

**PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF BALE ZONE**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ESDP	Education Sector Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEQIP	General Education Quality Improvement Package
MoE	Ministry of Education
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Association
REB	Regional Education Bureau
SIC	School Improvement Committee
SIP	School Improvement Program
WEBE	Woreda Education Bureau Experts
WEO	Woreda Education Office
ZEB	Zone Education Bureau

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

The author was born in Oromia Region of Bale Zone in Agarfa Woreda on November 8, 1979 G.C. He attended his primary school in Amigna Haro Primary School and his high school at Agarfa Secondary Schools. He then joined Bale Robe Teachers' Training Institute in 2006 G.C. and then joined Bale Robe Teachers' Training College and earned a Diploma in Afan Oromo in 2006G.C. He then pursued his BA degree in Educational Planning and Management from Madawalabu University and graduated in 2012G.C. since then, he has been serving as teacher and principal in Agarfa woreda at Agarfa Secondary School in Bale Zone. Finally, in 2015 E.C, he joined Haramaya University College of Education and Behavioral Sciences to pursue his MA postgraduate study in school leadership to diversify his academic qualification to provide holistic service to his country.

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Practices and challenges of school principals in the implementation of school improvement program in secondary schools of Bale Zone Oromia regional state

Eshetu Balcha

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the practices and challenges of school principals in the implementation of school improvement program in secondary school. In this study descriptive survey research design was used with both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. In this Zone, there are 18 Woredas, and 3 administrative towns ; Among these ,8 woreda and 2 administrative town were selected by using simple random sampling techniques .For this study the total population size and total sample size were 620 and 292 respondents respectively. Of the total sample size of the five groups, the composition involved 222 teachers, 20 school leaders, 10 supervisors, 10 educational experts and 30 PTSA members as sources of information. Questionnaires, interview and group discussion were used as instrument of data collection. Data were analyzed using both descriptive, i.e. percentage, frequencies, mean and narrative descriptions. The findings of the study indicated that schools principal in secondary schools of Bale zone did not implement SIP properly. Furthermore, the principals did not identify the alternative strategies to improve SIP, whereas lack of the involvement of the stakeholders and lack of monitoring and guiding of the educational experts were the most problems of principals in while planning and implementing of SIP. In addition, the school principals were not committed and didn't give equal considerations for the implementation of school improvement program domains. The implication is that the contribution of SIP for the important of the teaching-learning process and thus, academic achievements of the learners will be minimal. Based on the finding, some recommendations were suggested. First, school principals are advised to conduct self-assessment and prioritize the problems when planning, organizing, monitoring and evaluating the SIP. Second, Woreda and zonal education administrators would provide principals with management related training on the implementation of SIP, give directives and guidelines to fill gaps are observed, and the school principals should organize and create better SIP. Finally, principals are advice to work closely with stakeholders particularly with Woreda education office, school community and societies at large.

Keyword; alternative, challenges, practices, principal, strategies, SIP

1 .INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study and operational definition of key terms .

1.1. Background of the Study

Ethiopia has embarked on a new education and training policy which was issued by the transitional government of Ethiopia (TGE) following the military regime in 1991 (MoE, 2008). In its attempt to ensure the quality of education in the country, the government of Ethiopia has been engaged in formulating and implementing different policies and programs. One of the programs recently developed and currently under implementation is the general education quality improvement package (GEQIP) which has the following six important pillars: teacher development program (TDP), school improvement program (SIP), civic and ethical education, curriculum improvement program (CIP), information and communication technology (ICT), and management and administration program (MAP). Even though there are six different pillars as indicted above, all of the other five pillars are there to strengthen school improvement program because all of them are inputs for school improvement program which is reflected by student achievement. The school improvement program comprises four domains, 12 elements, 29 standards and 150 indicators; all of which are targeting at improving students performance to achieve the educational goal (MoE, 2007c). The other program is that the 1994 education and training policy which the government of Ethiopia launched was the first education sector development program in 1997. The objective of launching education sector development program was to improve educational quality, relevance, efficiency and equity and expand access to education giving it special emphasis on primary education in rural and underserved areas, as well as the promotion of education for girls as a firststep to achieve universal primary education by 2015 (MoE, 2005). As to the document, the education sector's vision is "to see all school age children got access to quality primary education by the year of 2015 and realize the creation of trained and skilled human power at all levels who may be driving forces in the promotion of democracy and development in the country". Different evaluations on the implementation of education sector development program have shown that Ethiopia made significant progress in education as a result of ESDP I, II and III (MoE, 2005). As to the document, challenges are faced and lessons are

learned at different levels of the implementation. MoE (2010) also points out that access at all levels of the education system increased at a rapid rate in line with a sharp increase in the number of teachers, schools and institutions. There were also important improvements in the availability of trained teachers and some other inputs which are indispensable for a high quality education system, challenges, however, in order to realize quality and internal efficiency. Hence, the focus of education policies under ESDP-IV shifts towards priority programs which address these challenges. As to the MoE 92007c) document, it was necessary to shift attention to quality concerns in general and to those inputs and processes which translate more directly into improved student learning and which help change the school into a genuine learning environment in particular. In order to improve the shortcomings related to quality, MoE launched the general education quality improvement package (GEQIP) in 2007. Hence, school improvement programs among the programs designed to improve quality of education in the country.

