2) is applied. The calculate chi-square test (χ^2) is 5.962, 5.009, 5.238, and 8.780, for items 1, 2, 6, and 7 respectively which all are less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, that shows, there is no significance of difference between the responses of respondents.

In supporting this, the data obtained from the interviews and document analysis indicates that woreda educations offices had problems to set results and ensure responsibility and accountability at full scale as the performance measure indicates. From this, one can infer that WEOs has problems to measure performances as per strategic plans. Thus, it seems that strategic plan monitoring and evaluation has not been given attention in the WEOs of Tigray Regional State.

However Chang (2008) argued that, plan M&E has been recognized as the mechanisms to determine the relevance, effectiveness, and impacts of the given plan. Furthermore, it is recommended to be carried out both by insiders (individuals who are indirectly influenced by the strategic plans) in order to help decision makers and other stakeholders learn lessons and apply them in future plans. Therefore, Tigray Region education sector seems to be seriously affected by its absence of effective monitoring and evaluation activities.

Table 9: Responses on the Monitoring and Evaluation in the implementation of strategic plan

No	Items	Rating scale										X ²	
		Woreda=60					School=92						
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4		5
1	Degree of M&E to take corrective measures	f	7	34	8	9	2	20	41	20	10	1	5.962
		%	11.7	56.7	13.3	15	3.3	21.7	44.6	21.7	10.9	1.1	
2	M&E is carried out by external evaluator	f	8	22	20	6	4	15	40	25	11	1	5.009
		%	13.3	36.7	33.3	10	6.7	16.3	43.5	27.2	12.0	1.1	
3	M&E is carried out by internal evaluators	f	4	8	28	14	6	4	12	32	28	16	3.700
		%	6.7	13.3	46.7	23.3	10	4.3	13.1	34.8	30.4	17.4	
4	M&E has been done on regular basis	f	2	11	22	20	5	4	30	34	20	4	5.667
		%	3.3	18.3	36.7	33.3	8.3	4.3	32.6	37.0	21.7	4.3	
5	M&E carried out after deviations occur	f	6	8	24	18	4	9	26	33	16	8	6.440
		%	10	13.3	40	30	6.7	9.8	26.3	35.9	17.4	8.7	
6	M&E is carried out to evaluate the impact that the strategic plan brought	f	2	37	14	5	2	8	55	24	5	-	5.238
		%	3.3	61.7	23.3	8.3	3.3	8.7	59.8	26.1	5.43	-	
7	Degree of M&E to evaluate the whole system of the education	f	4	38	4	9	5	10	43	21	10	8	8.8
		%	6.7	63.3	6.7	15	8.3	10.9	46.7	22.8	10.9	8.7	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square df= 4 Value, χ^2 CV=9.49

*= M&E= Monitoring and Evaluation

On the other hand for items (3, 4, 5), majority of the respondents rated as medium. Specifically, the extent to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators (item 3), 28 (46.7%) office and 32 (34.8%) of school respondents agreed as medium. Similarly, the extent to which monitoring and evaluation be done on regular basis (item 4), 22 (36.7%) office and 34 (37.0%) school respondents confirmed that as medium. Regarding item 5, respondents were asked to give their responses on: the degree to which monitoring and evaluation is carried out after deviations had occurred. Thus, 24 (40%) of office and 33 (35.9%) of school respondents were confirmed as medium.

The calculated chi-square test (χ^2) is 3.700, 5.667, and 6.440 for items 3, 4, 5, respectively which all are less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, thus, there is no significance of difference between the opinions of respondents.

Besides responses obtained from the interviewees in the above issues have witnessed, there was less regular plan following up, less/no involvement of concerned parties in plan monitoring and evaluation, and they claimed that the planners and/ or wereda education officials attempt to examine the extent of strategic plan accomplishments were after plans have resulted in under public dissatisfaction.

However, in reality, according to (Miron and Chinapah: 1990), the order of the risks that might be brought about a result of poor strategic plan preparation and implementation were: periodic strategic plan monitoring and evaluation is believed take early measures before problems happens, since it enables to follow the progress of the plans at every stage.

Therefore in spite of this reality from the above discussion, it generally seems that plan monitoring and evaluation in Tigray region has been given less attention which was due to lack of experiences of woreda education officials and scarcity of required resources.

4.2.1.7 Monitoring and evaluation in the performance measure of strategic plans

Table 10: Responses on the performance measure of strategic plans

No	Items	Rating scale										X ²	
		Woreda=60					School=92						
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4		5
1	The performance measure relates to the mission it represents	f	4	8	30	16	2	5	30	35	18	4	7.613
		%	6.7	13.3	50	26.7	3.3	5.4	32.6	38.0	19.6	4.3	
2	The performance measure relates to the goal it represents	f	2	8	26	20	4	4	30	34	20	4	8.089
		%	3.3	13.3	43.3	33.3	6.7	4.3	32.6	37.0	21.7	4.3	
3	The performance measure relates to the policy directions	f	1	9	20	22	8	4	31	33	16	8	11.818
		%	1.6	15	33.3	36.7	13.3	4.3	33.7	35.9	17.4	8.7	
4	The performance measure is possible to collect accurate and reliable data	f	9	24	18	7	2	15	42	23	11	1	1.568
		%	15	40	30	11.7	3.3	16.3	46.7	25	12	1.1	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square $df= 4$ Value, χ^2 CV=9.49

In the above table items (1, 2, 3), respondents were asked to give their responses regarding, the extent of performance measures relates to the mission, goals, and policy direction it represents thus, majority of both respondents confirmed it the performance measure was medium, in other words the performance measure relates to the mission, goals, and policy directions.

The calculate chi-square test (χ^2) is 7.613, and 8.089 for items 1 and 2 respectively which all are less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, that indicates there is no significance of difference between the responses of respondents. And the calculated chi-square test (χ^2) is 11.818, which is greater than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, that shows there is significance of difference between the responses of respondents. Thus, it can infer that, the performance measure of the strategic plans in the woreda education sectors were related to the mission, goals, and policy directions.

On the other hand, regarding (item 4), as indicated by both respondents, the performance measure that has been carried out to collect accurate and reliable data was poor. That is 24 (40%) of office and 42 (46.7%) of school respondents confirmed as poor. This indicates that, the performance measure has carried out to collect accurate and reliable data in the Region is weak.

The calculated chi-square test (χ^2) is 1.568 which is less than the critical value ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$) at alpha 0.05 levels, that implies there is no significance difference between the responses of respondents. Thus, the performance measures of the strategic plans of the woreda education sectors were not able to collect accurate and reliable data that is important to the education sectors.

4.2.1.8 Experience and /or Knowledge of planners for the Effectiveness of strategic planning

Planning is not a one shot activity it is a continuous exercise that requires collective knowledge and/ or experience of the plan actors. By knowledge it means that the planners should be necessary be equipped with the required planning know-how and skills which could make the strategic plans effective and achieve. In other word, planners who have received good amount and kind of trainings in planning field could design varieties of techniques in order to address the most pressing needs of the society using the knowledge and the skills they have. Similarly, planning experiences is significant important for effective strategic plan preparation and implementation. In other words, the fact that strategic involving a continuous activity, the output of one stage could serve as inputs for the subsequent stages: and individuals who are taking part in the strategic planning process could learn much as they spend more times in these activities. Moreover, experience is school by itself. In the Table below (Table 11), data with regarding the knowledge and/experiences of the currently existing practice and problems of preparing and implementing educational strategic plans in Tigray region are present: and consequently, discussions were made accordingly the following procedures undergone in previous sections.