Effective leadership in educational activities is important to achieve success in school improvement. (Warren Bennis, 2003:54) has argued that thus, effective school leadership is the core of every successful school improvement. Initiatives must be taken by school principals, because they act as a catalyst in the overall efforts of bringing about effective implementation of school improvement plans. School improvement is the constant theme of visionary school leaders. School improvement becomes one of the major educational initiatives that many countries have developed and implemented to realize the provision of quality of education (Plan International, 2004). These kind of leadership scrutinize (deep search) existing practice to assure that all activities and procedures contribute to quality of education.

The success of any school improvement is highly linked to the leadership capacity of the principal. According to Findley (1992) of the factors for school to become effective is because of the instructional leadership of the principal. The effectiveness of the school could be described by the strong instructional leadership to support the staff in improving instructions for the best and highest academic achievement of the students. The major function of leadership for authentic SIP is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Effective leaders place an emphasis upon teaching and learning as well as building organizational capacity and have a moral obligation to see that students are well served and

that teachers are supported in their efforts to improve the quality of learning (Hopkins, 2001).

Stoll and Fink (1996) suggested that school improvement should be the activity of each. In line with this, Barnes (2004), has confirmed that even the highest ranked schools will always need improvement because the condition under which learning environment of the children always need change and improvement. Thus, schools must improve their basic functions such as teaching-learning process, empowering all stakeholders along with active participation in the improvement effort as well as creating conducive learning conditions and improving leadership

The purpose of school improvement policies is improving the educational process that includes instruction and subject matter. It helps schools improve their organizational functioning that are indirectly linked to students' achievement, such as school climate, staffing and school organization. The most promising objective of the 1994 ETP is increasing access to education and then to work with quality of education. Accordingly, MoE has developed a General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) which aims at improving quality of education at primary and secondary levels of the school and this package has six components out of which SIP is one (MoE, 2008).

School improvement program is complemented by strengthening the internal situation of the schools. The internal situation of schools that principals should be considering are to creating trust among the workers, producing knowledge of the tasks of school improvement and developing leadership capacity. School improvement helps to create a learning environment that welcomes all learners. It enables teachers to be responsive to the diverse learning needs of students in their teaching learning approaches. More over ,School improvement is essential to enhance leaning of students, to improve the involvement of parents and the community in school activities and to advance effectiveness of the school management.

In Ethiopia, the function of leaders in education has been described by the MoE. Accordingly, the roles of leader in education are; planning, coordinating, monitoring, decision making, monitoring, communicating, motivating, managing conflict, supervising and, evaluating (MoE 2007)

The researcher to pursued this study on the practices and challenges of principals in the Implementation of School Improvement Program /SIP /.Hence, this study was focused on exploring the challenges and practices of principals in the implementation of School Improvement Program (SIP) and particularly the commitment of school principals to investigate the practices and challenges of school improvement program in government selected secondary school in Bale zone Oromia regional state.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Success of institutional planning depends on the dynamism and flexibility of leaders and effective school principals should look at the system as whole, asses the strengths and weaknesses carefully create a feeling of readiness for change. But, a primary reason that school improvement plans fail to show success is that they are not kept in the front of the school's daily life and plan that is put on the shelf and forgotten or initially implemented, but neglected not contribute to the achievement of the students at the school (Talesra,2002).The schools with leaders having the capacity to organize staff, trust others, and communicate with the organization's vision undoubtedly come up with change and development but others cannot.

Hopkins(in Harris 2005) identified different type of schools such as improving, failing, trapping and dynamic in which the failing type is one which is attributed by low development and maintenance; poor at the day-to-day management tasks and tends to be reactive rather than proactive in their approach to deadlines or problem solving.

School improvement program is very complex that it might be hindered by various impediments that challenge the implementation. These challenges include: complexity of the program, mobility of teachers and principals, principals coordination problems (ineffectiveness of leadership) and sustaining commitment, low support from top level officials and lack of involvement of the stakeholders.

In order to play active and effective leadership role in school improvement programs, principals need to have the theoretical knowledge, skill and adequate experiences in school leadership (MoE, 1999/10). More specifically, principals are expected to play a great role in the implementation of SIP, which is divided into four domains: learning and teaching, student environment, leadership and management and community involvement. Principals

articulate and communicate clear and appealing visions and must also convince followers that the visions are attainable.

School principals implementing school improvement program in Ethiopia are facing dozens of problems. Challenges are major contributing factors that lead to ineffectiveness of principals' performance. In turn, this challenge negatively impacts schools and ultimately influences student achievement and success.