As shown in Table 11 of item 1 regarding availability of qualified personal in strategic planning, the majority 24 (40%) and 19(31.7%) of office respondents were agreed as poor and medium respectively. Besides, 45 (48.9%) and 18(19.6%) of school respondents had responded as poor and very poor respectively. Accordingly the chi-square (χ^2) is applied to test the significance of respondents' responses. The chi-square (χ^2) result is 6.83 which is less than the table value at 0.05 levels ($\chi^2_{cv}=9.49$).The difference of the responses among the respondents is not significant. Therefore the responses, regarding the issue are rejected. However, it is believed that strategic plans can function so successfully if prepared by planners who have relevant and adequate planning knowledge.

Table 11: Responses on the Experience and /or Knowledge of planners for the Effectiveness of strategic plan

No	Items	Rating scale											X ²
		Woreda=60						School=92					
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Availability of qualified personal in strategic planning	f	7	24	19	9	1	18	45	18	7	4	6.83
		%	11.7	40	31.7	15	1.7	19.6	48.9	19.6	7.6	4.3	
2	Availability of continuous training for planner	f	10	25	13	11	1	16	38	27	9	2	2.84
		%	16.7	41.7	21.7	18.3	1.7	17.4	41.3	29.3	9.8	2.2	
3	Experience /or qualification of planners	f	14	22	12	10	2	14	46	20	7	5	6.39
		%	23.3	36.7	20	16.7	3.3	15.2	50	21.7	7.6	5.4	
4	Relevance of planners' academic back ground.	f	14	22	10	10	4	16	55	8	10	3	8.22
		%	23.3	36.7	16.7	16.7	6.7	17.4	59.8	8.7	10.9	3.3	
5	Familiarizing all administrators with the concepts and techniques of planning	f	2	28	9	17	4	10	35	27	17	3	8.86
		%	3.3	46.7	15	28.3	6.7	10.9	38.0	29.3	18.5	3.3	
6	Preparing and issuing clear – cut terms of references and guidelines in relation to national objectives etc	f	5	39	6	7	3	5	47	20	13	7	5.12
		%	8.3	65	10	11.7	5	5.4	51.1	21.7	14.1	7.6	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square df= 4 Value = 0, 05 χ^2 CV=9.49

As can be seen from Table 11 item 2, 25 (41.7%) and 13 (21.7%) Of office respondents confirmed that the availability of continuous training is poor and medium respectively. The calculated chi-

square value (χ^2 is 2.84) which is less than the table value (χ^2 CV=9.49). Hence, the deference of the responses among each opinion of the variables is not significant.

Regarding the adequacy years of planners' experiences in the strategic planning activities (item 3), respondents, 22 (36.7%) office and 55 (59.8%) school revealed that it was poor. The calculated value (χ^2) of the respondents is 6.39 which is less than the table value (χ^2 cv=9.49) at alpha 0.05 level, though the differences of the responses among each option of the variables is not significant. The interviewees also confirmed that, not only this planning experience was weak, but also the WEO planners were not seen while trying to share planning experiences with other zones, and weredas .However, most literatures repeatedly suggest that strategic plans which were practiced by experienced planners in relevant areas could result better outcomes than strategic plans prepared by non professionals practitioners with less or no strategic planning experiences.

Moreover, experience is a school by itself where individuals can accumulate a good amount and kind of operating skills. Further more, skilled, relevant and adequate academic knowledge in strategic planning /managing education with vast planning experience help the planners internalize the common needs of the society and design effective involvement mechanisms from the very start to the last phase of the strategic planning process.

Stressing this Forojalla (1993) has illustrated that, effective strategic planning practices require relevant and adequate planning knowledge and/or experience: and hence, the education strategic plans would result in desired outcomes if prepared by professional planners with special skills.

In summary, the discussions made above have brought the researcher to say that, the educational strategic planners' knowledge and /or experience in the planning and managing education were poor. That indicates the strategic planning responsibilities in TREB remain the task of individuals who have less knowledge and /or experiences. This agrees with the ideas of Bharadwaj and Balchandran (19880) saying that , educational strategic planning in educational institutions of developing countries generally lack highly trained specialized and well experienced personnel of higher administrative levels which were a must for economically efficient management.

Besides item 4 indicates, majority 22 (36.7%) office and 55 (59.8%) school respondents revealed that the relevance of planners' academic background to the strategic practice is poor. The calculated chi-square (χ^2 is 8.22) which is less than the table value (χ^2 cv=9.49).So the difference

of responses among each group is not significant. Therefore, the response regarding the relevance of planners' academic background to the strategic planning practices is accepted. Among the very pressing issues that various scholars recommended as significant factors for successful strategic planning activities were: the adequacy and relevance of planners' academic background and/or experiences in the related field (planning and managing education) is the major one.

Besides, responses obtained from the interviewees have also confirmed that the qualification of strategic planners mainly at WEOs was far to the planning and managing education. For instance, the education plans and resources mobilization program officers in most WEOs were qualified in Geography, Mathematic, Chemistry and so on who have no relevant training on educational strategic planning. Thus, this could be the case why both office and school respondents complained on the relevance of strategic planners' academic background as very poor and poor.

Finally, the extent of familiarizing all administrators with essential concepts of strategic plans (items 5) and preparing and issuing clear-cut terms of references with national objectives (item 6), both respondents confirmed as poor. The calculated chi-square(x^2) is 8.86 item 5 and 5.12 item 6 which are less than the table value ($x^2_{cv}=9.49$). So the difference of responses among each group is not significant.

Furthermore, this finding is in agreement with Forojalla (1993) stated that, the main obstacles to the implementation of such process of planning in most African countries however, is the local government councilors and officials are more often than not without any concept of rudiment of planned national development. Though, a number of measures can be taken to guide planning at those lower levels. Thus, familiarizing all administrators with the essential concepts & techniques of planning, providing a careful definition of functions, authority and responsibility of each planning organization and preparing and issuing clear-cut terms of references and guide lines especially in relation to national objectives and limitation of resources and detailed formulation of programs and projects. It is by the use of hierarchy of planning, organizations can cope with the wide objectives of education.

4.2.1.9 Educational strategic plans that address major policy issues

Table12. Responses on the Educational strategic plans that addresses major policy issues

No	Items	Rating scale											X ²
		Woreda=60					School=92						
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Mission identification in strategic plan preparation	f	4	6	8	22	20	4	12	32	28	16	11.27
		%	6.7	10	13.3	36.7	33.3	4.3	13.0	34.8	30.4	17.4	
2	Vision statement that provide a clear picture of the organization	f	-	6	8	28	18	4	7	33	32	16	13.5
		%	-	10	13.3	46.7	30	4.3	7.6	35.6	34.8	17.4	
3	Values are included that can be embraced by every employee in the organization	f	4	4	16	24	12	3	59	16	11	3	53.99
		%	6.7	6.7	26.7	40	20	3.3	64.1	17.4	12.0	3.3	
4	Goals that reflect strategic direction	f	-	4	10	36	10	1	15	38	32	6	18.98
		%	-	6.7	16.7	60	16.7	1.1	16.3	41.3	34.8	6.5	

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$: χ^2 =chi-square $df=4$ Value = 0, 05 χ^2 CV=9.49

Regarding the mission statement (item1) majority 22(36.7%) office and 32 (34.8%) school respondents confirmed as good and medium respectively. This might show that there is close similarity among both respondents. The critical value($\chi^2=11.27$), describes that there is significant of difference observed from the data. More over, the responses obtained from the analysis of strategic plan documents revealed that all the WEOs under the study has developed five years strategic plans and the mission statement is stated clearly in broad terms even though there is some sort of disparities among WEOs.