(MoE, 2010) identified problems such as limited capacity of leadership at sector and school level, limited SIP implementation capacity at both woreda and school levels, unsustainable monitoring and evaluation system of SIP, less student achievement in relation with low quality were few of the problems identified. This might indicate that the principals were made to lead the school without a clear understanding of theories and principles of educational administration .According to the report of Zone education bureau, most school principals did not do effective practice in the implementation of SIP. This indicates that there are different variables that affect the practice of principals in implementing SIP.

Different studies have been conducted on some of the domains of SIP. Dereje(2012) and Abera (2013), for example, conducted related studies focusing on the implementation challenges of SIP in secondary schools, though they chose different study areas, the former did it in schools in towns surrounding Addis Ababa.

Lemessa (2016) also did his study on the status of the implementation of school improvement program in primary schools of in Ilu Aba Bora Zone. Husen (2016)studied the effectiveness of school leadership in implementing school improvement program in secondary schools of West Arsi Zone in Oromia Regional State.

Additionally, Tigistu (2012) conducted a case study on the perception of leadership in effectiveness of school improvement program in selected high schools in Addis Ababa. The emphasis of this research was on perception of leadership on school improvement. A further study carried out on SIP related topic was by Chaltu (2015) focused on assessment of School Improvement Program implementation practices and challenges in selected secondary schools of West Hararghe Administrative Zone. Most of these studies focused on Implementation and challenges of SIP.

However, none of the above-mentioned researchers have considered practices and the challenges principals have in implementing SIP in schools at a secondary level. Accordingly, the present study was conducted to assess ten (10) selected secondary school principals' practices and challenges they experience in the implementation of SIP in secondary schools in Bale Zone Oromia regional state.

1.3. Research questions

The following were the major research questions at the center of the study.

1. What is the current status of school improvement program being implemented by school principals in selected secondary schools of Bale zone Oromia regional state?
2. What are the challenges faced by principals in the implementations of school improvement program SIP in secondary school
3. Which of the four domains of SIP that have been properly implemented?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General objectives

The general objective of this study was to assess the overall practices of school principals and the challenges they faced in implementing SIP in selected secondary schools in Bale Zone.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. To describe the current practices of principals' implementation of School Improvement Program in selected schools in Bale zone;
2. To identify the challenges school principals face in the implementation of SIP in selected secondary schools in Bale zone; and
3. To find out which of the four domains of SIP that have been properly implemented?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Principals understand the broader roles and practices to implementing school improvement, they may fill gaps on the lack of knowledge and skills to engage and implement the practices effectively. The study may have effect on the improvement of school principal activities on the learning teaching process. This study helps principals to be aware of the implementation of school improvement program in the Bale zone government selected secondary schools and also help the school principal may in order to improve their skills on the implementation of SIP.

Furthermore as methods of implementing SIP are improved, it allows principals to participate in the management and decision-making process of the schools which produced the good ways of teaching and learning environment. It may help professionals of woreda education bureau to design and give relevant and timely supervision support, capacity building program, training and experience sharing programs on the implementation of school improvement program; it needs to identify the challenge so as to take corrective measures on time, school principals to investigate the practices and challenge of school improvement program.

Generally, the study may provide important information for other researchers, school principals, teachers, Woreda education officers, parent-teacher- student-association (PTSA) and educational experts on challenges and practices of principals in the implementation of SIP; the study may also help principals to point out the strengths and weaknesses observed in implementing SIP and to take corrective action.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The title practices and challenge of principal in the implementation of SIP was the main area of the study focused by the researcher. The researcher select respondents' directly related to the topic to gathered the relevant data and used researchers' practical experience that clearly indicated the major challenges faced to link with the practices of principal in the implementation of SIP at secondary schools. The researcher was focused to respondents; of these are teacher, school principals, supervisors, parent-teachers-students-association (PTA) and educational office experts.

The researcher used data collection instrument such as, questionnaires, interview, document analysis and focus group discussion. To make the study manageable among 18 woredas and 3 administration town, the researcher selected by simple random sampling 10(47.6%) of the selected woredas. The research select 10 secondary schools, namely: - Agarfa secondary school, Batu secondary school; Galama secondary school, Dinsho secondary school ,Goro secondary school, Delosebro secondary school, Delomena secondary school , Bidire secondary school , Gasera secondary school and Alemgena secondary school. The study was focused on the practices and challenges of principal in the implementation SIP in ten selected secondary schools of Bale zone included in the study.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The following were some of the limitations of the present research. First, it was very hard for the researcher to get updated reports on the sampled schools as they had poor record keeping system. Another problem relates to small sample size used for the study because of inadequate fund the researcher received from HU. Finally, the findings of this study cannot be generalized for all schools in the zone because the study focused only on schools which provide general education in grades 9 and10.

1.8. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Challenge: Factors that affect effectiveness of principal in the implementation of SIP.

Competencies: A set of knowledge, skill and ability.

Domain: The broadest component of SIP designed by the MoE and REB of Ethiopia.

Parent-Teacher-Association: A school management body having members from parents and teachers, set up to strengthen the school-community relationship and create conducive learning environment in the school.

Practice: Performing school improvement program (SIP) activities or the application of knowledge to effect in implementing SIP.

School community: Refers to school leaders, teachers, and non-teaching staff, students, and PTA members involved in school improvement program process.