Therefore, this finding is in agreement with the views of (Kuber and Malan, 1996) states that, the mission statement is valuable tool in directing, planning, and implementing institution efforts. The mission describes customers and products or services. The mission is part of the organization identity, is all encompassing and is the ultimate rationale for the existence of the agency, program or sub-program.

Item 2 depicts, there is an agreement among both respondents regarding the formulation of vision statement that provides a clear picture of the organization. Statistically, 28 (46.7%) office and 33 (35.6%) school respondents confirmed as good and medium respectively. The critical value ($\chi^2=13.50$), describes there is significant of difference observed from the data. However, the strategic plan document analysis revealed that all the WEOs under the study have clearly stated the vision statement and it was brief enough to be memorable.

Regarding (item3), 24 (40%) of office and 59(64.1%) of school respondents indicate good and poor respectively, concerning the extent of values were included to embrace by every employee. The critical value($\chi^2=53.99$), describes there is statistical difference observed from the data.

More over, the responses of interviews and analysis of strategic plan documents revealed that in the five years strategic plans documents values were not clearly stated or included to embrace employees as required.

However, the values of organizations can promote employee excellence, describe the way customers should be treated, clarify expectations for quality performance and act as foundation for the mission and vision. In this regard, the Arizona model (2004) of strategic plans points out that, values were factors that drive the conduct of an organization and guide the development and implementation of all strategies, policies and actions.

Finally, regarding the extent of goals/objectives that can reflect strategic directions (item 4), majority of the respondents revealed as good &medium by office and school respectively. The critical value($\chi^2= 18.98$) which describes there is a statistical difference observed from the data. This indicates there is an opinion difference among the office and school respondents. However, since the respondents were agreed on the range of very good to medium, one can infer that, the strategic plan goals of the WEOs were support the mission, reflect strategic directions, and align with strategic issues.

4.2.10 Major problems encountered in the Practice of Strategic Plan

In order to ensure effective and efficient strategic planning practice, an intensive exploration of the major problems is necessary. This helps to take timely corrective measures and facilitate the way that brings to effective and efficient achievements of the desired results.

In this regard Table 13 presents the major challenges that are frequently encountered in educational strategic planning activities by ranging their difficulty levels from: not observed at all (1) to extremely serious(5). Thus, the respondents rated every item according to their levels of serious problems as Weredas and schools performed the realities.

Finally, for analysis purpose the calculated mean values were categorized: 0.00-1.25 (not observed at all), 1.26-2.50 (observed but not serious), 2.51-3.75 (very serious), and 3.76-50 (extremely serious problem).

Table 13 clearly depicted the opinions of the two categories of respondents on the existence and degree of the major barriers that would be encountered while practicing educational strategic planning in Tigray Region.

Table 13: Responses on the problems encountered in the practice of strategic plan

No	Item	Rating scale												Average mean	t-value
		Woreda=60						School=92							
		1	2	3	4	5	X̄	1	2	3	4	5	X̄		
1	Lack of meaningful participation of Stakeholders	2	10	14	22	12	3.53	-	17	19	32	24	3.68	3.6	-0.842
2	Failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets	18	20	12	10	-	2.23	23	27	23	18	1	2.38	2.31	0.842
3	Inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of the planners	-	10	12	26	12	3.5	2	10	24	30	26	3.73	3.61	-1.352
4	Lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult	14	22	12	10	2	2.4	16	30	36	10	-	2.43	2.42	0.184
5	Inflexible organizational structures in the woredas	22	19	11	7	1	2.1	7	43	37	3	2	2.34	2.22	1.60
6	Inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems	-	16	8	26	10	3.5	7	8	22	39	16	3.53	3.51	-0.165
7	Failure to obtain sufficient resources	8	8	8	28	8	3.6	-	15	28	29	20	3.58	3.59	0.108
8	Failure to follow the plan	-	10	12	26	12	3.5	1	14	13	38	26	3.8	3.65	-1.764
9	No incentives given to workers to embrace the new strategies	6	10	2	30	12	3.53	2	13	20	37	20	3.64	3.58	-0.585
10	Lack of coordination among regional, zone woreda education offices	13	21	13	11	2	2.47	24	28	24	15	1	2.35	2.41	0.662
11	Over-dependence on past experience	4	10	4	25	17	3.68	7	16	14	34	21	3.52	3.6	0.780
12	Lack of budget to implement strategies	3	8	10	29	10	3.58	3	17	21	26	25	3.57	3.57	0.053
13	Using Inadequate or unreliable data	6	10	2	30	12	3.53	2	13	20	37	20	3.64	3.58	-0.585
14	High turnover of expertise/heads	2	10	8	26	14	3.66	2	18	17	38	17	3.54	3.6	0.666
15	Failure to address policy issues (Vision, Mission)	18	26	10	6	-	2.06	18	33	23	13	5	2.5	2.28	2.52

*=statistically significant at $\alpha=0, 05$ of $Df=150$ $Tv=1.96$

As shown in Table 13, items (1,3,,6,7,8,9,11,12,13,14), both office and school respondents confirmed that as a very serious problems by indicating the weighted mean values ranging from 3.5-3.68 office and 3.52-3.8 school respondents.

In order to test the statistical difference between the respondents of the two groups (office and school respondents) t-test was applied. Thus, the calculated t-test value indicates between the range of -1.764 - 0.780 all of which are less than the t- critical values (1.960) ;which implies that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents at (Df =150,a=0.05, two tailed).

Further more, the interviewees assured that, the monitoring and evaluation system exists as a system in the woreda educations. However, according to them it was challenged by lack of professionals who can process the data and facilities. In addition from the interviewees the researcher understood that, there is lack of budget and poor utilization of available funds and budgets efficiently. From this discussion, it can say that, Tigray Regional State seems to have given seriously less attention in the above issues which would certainly ensures failure.

However, when workers are provided with incentives, they tend to develop motivation and exert their seemingly important potentials for the successful of strategic plan activities. Moreover, as communication/participation is the blood of an organization, it highly helps workers and stakeholders to concentrate the common goals of the organization and new strategies can effectively executed since it creates smooth relationships between and/or among workers, officials and/or stakeholders at various levels of the organization. Planning process basically undergoes preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation which all require higher attention. More importantly, plan monitoring and evaluation is the major step which helps to assess the progress and impacts that have been brought about as a result of the strategic plans. It is in this phase strategic plans have successfully been achieved and responses to stakeholders' satisfaction would be made. However, it seems that the educational strategic plan of Tigray Regional State lacks monitoring and evaluation which results failing to control whether or not its objectives are addressed. This might have possibly resulted in failing to follow the out comes of their strategic plans.