School Improvement Program (SIP): A concept focused on enabling students achieve excellent result by making schools conduct self-assessment based on varied school domains (MoE, 2007).

Secondary School: Refers to an educational level which offers general education to students in grades 9 and 10.

1.9. Organization of the Study

This study was organized in to five chapters. The first chapter dealt with the problem and its approach. The second is concerned with the review of related literature while the third chapter provided the readers with the research designs and methodology of the study. The fourth chapter contained presentation, analysis and interpretation of data while the fifth chapter covered with the summary of the major findings, conclusion and recommendations

2.REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This literature part emphasizes on the overall concepts of practices and challenge of principals implementing school improvement program. It is concerned with concept of school improvement program, the role of principal to implementing school improvement program domain, the role of principal to implementing school improvement program domain, role and practices of principals, school principal and effective school improvement program, importance of involving stake holders in school improvement program, objectives of school improvement program, and challenges of school principals in implementing school improvement program were included.

2.1. Concept of School Improvement Program

Robins (2003) argue that school improvement is an approach to educational change that is about raising student achievement through enhancing the teaching and learning process and condition, which support it. It is about strategies for improving the school's capacity for providing quality of education. Reynolds (2010) describes school improvement as “asset of process , managed from within the school , targeted both at pupil achievement and school's ability to manage change ”school improvement is largely concerned with changing the internal practices of the schools by influencing how people work together by changing the internal condition within the school .When we are talking about school improvement as a process, it is continuous activity of fulfilling different inputs, upgrading school performance and bringing better learning outcomes at school level.

As it is indicated in the school improvement program guidelines, there are many importance of school improvement program implementation. First, it enables schools to improve the teaching-learning process by systematically increasing the competency, efficiency and motivation of teachers and the management through various techniques (mutual teaching, by correcting weaknesses by self evaluation and developing strong unity by exchanging experiences and the realistic practical training etc). Second, it increases students 'motivation for education and improving the necessary resources for education and to create suitable condition for learning. Third, it increases the participation of parents, communities and their feelings of responsibility by increasing their awareness regarding education. Finally, it provides quality of education by providing the necessary resources

through the coordination of the community, non-governmental organizations, humanitarian agencies and religious organizations, in addition to assistance provided by the government (MoE, 2006). Besides, effective school improvement program minimizes wastage of educational resources by reducing class repetition, dropout and improving the learning capacity and academic achievement of students (MoE, 2006)

According to MoE (2008), there are various meanings given to school improvement, but the theme remains constant as far as it is focusing on improving factors of the teaching-learning process to enhance students' achievement. A school improvement is a continuous process without instant rest. Hence, it is a cyclical by its nature. Its primary revolution is change in the school. But, change in school as result takes time. Jeilu (2010) also states that school improvement is an activity to improve input and process in order to improve teaching learning and students result. School improvement is commonly defined as the general efforts to make school better places for pupils to learn, school improvement is a combination of planned, continual and coordinated efforts made both within and out of classroom and school level to change factors that are related to students learning with ultimate goal of maximizing the level of students achievement and improve school capacity.

MoE's (2005) school improvement is not a routine practice which can be performed as day-to-day activities of schools. The major focus areas of the school improvement program is school leadership and management, parent and community partnership, student-centered learning, professional development and collaboration and quality instructional program. In general to this end, as it was explained by different scholars, the term improvement is familiar to all, it simply means reforming, transforming or upgrading the quality of input, process, service or product and providing quality of education enables students to attain high achievement in their knowledge, skill and attitude .The school improvement programs aimed at improving the learning- teaching process, which is the core of school principals activities.

Thus the secondary schools are expected to successfully implement the school improvement program. However, SIP is a very wide spread phenomenon and a wide variety of improvement efforts can be found. to be any importance for school effectiveness school improvement should use the school effectiveness, knowledge base and be directed

to the application of this knowledge as focused intervention, emphasizing implementation, emphasis outcomes and evaluation techniques to practice school improvement program.

2.2. The Role of Principals in Implementing School Improvement Program

MoE(2007) school improvement program has classified such school factors that have impact on learning outcome into four domains, such as teaching learning, school environment, school leadership and management and community perspective. Students' performance improves when principals use suitable strategies that specifically address the SIP process. Students' performance improves when principals influence and facilitate teachers to use suitable delivery strategies that specifically address the needs of their students.