Therefore, the finding of this study is indicated against to the assumption of Cunningham (1982) that states, if the budget does not supported the plan, the system has little chance of accomplishment it, the planning effort becomes a paper system lacking both subordinates' respect and effort.

Strategic planning helps organizations to achieve the common felt needs of the serves users. This can be done through setting clear and achievable targets. Effective and efficient strategic planning practice basically requires adequate and relevant planning knowledge and/ or experiences of the plan actors. In other words, well experienced and knowledgeable individuals know the most commonly felt needs of the society that can be addressed by plans and they could design variety of techniques to address. Resources (human, financial, material, time ...) are basic preconditions for effective strategic planning practice with out with which plan lose their practical values. If the regions strategic plans fail to do this, failures could be their immediate facts. This can however, describe the realities in Tigray region.

In supporting aforementioned difficulties, Griff (2000) and McNamara (2008) witnessed the above mentioned difficulties as major barriers to successful practice. In addition, the interviews conducted with higher officials, planners and document inspections have also generally strengthened these difficulties as the most commonly felt barriers across weredas of Tigray region. Generally it seems that the practice of preparing and implementation of educational strategic planning in Tigray Regional State have been confronted with many problems and as discussed above even their degrees vary.

On the other hand, both respondents indicate that items (2, 4, 5, 10, and 15) were not identified as serious problems in the processes of strategic planning, though the mean values are ranging from 2.06-2.47 office and 2.34-2.5 school respondents. These items are failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets, lack of clear lines of authority, inflexible organizational structures, lack of coordination among the Region, Zones, WEOs and Schools, and failure to focus on addressing policy issues (Vision, and Mission). In order to test the statistical difference between the respondents of the two groups (office and school respondents) t-test was applied. Thus, the calculated t-test value is ranging from 0.184 -1.60 which is less than the t- critical values (1.960); which implies that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents (df =150, $\alpha=0.05$, two tailed). Besides, the interviews conducted with higher officials, planners and document inspections have also proved that in the wereda educations every body's duty and responsibility is stated clearly and he/ she knows his/her responsibility well.

CAPTER –FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the last chapter of the study where the summary, conclusions, and recommendations are presented. Before arriving at this point, the study has passed through various steps. In the process the study was guided by a core purpose of examining the current practice of educational strategic planning process in Tigray region with the following six basic research questions in mind.

1. To what extent the management of WEOs do have competency in the process of strategic planning?
2. To what extent were stakeholders involved in the educational strategic planning process?
3. How adequate well the resources available to implement the strategic plan and were they effectively utilized?
4. To what extent have been the monitoring and evaluation systems instituted for tracking formulation and implementation progress, to identify strengths and weaknesses for making corrections?
5. To what extent the educational strategic plans focus on addressing major policy issues?
6. What are the major problems encountered while implementing educational strategic plans in the Region?

To answer the above questions, the study had employed descriptive survey method where three zones with their respective weredas were selected. Thus, the zones were selected by simple random sampling techniques: the weredas were chosen by stratified sampling technique and schools were included in the study based on the random of sampling techniques.

In order to select respondents from the sample areas, purposive sampling techniques for (WEOs and principals) and simple random sampling techniques for (department heads & supervisors) were employed.

As data gathering tools, questionnaires, interviews, document analysis were employed. The total number of sample respondents involved in the study was 172. In specific terms, there were 97 school respondents (14 principals, 63 department heads, and 20 supervisors) and 63WEO respondents (7 WEO heads, 21 process performers, 14 planners and 21 experts).

For the WEOs and School respondents, questionnaires were employed and for 5 REB officials (2 planners and 3 process owners) and also 7 parent teacher association (PTA) interviews were used for the study.

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

5.1 Summary of the major findings

Following the analysis made in the preceding chapter, the major findings of the study, have been summarized under six basic categories as presented here under.

5.1.1 Respondents characteristics

Regarding the characteristics of respondents, it was shown that 83.33% of office and 91.30% of school respondents were belonged to the male category. From these data, one can observed that, there were more planners, experts, principals, department heads, and supervisors than their counter parts in the professionals and leadership positions. In addition to this, majority of school and office respondents were in age limit of 26-38 and above 40. Concerning educational qualification, 1.66% and 7.14% of office and school respondents respectively were masters' degree holders and 76.66 of office and 81.52% of school respondents were degree holders while the others are diploma and certificate holders.

Regarding field of specialization, 6.66% office and 71.42% of principals were attended in the field of educational planning, whereas, majority of office (93.3% and 100% department heads and supervisors were attended in fields other than educational planning, curriculum and/or pedagogy.

Concerning total services, majority (66.66%) office and 67.24% department heads and 50% supervisors were below 5 years. Unlike, 57.14% principals were rated greater than 10 years of service regarding the current position.

5.1.2 Major findings of the practice of strategic planning process

5.1.2.1 Competency of WEO heads in the practice of strategic planning process

A/ concerning the commitment or readiness of Wereda education heads in the practice of strategic planning is poor. Thus statistically, the respondents revealed that 18(30%) and 30 (32.6%) of WEOs heads' commitment in taking prime initiative, 30(50%) and 38 (41.3%), of the availability of planning

team, 22(36.7%) and 45 (48.9) of enhancing and initiating planning team for the realization of strategic plan, 28(46.7%) and 34 (37%) of participation of stakeholders and professionals, and 24 (40%) and 42(45.7%) of training have been given to planners by both office and school respondents respectively revealed as poor.

On the other hand, 20(33.3%) office and 28(30.4%) school respondents confirmed that as medium regarding the strategic planning practices the institution has had.

B/ The competence of WEOs heads in preparing the educational strategic plans, it has been also reported that it is poor by both respondents. The existence of poor competence of WEO heads has been identified by both office and school respondents respectively with 24(40%) and 48 (52.2%) for the ability to absorb new information, 34 (56.7%) and 46 (50%) for the ability to create new strategies to move in new direction, 26 (43.3%) and 53 (57.6%) the ability of preparing strategies by using SWOT analysis.

C/ While the way of communication in every direction: top-down, bottom-up, across department lines and the extent of values included to embrace employees were confirmed as good by office and poor by school respondent groups with 20 (33.3%) of office and 36 (39.1%) of school, and 24(40%) office and 59(64.1%) school respondents respectively.

Concerning local communities awareness about the objectives and targets of strategies, 24(40%) and the ability of planners and/ or heads to translate plans in to action, 28(46.7%) of the office respondents confirmed as medium whereas, the majority of the school respondents 40(43.5%) and 33 (35.9%) confirmed as poor respectively.

Regarding the competency of WEO heads in aligning people and organization, both respondents confirmed that it is poor communication with 32 (53.3%) office and 41 (44.6%) school respondents.