2.2.1. Teaching –Learning Domain

The teaching-learning domain describes the context in which the curriculum is delivered. High quality learning occurs when teachers make appropriate decisions about what is taught, how to engage students in meaningful experiences and how progress will be assessed to inform future actions. Providing quality education enables students to attain high achievement in their knowledge, skill and attitude. The school improvement programs aimed at improving the learning- teaching process, which is the core of school activities. (Tigistu,2012) stating Successful school improvement projects focus specifically upon the teaching and learning processes and the conditions at school and classroom level that support and sustain school improvement. As Instructional leadership principal requires to free themselves of bureaucratic tasks and focus their efforts on improving teaching and learning. Inherent in the concept of instructional leadership is the notion that learning should be given top priority while everything else revolves around the enhancement of learning. Principal need to know what is going on in the classroom, without this knowledge they are unable to identify some of the problems teachers and students encounter. Principals need to work closely with teachers and students, developing teaching - learning techniques and methods as a means for understanding teacher perspectives and for establishing a base on which to make curricular decision

2.2.2. Safe and Healthy School Environment

A school has to have a favorable environment that addresses the needs of each student. If students are empowered and feel safe in their schools, they can learn with interest. School environment must be free of any kind of insecurity for student learning to take place. In line with this statement, Faculty of education department of teacher education (2002:4) suggested that “Learners have right to clean and safe environmental that is conducive to their education” In effect, teachers and school management as well as community seek to create a learning environment that encourage positive and active engagement in learning and self motivation (MOE,2004). In the SIP guide line, it’s also discussed that in order to meet the SIP objectives; school environment must be safe and healthy. This ranges from beautification of school compound to maintenance of stability of discipline and peace (MOE, 2007b).

The principals have great role to creating a safe and welcoming school. School environment is a fundamental that the schools should take into account in an effort to success fully learning the students. Ubben and Hughes (1997) enumerate two of the most vital premises: learning occurs best in an orderly environment, and the environment enhanced when the staff behaves in an orderly and internally controlled way. A safe learning environment is focused on academic achievement, maintaining high standards, fostering positive relationships between staff and students, and encouraging parental and community involvement.

Stolp(1994) contends, healthy and sound school cultures correlate strongly with increased student achievement, motivation and with teacher productive and satisfaction.(MoE, 2006) states school environment consists of students focus, students empowerment and students support and decisive domain for the implementation of school improvement program. Principals should be competent in establishing safe and positive school climate, changes and increase education promotion to enhancing student academic achievement and develop better strategies to implementing school improvement program. Hence, safe conducive climate and health school environment plays significant role for school improvement.

Safe conducive climate and health school environment plays significant role for school improvement.(MoE,2006) states school environment consists of students focus, students

empowerment and students support and decisive domain for the implementation of school improvement program.

Apart from physical facilities and infrastructural service, to maintain safe and healthy school environment there are different kinds of student support service need to be in place. Emphasizing this view, Nergney and Nergncy (2004) state “Level of availability and accessibility of the principal amount of support students receive from teachers and school staff members” can influence student environment learning” For example, such teachers support like coordinating curricular and extracurricular activities, guidance and counseling service, healthy service (first aid) reward (motivation mechanisms and the use of instructional aides are among activities that determine instructional environment (MOE, 2007).

School principals are in charge of preparing and changing into action the school improvement plan, therefore, need to sense themselves that they are working on a condition of relatively stable job environment. Ubben and Hughes (1997) enumerate about two of the most vital premises: i) learning occurs best in an orderly environment and ii) the environment enhanced when the staff behaves in an orderly and internally controlled way. Cooperativeness among every school community, proper student behavior control system and encouragement of leadership for high achievements of teachers and students are indicators among others conducive environments of schools.

2.2.3. Leadership and Management Domain

This domain refers to school leadership and management that plays great role in implementing the school improvement program. Accordingly, effective and successful principals must have a clear vision that shows all components of a school operation. Similarly, work effectiveness of the school system requires an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding between the school principals and their subordinates in developing school goals, creating a unity of purpose, facilitating communication, and managing instruction (Biech, 2010). The presence of effective school leaders, positive school climates, and positive attitudes of teachers can directly or indirectly influence school performance and student achievement or quality of education.

School principals and management is among the most crucial forces in the school improvement process. Without high quality and policy making levels, Management of school improvement is the common school improvement committee comprising of teachers, students and members of community groups one hand and educational professionals at different levels on the other (MOE, 2007b) .School improvement needs strong commitment and sense of ownership on the part of all the concerned. The successful instructional leaders promote culture of collegiality, collaboration, support and trust in the school improvement effort. Effective instructional leaders must be knowledgeable, collaboration, support and trust in the school improvement effort.

The successful instructional leaders promote culture of collegiality, collaboration, support and trust in the school improvement effort. Effective instructional leaders must be knowledgeable, collaboration, support and trust in the school improvement effort. Effective instructional leaders must be able to communicate and represent the student, teachers and parents what is of important and value in the school. They must also be skillful in the construction of culture that especially defines a given school is all about (Mc Ewan, 2003:6).Studies still reveal that the role of school leaders and the process of leadership are significantly contributing factors in the achievement of successful school improvement(Telford, 1996). Some implication for well being and improvement of the school include the following: In the first place, vision need to shared and regularly re confirmed as the process of change take place(Bush and Marine 2000; Harris,2000).

The importance of spreading leadership function through the staff group is another issue. The ministry of education frame work document argues in favor of leadership that should come from variety of sources in the school. School leadership that is shared among teachers, staff members, parents and members of the entire educational community, increase the desired level of student performance, hence, an opportunity to achieve at high level. It is due to this fact that the SIP committee is organized to manage the improvement effort in many countries including ours. The third function of leadership is the emphasis up on infrastructural and interpersonal skill development. This is according to Harris (2003)is the concern with promotion of people centered continuing professional development as means of maintaining the level of commitment and morale staff in the school. Fourthly, an analysis of personal and professional value including critical thinking is central to successful leadership functions.

A school as an organization is influenced by its principals (Andy, 2010). Therefore, monitoring cooperative and collaborative leadership in the school improves the leadership qualities and performance of teaching learning in the school. This means that principals are expected to play dual roles. Primarily, they need to act as managers in maintaining the implementation of the existing government policies, strategies, rules and regulations. Secondly, they are required to develop the vision and change the existing statuesque of the school. They are expected to lead both the administrative staff and academic staff in their schools. This is because; quality education is a product of effective school principals and leadership practices. Here, effectiveness of school leadership has direct connection with increased learners' performance, improved quality of teaching learning processes and sustained healthy school environment (MoE, 2012)

2.2.4. Community Involvement

The community involvement domain describes the development quality, ongoing, community partnerships and networks. Schools are responsive to community expectations,, suitable environment for learning ,school administration and community participation. Community involvement in educational affairs is one of the most over used but least understood concepts in developing countries. Community participation is a process through which stake holders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decision and resource which affect them.

School has much intimate relation with the community this is because parents as members of larger community have greater concern with the way the school is training their children. The target of community involvement is, therefore, to develop sense of owner ship on school programs. Ones the community considers the school as it's properly it takes apart in bringing benefit is the provision of additional resources (Teet, 2003: Sheffer, 1994: Word Bank, 1998; Dodd, 2004: MOE 2006,MOE 2001; MOE, 2007b and USAID/AED, 2006). The resource that can be generated for school improvement can be take the form of raising money for school support material support to fill school facilities, labor and technical contribution to extent of gift ofown plot of land.

Community can render support to the school through other means as well. For example and following up teachers attendance Dodd, 2004, World Bank, 1994) beautification of school compound and participation in the area of education policy formulation, project implementation and problem solving (MOE, 1998) promoting girls education through

active engagement in the eradication (Shaffer, 1994: world Bank, 1994) participation in school management and governance world Bank 1994: MOE, 2006a) through parent and community representation. It is believed that agreement sole resource of support doesn't guarantee school improvement effort. In addition, school own effort in revenue generation through different mechanisms the contribution of wider community including private investor and NGOs is key for the sustainability of school improvement in our country. As the top is the champion ship role of parents as partners since, they know about the education of their children more than anyone else. Hence, in our countries context parents are expected to meet educationalmaterial need of their children, keep their hygiene and follow up and monitor discipline and education other than any kind of support they render to the school for improvement. In relation to this, the study conducted on school improvement program in Chicago city as discussed by MOE (2006b) pointed out that“when schools work with families to support learning, children are more likely to succeed, conversely, students achievement in school is the extent to which family encourages and supports learning at home”. Therefore, in order to enhance school program so as to work as efficiently and effectively as possible, it is important to establish and continuously develop partnership b/n school, parents and the community

Kruger,A.G.(1996:83), has also indicated the following activities as a means for parents to get involved in schools; helping children with homework, fund raising; maintenance buildingand grounds; transportingof pupil's; Organizingfunctions at school helping with extracurricular activities and supporting school activities. Several reportson community involvement indicate that the school in general and teachers and students in particular benefit a lot from the involvement of the community in the issue of schools.

The parental participation and community involvements are becoming facts of life in school management. Consequently, school principal must expand their scope and role, including: to lead all school constituencies and satisfy their needs and expectations, to lead a community of leaders in different aspects of the school. Furthermore, to lead multi – level developments including individuals , groups, school and the community , to lead social networks and build up alliances among diverse constituencies for partnership and collaboration, to lead and ensure the school to meet external challenges and competition (Schlechty, 1990). Meaningful family involvement is a powerful predictor of high student

achievement. Students attain more educational success when schools and families work together to motivate, socialize, and educate students (Caplan, 2000)

2.3. Leadership Skill in Implementing School Improvement Program

(Hopkins, 2001), identified principal's focus on six internal conditions these are Staff development, Involvement, Leadership Practices, Co-ordination, Inquiry and Reflection and Collaborative planning. According to his suggestion it is classroom practice that has the most direct impact on student learning. If the enhancement of student achievement and learning is to be taken seriously, however, then work on the internal conditions of the school has to complement the focus on teaching and learning. The principal managing the programs & insure positive school learning environment. (Oak land, 1993) asserts that effective principals is an approach to improve the competitiveness and flexibility of the whole organizing and allowing participating of all members at the appropriate level. Principals are expected to be effective instructional leaders and must be knowledgeable.