D/ Regarding the experience and/or knowledge of planners, the finding also proved that both categories of respondents together with interviewees commonly agreed that poor. Thus, the availability of qualified personal in educational strategic planning practice, majority of 24(40%) office and 45(48.9) school confirmed as poor: the availability of continuous training to planners 25 (41.7%) office and 38 (41.3%) school: adequate years of experience of planners on strategic planning practices 22 (36.7%) office and 46(50%)school: relevance of planners in academic background to the strategic planning 22(36.7%) office and 55 (59.8%) school: familiarizing all administrators with the essential

concepts and techniques of planning 28 (44%) office and 35 (38.04%) school: and preparing and issuing clear-cut terms of references and guide lines in relation to national objectives 39 (65%) office and 47(51.1%) school respondents revealed that it is poor.

Thus, it can infer that, the strategic planning practice in Tigray region seems to highly affect: and the major posts seem to have occupied by individuals whose academic know- how / experience is far to the strategic planning activities.

5.1.2.2 Stakeholders' participation in the practice of strategic planning process

Regarding the participation of stakeholders in the preparation of strategic plan, this study showed that the degree of stakeholders'(NGOS, GOs, School administrates, etc) involvement in preparation strategic plan, the extent of discussion made on the draft of the strategic plan by the education sector communities, the extent of stakeholders' feedback was taken to improve the strategic plan, and the extent of understanding to all stakeholders about objectives of the strategic plan were confirmed as poor by both office and school respondents with the mean value ranging from 2.4- 2.85 and 2.29- 2.45 respectively in the educational strategic plan preparation and implementation.

Besides few (30%) of the interviewees have witnessed that, participation of the concerned external stakeholders in the strategic preparation were so good and encouraged through out its process. But most (70%) of the interviewees together with large number of school and office respondents have great complains on the participation of external stakeholders mainly NGOs, private investors, local communities: the fact that their participation has almost been given less attention.

Generally it seems there have been great complaints on the stakeholders' involvement in strategic planning practices of Tigray region which all justify weak strategic planning trend.

5.1.2.3 Adequacy and utilization of resources for putting strategies in to actions

Regarding the adequacy and utilization of resources, it has been found that the necessary resources (human, financial, material, time ...) for successful planning practice in Tigray region have generally been poor by both office and school respondents. This was confirmed by office and school respondents respectively as 28 (46.66%) and 44(47.82%) for the availability of adequacy of qualified manpower resources: 26(43.33%) and 42 (45.65%) for availability of material resource and26 (43.33%) and32 (34.78%) for the availability of adequate fund to implement the plans.

On the other hand 23 (38.3%) and 31 (33.69%) office and school respondents respectively revealed as medium for effective utilization of available resources. Generally, it seems that the scarcity of the available resources has been seriously challenging in Tigray region for the smooth functioning of the educational strategic planning activities, without which the strategic plan loses their practical values.

5.1.2.4 The practice of monitoring and evaluation of strategic plans

A/Monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of strategic plans

Regarding plan monitoring and evaluation, the majority of the respondents have seriously complained that there has not been an external evaluators that carries out regular plan monitoring and evaluation or adequate of plan monitoring and evaluation system in Tigray region. In other words, the respondents have rated that the existence of external evaluators that carries out plan monitoring and evaluation is poor with 22 (36.66%) office and 40 (43.47%) school.

Besides, even if, monitoring and evaluation had carried out by internal evaluators, rated as medium by both respondents, however, the system of monitoring and evaluation did not evaluate the whole system with 38(63.33%) office and 43(46.73%) school, as well as the impact that the strategic plan brought with 37 (61.66%) office and 55(59.78%) school, and take corrective measures with 34 (56.66%) office and 41(44.56%) school respondents respectively. In other words the respondents confirmed that the monitoring and evaluation system was poor.

B/ Monitoring and evaluation in the performance measure of strategic plans

Among the lists of items of monitoring and evaluation, one of it (i.e. the performance measures that carried out is possible to collect accurate and reliable data), both respondents revealed that, the performance measures that carried out were not possible to collect accurate and reliable data with 24(40%) and 42(46.73%) Of office and school respondents respectively.

5.1.2.5 Educational strategic plans focus on addressing major policy issues

In relation policy issues while preparing strategic plans, the WEO respondents reported that, good while the school respondents indicated medium respectively as: for the preparation of strategic plans having clear identification of missions with 22(36.66%) and 32 (34.78%), for the vision statement provides clear picture of the organization 28 (46.66%) and 33(35.56%), and for the objectives are reflect strategic directions 36(60%) and 38(41.30%).

5.1.2.6 Major problems encountered while implementing strategic plans

Concerning the major problems of preparing and implementing educational strategic plans, among 15 possible major problems to the practice of educational strategic plans in Tigray Regional State, 10 were identified as very serious problems. These were: lack of meaningful participation of stakeholders with mean value of 3.53 office and 3.68 school ; inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of planners with mean 3.5 office and 3.73 school: inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation system with mean value 3.5 office and 3.53 school: failure to obtain sufficient resources with mean 3.6 office and 3.58 school: failure to follow the plan with the mean value of 3.5 office and 3.8 school: no incentives were given to the workers to embrace the new strategies with mean 3.53 office and 3.64 school: over dependence on past experiences in the practice of strategic plans with mean 3.68 office and 3.52 school: lack of budget to implement the plans with mean 3.58 office and 3.57 school: using inadequate or unreliable data with the mean score of 3.53 office and 3.64 school respondents: and high turnover of experts and/or heads with mean value 3.66 office and 3.54 school.

Furthermore, 5 items were identified not serious problems in the processes of strategic planning with the mean value of ranging from 2.06-2.47 of office and 2.34-2.5 of school respondents. These were failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets, lack of clear lines of authority, inflexible organizational structures, lack of coordination among the Region, Zones, WEOs and Schools, and failure to focus on addressing policy issues (Vision, and Mission).

5.2 Conclusions

Strategic planning is the cornerstone of every organization. Without strategic plan, the organization will never know where it is going. At the lower levels, the role of education is great in countries like Ethiopia since there are a lot of capacity gaps which were observed in the WEOs. Therefore, assessing the practice of strategic plan in WEOs of Tigray Regional State is indispensable. Thus, after the data were gathered and analyzed; the researcher arrived at the following conclusions.

The practice of strategic planning was not properly done at the Woreda levels and its purpose was not well known to decision makers as well as implementers. Thus, absence of commitment of WEO heads constrains the practice of strategic planning process and risks the chance of success. From this, it can be conclude that, the practice of strategic planning process was not done with full awareness of the top management of WEOs.

The study found out that, the competence of WEO heads and/or planners to carryout the practice of strategic planning process was weak. In preparing strategic plans, the WEO heads and/or planners were lack relevant knowledge to absorb new information and move in to new strategic direction. Thus, they were responding to day to day problems that were not focusing on how to create a better future by proactive. From this one can conclude that, the attainment of long term strategic goals in the weredas was not as expected.

Meaningful participation of the concerned stakeholders in the strategic planning process enables to focus on the commonly felt needs of the stakeholders through group involvement and facilitates smooth strategic plan implementation with maximum efficiency. However, in the finding it is indicated that, there was poor stakeholders' participation in the strategic planning process in the WEOs. Thus the formulation of strategic plan was not supported by participation of stakeholders. From this, one can conclude that, the relation of WEO heads and stakeholders was less to the preparation of strategic plans.

Any plan to be success in its implementation, the provision of resources (human, material, financial) with right kind and time is mandatory. However, at the woreda levels the availability of these resources was not adequate enough to implement the strategic plans. Thus, the provision of necessary resources is in risky and hampered the success of the strategic plans and also makes it less likely to move in the new strategic directions successfully and realize the strategic goals as expected.

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

In the finding it indicated that at the woredas there is high turnover of planners and/or woreda education heads and as a result the practice of strategic planning process is highly depended on the past experiences. Frequent planners and/or leaders turnovers might have weaken the system and

hampered the effective planning and implementing process of strategic plans. Thus, there was a continual change of officials, leaders and senior experts at the woreda levels. From this it can conclude that, lack of stability of planners might have hampered the practice of strategic planning process.

In sum, among the basic precondition for the successful attainment of strategic plan practices, in this finding: commitment and competency of top managements, meaningful participation of stakeholders, relevant planner's knowledge and/ or experience, availability of necessary resources (human,, material, financial), effective monitoring and evaluation system: turnover of experts and/or heads, and incentives of planners were found to be weak across the wereda education sectors of the region.

5.3 Recommendations

Educational strategic planning is a continuous activity that needs effort to be strengthened through research, innovative ideas, resources, committed and competent leaders and planners. Thus, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to look critically by concerned bodies to alleviate the problems of educational strategic planning practice.

1. The study showed that there was lacked of commitment or readiness of WEO heads that could carry out strategic planning practices. However, strategic planning needs a visionary, well committed and cooperative leader that can understand the organization's future needs in advance. It also requires well trained planning team and participation of professionals in the field and also requires careful preparation and due recognition of its importance for addressing development-related problems on the part of those who develop the courage to make use of it. Because strategic plan is a living document that should be executed for the realization of the organization's vision: since vision should not be realized with out committed leadership. Therefore, the top management of WEOs should make a well organized effort to the practice of strategic planning process in order to understand the importance of strategic planning for implementers and planners. The WEOs has to organize a committee composed of experts who themselves are versed in the required skills of strategic planning.

REB should also prepare schedule to regularly meet with those entities to look in to the problems they came across the process of strategic planning to immediately curb these problems before they collapsing the implementation process.

2. The study indicated that, the woreda education heads lacked thinking strategically and the planners experience and/ or knowledge is weak in dealing strategic planning process that shows over dependence on past experiences. However, the existence of skillful educational leaders and planners could enable the organization that, it can have clear purpose and direction and the means of achieving the purposes. Planning and change are the primary jobs of the leaders today and strategic thinking is the way of to do this.

Hence, it is suggested that leadership development may be the best way to develop strategic thinking, so the REB, Zone administrative and/ or woreda administrative bodies should provide deep and need based short-term and long-term capacity building training in educational planning and creating conducive environment for education leaders to become and remain strategic thinkers in creating and ideal futures by defining and achieving results that add value. The WEO should also give more professional development and training for educational planners that can enhance the strategic planning process effectively.

- 3., The practices of strategic planning in the WEOs as indicated in the finding, did not give due attention to the perceived benefits of involvement of stakeholders. NGOs, GOs, Teachers, PTAs, and Woreda Cabinets and education sector communities working in the respected woredas have not got attention to participate in the preparation, draft discussion, and implementation of strategic plans. However, Participation of stakeholders helps to pool valuable experiences, induces commitments as a result of feeling of belongingness developed to participate in decision making and helps to coordinate efforts to tackle challenges that may appear in the process of planning.

Thus, it is recommended that, WEOs should establish a close relationship with those stakeholders to involve them in the practice of strategic plan and giving appropriate attention to the feedbacks of these stakeholders is timely responses to the existing situations of the strategic plan of Tigray Region.

The REB as a responsible body should have to follow up the activities of wereda educations in order to have a sustainable relationships and genuine co operations with those stakeholders in the education system.

4. As indicating in the finding, scarcity of resources (skilled man power, material, financial) for effective strategic planning activities has been reported as sensitive problem. Thus, the woreda education sectors were facing with lack of resources in implementing strategies. However, education institutions need sufficient budget and resources to carry out their parts of strategic plan effectively and efficiently, having availability of adequate and timely resources could able to the practice and function of strategic planning smooth.

Hence, to overcome this difficulty, the education sectors in the region, zone, and woredas need to develop as many income generating sources as possible in order to fulfill the gap resulting from scarce of resources contributed predominantly by the MOE. This could be made through creating collaborations with local and international NGOs, GOs, donors, etc.

The wereda education planning teams and higher officials should design strategies that are compatible with the budget and other resources available in the institutions, and mobilize the local communities to contribute and generate additional income besides the budget approved from the government and if not at least to utilize the available resources efficiently.

5. The finding indicated that, plan monitoring and evaluation system in the WEOs is weak. There was no an independent organ that carried out plan monitoring and evaluated. The monitoring and evaluation system did not measure the whole system and impact of the plans and it could not possible to collect accurate and reliable data: accordingly, it unable to take corrective measures before deviations occurred. However, plan monitoring and evaluation helps to improve performance, to assess and enhance impact, and day-to-day decision making, to provide early warning of the problematic activities, and process those need corrective actions.

Therefore, it is recommended that, the REB should an independent organ having teams across the woredas in order to follow the progress of strategic plans and their levels of execution so as to give timely strategic solutions.

In doing so it is also recommended that, the wereda educations of the region should have uniform monitoring and evaluation techniques in the plans of these units device towards achieving the common goals of the institutions.

It is desirable on the part of REB to install a system which never breaks to ascertain the existence of a scheduled relationship between WEOs and schools by conducting supervisory programs and arranging meetings to confirm that there is coordinating of effort among these tiers.

WEOs in turn, should establish consistent and genuine relations with schools by arranging continuous supervisory programs and holding regular meetings to ensure that schools are capacitated to realize the educational problems of the woredas.

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Appendices

Appendix- A

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

Educational Policy and Planning Stream

PART I

A Questionnaire filled by school Respondents (Principals, Department heads and, Supervisors).

This questionnaire is prepared to collect relevant information for a thesis entitled “An Assessment of the Practice of Educational Strategic Planning Process in the Woreda Educations of Tigray Region.” Thus, it mainly focuses on examining the current practice of educational strategic plan in Tigray region.

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

Thank you in advance

1. General Direction

- 1.1 No need to write your name
- 1.2 Put your agreement (X) mark in each given rating scales
- 1.3. You can put more than one answer for those required more than one explanation

2. Personal information

2.1 Name of your Woreda _____

2.2 Name of your school _____

2.3 A. Sex M F

B. Age

Below 25

From 39 – 45

Above 55

From 26 – 38

From 46- 55

2.4 Educational qualification

A. MA/MSc

B. BA/BED/BSc

C. Diploma

D. Certificate

E. Other

2.5 Field of specialization _____

2.6 Total years of service _____

2.7 Year of service on current position _____

2.8 Your current position _____

1. Readiness for strategic planning,

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

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The degree to which WEO heads are really readiness or take prime imitative to the practice of developing strategic plans					
2	Availability of effective planning team (committee) in the wereda Educations					
3	To what extent the institution has had educational strategic planning practices.					
4	The extent to which the planning team promotes its awareness in realizing the strategic planning practice.					
5	The extent to which participation of stakeholders and professionals in the strategic planning practices					
6	The extent to which you have been given training on how to prepare educational strategic plan to planners					
7	The extent to which the necessary budget is provided for the strategic planning process					

8. What major challenges are encountered during the practice of strategic planning?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

9. What solutions can you forward for the better effectiveness of the practice of strategic planning in the institution?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Preparation of strategic planning

Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder.