The school principals are considered as links between the school and all stakeholders. They should dynamically interact with stakeholders. An effective leader appears to possess three personal skills and a basic skill to implement school improvement programs. Koontz and Weithrich (1998) suggest that principals or school leaders should have three related skills: technical skill, human skill and conceptual skill. According to these authors technical skill refers to the proficiency and understanding of specific kinds of activity process, procedures or technique. This skill is primarily concerned with working with things. They describe human skills the ability principals have to work with others and build a cooperative effort with the group or stakeholders. This skill is primarily concerned with working with people. The third skill- conceptual skill is the ability to visualize the organization as a whole. This skill enables the leader to perceive and recognize the interrelation of various factors operating within the total organization.

The study by Marks and Printy(2003) found that transformational leadership was a necessary element to effective instructional leadership, it was also necessary to combine it with shared instructional leadership, in which effective school principals are empowered to lead and develop means of instruction in addition to the leadership transformational, in order to be effective. Their hypothesis of integrated leadership held that the efficacious

principal works simultaneously at transformational and instructional tasks (Marks & Printy, 2003)

2.4. School facilities as a factor of influencing school improvement program

It is known that clean, quiet, safe, comfortable and healthy environment are an important of successful teaching and learning. On this account, scholars suggested that school facilities can affect implementation of school improvement program. Bishop (1995:111) point out there is a relation that exists between school facilities and students learning. The author states that the availability of school facilities such as teaching materials and equipment, laboratory apparatus, specialist work rooms, the media of communication, the design of the class room, the climate of the school have an acceleration or a deadening influence on the students learning. From Bishop View, therefore, it is clear that school facilities enhance or affect students learning. This in turn that school facilities can affect school improvement program implementation.

2.5. Role and practices of Principals

The school principal role is to be crucial for the overall success of any school improvement tasks. Huber (2010) conducted a research on many school leaders and categorizes the school leadership as good and bad, in which the bad is low student achievement, poor results in national and international achievement tests, little value added, and a high rate of absenteeism among students and teachers. The good one is characterized by the principal that use analysis of best practice in education that to be responsive and proactive in changing schools prepare students for the future. They focus on student's achievement data and measure success in terms of positive students out comes. The principals provide the motivation and encourage that lead to success and they manage effectively in changing educational environment

Effective school principals are able to utilize the skills of all in the schools to reach school goals within a minimal time. Riley and Macbeth (2003) describe effective leaders as follows: "Good school leaders are those who are able to maximize the leadership qualities of others, enabling them to take on leadership within their areas of expertise. School principals are being effective when they are visionary and clear about their mission. Early

forms of effective principal focused on the principal's ability to manage school process and procedures.

When considering the recent movements in education and change in society it is understandable why principals must retool and acquire new knowledge and skills. Considering recent research, there appears to be general agreement between researchers and practitioners that those are several leadership role principals could use to effectively lead today's educational organization. However, the most principals method would require less command and control, more learning and teaching, less dictating, and more orchestrating (Dofour, 1998). In fact, more recently effective principal have been viewed as transformational principals that focus on establishing a vision and utilizing leadership skill such as innovation influence and consideration for the individual in the school improvement process. Effective leadership is multi-dimensional; principal's leadership style should incorporate facilitative or transformational models. For example, principals must have an extensive knowledge base in the area of school improvement and the skills to effectively implement SIP. Based on review of several research studies, (GazielH.2007) concludes, "The principals come to for as an instructional or educational leader who effects the school climate and student achievement. Effective principals are role models of ethical and moral leader ship. Such school leaders demonstrate courage in difficult situations, and provide a model of moral leadership for others to emulate.

In the context of a leadership role, research also provided principals with more context specific roles and responsibilities to guide their actions in establishing effective school improvement. Linda Lambert (2005) defines leadership capacity as "an organizational, concept meaning broad based skillful participation in the work of leadership that leads to school improvement. Principals responsibilities for effective leadership identified by the center for effective school improvement indicates that effective Principals focus on setting the direction ,developing people , and redesigning the school .

According to Mac beath. J. (2006),today's principal is under extreme pressure not only to be an instructional design and delivery experts but also to be expert of consensus builders, marketing and public relations experts , security and safety experts , administration and building managers, and special education experts. Lezotte and Mckee (2006) acknowledge these additional responsibilities by stating the effective leader must now be a "jack of all"

and a “master of all”. Principals allocate adequate time and energy as an instructional leader.

According to Sergiovanni, T. (2001) Principal impact student achievement: by setting direction, planning a clear course of action that every stakeholder understands, establishing high expectations and using information or data, by developing people; providing stakeholders in the system with the necessary support and training to succeed and by making the organization work, ensuring that the entire range of school conditions and inhibits teaching and learning. The fact current research reports school principal as one of the most significant factors affecting student's achievement clearly indicates principals must also have ability to fulfill each of their roles as instructional leader by effectively utilizing researched based practices.

As Marzano and Walters (2006) describe the role and responsibilities of school principal directly participate in the implementation of SIP, support and promote effective instructional practice, recognize individual and school accomplishments and adapt their leadership to address the context specific needs of teachers, student and other stakeholders.