While rating, use (5=Very good, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

N o	Items	Rating Scales				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	To what extent stakeholders (NGOs, GOs, private sectors, etc) involved in the current practices of educational strategic planning.					
2	The extent to which principals, Department heads, teachers, and supervisors involve in the WE 'strategic planning preparation /formation.					
3	The degree to which discussion made on the draft of the WE strategic plan by the educational sector community.					
4	The extent to which stakeholders' feed backs are taken for improvement of the plan					
5	The ability to absorb new information by the WE heads and/or planners					
6	The ability to create new strategies to move in new direction					
7	To what extent the strategic plan preparation starts with the clear identification of missions.					
8	To what extent the strategic plan preparation starts with the SWOT analysis or diagnosis.					
9	To what extent the mission statement answers: who we are? What? For whom we do? What we do? And why it is important?					
10	To what extent the vision statement provide a clear picture of the organization's future direction					

11	To what extent the values are included that can be embraced by every employee in the organization.					
12	To what extent the values can act as a foundation for the mission and vision					
13	To what extent the goal/objectives are understandable to all stakeholders					
14	To what extent the goal /objectives reflect strategic direction					
15	To what extent the action plan contains a time frame for completion					
16	To what extent the action plan indicates who is responsible for successful completion.					
17	The extent to which the staff members of the WEO involved in the preparation of educational strategic plan.					

18. What are the major challenges that you face while preparing educational strategic plan in the wereda education.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

19. What solution you suggest for the challenges.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

3. Implementation of the strategic plan

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

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	To what extent the local communities are aware of the goals/objectives, strategy and targets for the successful implementation of strategic plans					
2	Adequacy of qualified manpower in wereda education to implement the plans					

3	Availability of necessary material resources to implement the plans.					
4	The extent to which an effective utilization of available resources based on plans.					
5	The extent to which the wereda utilizes its budget efficiently and effectively.					
6	The ability to translate strategies in to action.					
7	The extent to which communication in every direction top – down, bottom – up, across each woreda/ department lines.					
8	The ability to align people and organization					
9	To what extent the strategic planning team and/or expertise have adequate planning skills/experience					
10	The extent to which adequate amount of fund to implement the plans					
11	The degree to which the result of monitoring and evaluation be used to take corrective measures					
12	The extent to which mentoring and evaluation carried out by external evaluators					
13	The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators					
14	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation be done on regular basis					
15	The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out before deviations occur					
16	The extent to which monitoring and evolution is carried out to evaluate the impact that the strategic plan brought					
17	The extent to which it monitors the whole system of the educational strategic planning practice					

18. What key problems that are encountered while implementing the strategic planning in the wereda?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

19. What solutions can you forward for these problems?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

4. Effectiveness of the Strategic Plan

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

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Availability of qualified personal in educational strategic planning practice					
2	The degree to which the planners are sent for further up grading in educational planning					
3	Adequacy years of experience /or qualification of planners on strategic planning practice					
4	The relevance of planners academic background to the strategic planning practice					
5.	The extent to which familiarizing all administrators with the essential concepts and techniques of planning					
6	The extent to which preparing and issuing clear – cut terms of references and guidelines in relation to national objectives, limitation of resources, detailed of programs, etc					
7	The extent to which participation of stakeholders is realized in the strategic planning practices					

8. List other major challenges that are encountered in the effectiveness of strategic planning.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

9. What solution you forward for the effectiveness of strategic planning in the institution?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

5. Extent of Implementation (Achievement)

Performance Measures: used to measure results and ensure accountability. The following table contains items that relate to qualities of good performance measures. Accordingly,

please evaluate the institution's strategic plan with these criteria and indicate with (X) mark in appropriate box (5= very good, 4 good, 3=medium, 2= poor, 1 = very poor)

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The performance measure relates to the mission it represents					
2	The performance measure relates to the goal it represents					
3	The performance measure relates to the policy directions					
4	The performance measure is possible to collect accurate and reliable data					

5. Please make any further comments if you wish to expand your suggestion.

6. Major problems encountered in strategic planning practices

Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (X) in the space provided hereunder.

While rating use (5 = Extremely Serious 4= Very serious 3= Serious

2= Observed but not serious 1= Not observed at all)

No	Items	Rating Scales				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Lack of meaningful Participation of Stakeholders					
2	Lack of clear delegation in the woredas and/or schools					
3	Failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets					
4	Inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of the planners					
5	Lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult					
6	Inflexible organizational structures in the woredas					
7	Inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems					
8	Failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish tasks/strategies					
9	Failure to follow the plan					
10	No incentives given to workers to embrace the new strategies					

11	Lack of coordination among regional, zone woreda education offices					
12	Over-dependence on past experience					
13	Lack of budget to implement the strategies					
14	Using Inadequate or unreliable data					
15	High turnover of expertise/heads					
16	Failure to focus on address policy issues (Vision, Mission)					

17. What are the major challenges that are encountered in the process of strategic plan in the wereda education?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

18. What solutions can you forward for these problems?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

Thank you

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

PART II

A Questionnaire filled by WEO (Woreda Education heads, planners and experts)

This questionnaire is prepared to collect relevant information for a thesis entitled “**An Assessment of the Practice of Educational Strategic Planning Process in the Woredas of Tigray Region.**” Thus, it mainly focuses on examining the current practice of educational strategic plan in Tigray region.

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

Thank you in advance

1. General Direction

1.1 No need to write your name

1.2 Put your agreement (X) mark in each given rating scales

1.3. You can put more than one answer for those required more than one explanation

2. Personal information

2.1 Name of your Woreda _____

2.2 A. Sex M F

B. Age

Below 25 From 39 – 45

Above 55

From 26 – 38 From 46- 55

2.3 Educational qualification

A. MA/MSC

B. BA/BED/BSC

C. Diploma

D. Certificate

E. Other

2.4 Field of specialization _____

2.5 Total years of service _____

2.6 Year of service on current position _____

2.7 Your current position _____

1. Readiness for strategic planning,

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

	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The degree to which WEO head are really readiness or take prime imitative to the practice of developing of strategic planning.					
2	Availability of effective planning team (committee) in the wereda Education.					
3	To what extent the institution has had educational strategic planning practices.					
4	The extent to which the planning team promoted its awareness in realizing the strategic planning practice.					
5	. The extent to which participating of stakeholders and professionals in the strategic planning practices.					
6	The extent to which you have been given training on how to prepare educational strategic plan to planners					
7	The extent to which the necessary budget is provided for the strategic planning process					

8. What major challenges are encountered in the practice of strategic plan?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

9. What solutions can you forward for the better effectiveness of the practice of strategic planning in your institution?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Preparation of strategic planning

Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder.

While rating, use (5=Verygood, 4=Good, 3=Medium, 2=Poor, 1=Very poor)

No	Items	Rating Scales				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	To what extent the stakeholders (NGOs, GOs, private sectors, etc involved in the current practices of educational strategic plan					
2	The extent to which principals, Department heads, teachers, and supervisors involve in the WE 'strategic planning preparation /formation.					
3	The degree to which discussion made on the draft of the WE strategic plan by the educational sector community.					
4	The extent to which stakeholders' feed backs are taken for improvement of the plan					
5	The ability to absorb new information by the WE heads and/or planners					
6	The ability to create new strategies to more in new direction					
7	To what extent the strategic plan preparation starts with the clear identification of missions.					
8	To what extent the strategic plan preparation starts with the SWOT analysis or diagnosis. *					
9	To what extent the mission statement answers: who we are? What? For whom we do? What we do? And why it is important?					

10	To what extent the vision statement provide a clear picture of the organization's future.					
11	To what extent the values are included that can be embraced by every employee in the organization					
12	To what extent the values can act as a foundation for the mission and vision					
13	To what extent the goals/objectives are understandable to all stakeholders					
14	To what extent the goals/objectives reflect strategic direction.					
15	To what extent the action plan contains a time frame for completion					
16	To what extent the action plan indicates who is responsible for successful completion.					
17	The extent to which the staff members of the WEO involved in the preparation of educational strategic plan.					

18. What are the major challenges that you face while preparing educational strategic plan in your wereda education office?

- A. _____
 B. _____
 C. _____

19. What solution you suggest for the challenges?

- A. _____
 B. _____
 C. _____

3. Implementation of the strategic plan

Show your agreements and/or disagreements by putting (x) in the space provided hereunder.

While rating, use (5=Very good, 4=Good 3=Medium, 2=Poor,, 1=Very poor)

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	To what extent the local communities are aware of the goals/ objectives, strategies and targets for the successful implementation of the strategic plans					
2	Adequacy of qualified manpower in wereda education to					

	implement the plans					
3	Availability of necessary material resources to implement the plans.					
4	The extent to which an effective utilization of available resources based on plans.					
5.	The extent to which the wreda education and/or schools utilizes their budget efficiently and effectively.					
6	The ability to translate strategies in to action.					
7	The extent to which communication in every direction top – down, bottom – up, across each woreda/ department lines.					
8	The ability to align people and organization					
9	To what extent the strategic planning team and/or expertise have adequate planning skills/experience					
10	The extent to which adequate amount of fund to implement the plans.					
11	The degree to which the result of monitoring and evaluation be used to take corrective measures					
12	The extent to which mentoring and evaluation carried out by external evaluators					
13	. The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by internal evaluators					
14	The extent to which monitoring and evaluation be done on regular basis					
15	The degree to which monitoring and evaluation carried out before deviations occur					
16	The extent to which monitoring and evolution is carried out to evaluate the impact that the strategic plan brought					
17	The extent to which it monitors the whole system of the educational strategic planning practice					

18. What are the key problems that you are encountered while implementing the strategic plan in your wereda?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

19. What solutions can you forward for these problems?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

4. Effectiveness of the Strategic Plan

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

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Availability of qualified personal in educational strategic planning practice					
2	Availability of continuous training for the educational strategic plan planners in the WEO					
3	Adequacy years of experience /or qualification of planners on strategic planning practice					
4	The relevance of planners academic background to the strategic planning practice					
5.	The extent to which familiarizing all administrators with the essential concepts and techniques of planning					
6	The extent to which preparing and issuing clear – cut terms of references and guidelines in relation to national objective, limitation of resources, detailed of programs, etc					
7	The extent to which participation of stakeholders is realized in the strategic planning practices					

9. List other major challenges that you are encountered in the effectiveness of strategic planning.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

10. What solution you forward for the effectiveness of strategic planning in your institution?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

5. Extent of Implementation (Achievement)

Performance Measures: used to measure results and ensure accountability. The following table contains items that relate to qualities of good performance measures. Accordingly, please evaluate your institute’s strategic plan with these criteria and indicate with (X) mark in appropriate box (5= very good, 4 good, 3=medium, 2= poor, 1 = very poor)

No	Items	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The performance measure relates to the mission it represents					
2	The performance measure relates to the goal it represents					
3	The performance measure relates to the policy directions					
4	The performance measure is possible to collect accurate and reliable data					

5. Please make any further comments if you wish to expand your suggestion.

6. Major problems encountered in strategic planning practices

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

No	Items	Rating Scales				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Lack of meaningful Participation of Stakeholders					
2	Lack of clear delegation in the woredas and/or schools					
3	Failure to set meaningful and verifiable targets					
4	Inadequate knowledge and/or experiences of the planners					
5	Lack of clear lines of authority which makes decision making difficult					
6	Inflexible organizational structures in the zones and/or woredas					
7	Inadequacy of monitoring and evaluation systems					
8	Failure to obtain sufficient resources to accomplish tasks/strategies					
9	Failure to follow the plan					
10	No incentives given to workers to embrace the new strategies					
11	Lack of coordination among regional, zone and woreda education offices					
12	Over-dependence on past experience					
13	Lack of budget to implement the strategies					
14	Using Inadequate or unreliable data					
15	High turnover of expertise/heads					
16	Failure to focus on address policy issues (Vision, Mission)					

17. What are the major challenges that you are encountered in the process of the strategic plan in the wereda education?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

18. What solutions can you forward for these problems?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

Thank you

Appendix -B

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies College of Education

Department of Educational Planning and Management

Addis Ababa University

Educational Policy and Planning Stream

PART I

An interview guide for Regional Education Bureau process owners & planners and PTAs in Wereda educations

This interview guide has been developed to collect relevant information from higher officials for a thesis entitled “An Assessment of the Practice of Educational Strategic Planning Process in the Woreda Educations of Tigray Region.

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

Thank you in advance

1. Personal information

1.1 Your current position _____

1.2 A. Sex M F

B. Age _____

1.3 Educational qualification

- A. MA/MSc B. BA/BED/BSc
C. Diploma D. Certificate E. Other

1.4 Field of specialization _____

1.5 Total years of service _____

1.6 Year of service on current position _____

1. The extent to which stakeholders and professionals are participated in the strategic planning practice of Wereda education
2. Would you participate in the practice of educational strategic planning process in the Wereda education

2.1 In what way you/ they participate?

3. The extent to which adequate training have been given to planners of Woreda education. on how to prepare educational strategic plan
4. The degree to which WEO heads are really ready or take prime initiative to the practice of developing strategic plan of the WEO
5. The ability to absorb new information by the WE heads and planners
6. The extent to which monitoring and evaluation carried out by external evaluators.
7. The extent to which it monitors the whole system of the educational strategizing planning practice
8. Availability of necessary resource (human. Material .financial) to implement the plans
9. The ability to align people and the institution.
10. Do you think that there is a planning team in the WEOs? If so, how its' planning skill/or experience?
11. What major and most frequently occurring problems in the practice of educational strategic plans
12. How is communication taking place among Region, Woredas and Schools?
13. What is your over-all comment in the practice of educational strategic plan?

Thank You

APPENDIX-C

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

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

DECLARATION

I understand, declare that this thesis is my work and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been dully acknowledged.

Shumuye Tafere Awalom

Name: _____

Signature e _____

Date _____

Advisor: **Jeilu Oumer (PhD)**

Signature: _____

Date: _____