McGuire (2009) states “If the daily action of principals makes difference in student academic achievement. Thus, every effort should be made to fully understand the role of principal leadership in improving teaching learning by using qualitative and quantitative evidence. Thus, indicate the principal effect on student achievement may be indirect, it is crucial. Jacobs (2009) continues by stating “principals should spend 80% of their time attending to school improving (curriculum, teaching and learning matters) and 20% of their time attending to the more routine matter of school management. This may be never ending due to the fact that the principal's roles are always expanding and urgent issues will always take precedent. Leithwood (2004) states school leadership consists of practice that are unique to the particular school and reform context in which one is working as well as practice that are an important part of being an effective leader in any context.

The principal controls the most important factors affecting a school's teaching and instructional quality including attracting, selecting, and keeping outstanding working with community to establish a common mission, instructional vision and goal, creating a school culture grounded in collaboration and high expectations facilitating school improvement

program and producing excellent academic result for all students as gauged by external tests aligned with state academic standing. . Schools principals are expected to improve the overall schools improvement program and increase student's achievement through effective school leadership practices. **Creating vision;** Chance (cited in Tigistu, 2012) described vision as being the force of the dream towards which effective administrators strive in the development and shaping of their schools. Change also explained vision as a statement which captures an ideal state of affairs. Effective principals help their schools to develop or endorse visions that embody the best thinking about teaching and learning. School principal inspire others to reach for ambitious goal. The school must have vision that all stake holders recognize as common direction of growth, something, which inspires them to be better, **Allocation of resources:** School principals use resources to accomplish goals and ensure powerful teaching and learning for all students.

The principal provide clear processes and procedures to make equitable decisions about the allocation of resources, **Management of people and processes:** School principal support and retain the most qualified staff members. The school principal plan, implement advocate, support, communicate and monitor all leadership responsibilities including all school improvement planning and implementing. Katz (cited in Wossenu, 2006) assert that quality school leaders understand teaching and respect by their staff; and these persons are willing to hold themselves and others responsible for student learning and enhancing the capacity of teaches. Moreover, effective school leaders work to share leadership responsibilities throughout all levels of the educational organization. School principal create supportive working environment and professional development opportunities, time and space for collaboration and access to professional learning communities. Schools are increasingly under public inspection, supervision are established for visiting schools to monitor the effectiveness of school management, teachers performance and students achievement and principals are becoming more accountable to expectations of school improvement (MoE, 2008).School principal can play a key role in efforts of creation of sustainable and conducive school environment that ultimately promotes effective teacher professional development and student learning.

2.6. School principal and Effective School Improvement Program

As a manager school principle involves student management, discipline enforcement, financial management, managing school assets and chairing of school committees among others responsibilities (Wohlstetter and Mohrman, 2006). As an administrator the Principle's role is to ensure that the institution is running smoothly by ensuring that all parameters of the school system are performing according to the desired level, for this reason the management roles of school Principles are inseparable with their administrative duties (Wohlstetter and Mohrman, 2006).

It is known School Principle as an Instructional leader is an emerging concept that requires school Principles to be more focused on student academic performance by ensuring high quality of teaching standards. School Principles are required to be curriculum leaders by the virtue of their profession; curriculum development and processes is one of the key areas that an effective school Principle should be thoroughly competent in since it is one of the characteristics of high achieving schools (Minehira and Marlow, 2005).

School improvement is the constant theme of visionary school principals. They scrutinize existing practice to assure that all activities and procedures contribute to quality of education. The success of any school improvement is highly linked to the leadership capacity of the principal. The effectiveness of the school could be described by the strong instructional leadership to support the staff in improving instructions for best and high academic achievement of the students. According to the explanation of World Bank (2008), there are factors that facilitate the success of school improvements should be committed leaders to run the school improvement process.

Lieithwood (1999) affirms that the principal has strong direct affect in school improvement and direct effects on educational outcome. Hallinger and Heck (1996) report that the effect of leadership on school improvement occurs largely through actions by the principals such as providing clear school mission and positive school climate. Before school reform can precede, those who need schools, those influence these school principal, those who follow and those who are called on to provide support must think clearly about the purpose. The role and responsibilities of principal that lead SIP in the development of a culture that promotes high student expectations resulting in high achievement. In addition, many experts in educational leadership have also moved beyond principal competencies,

responsibilities and identified specific associated practices that focus more on specific practices and behavior rather than styles or broader competencies.

Principal in educational activities is important to achieve success in school improvement. Lassey (1991) also states that school leadership is one of the several significant variables in the life of the institution. Initiatives must be taken by school leaders, because they act as a catalyst in the overall efforts of bringing about effective implementation of school improvement plans. This suggests maintaining efficiency and effectiveness of principals at all school levels.

Some literatures give a great deal of attention on the issue that school improvement has to be one of the primary tasks of school principal. The aim of school improvement initiatives highly suggests that principals are key persons to introduce changes in schools. Hence, it can be viewed that school principal should be indicators and agents of change. Accordingly, school principals are able to introduce new culture and climate so as to be agents of change processes in schools.

2.7. Importance of Involving Stakeholders in School Improvement Program

The stake holder's participation and involvements are becoming facts of life in school improvement. Consequently, school principals must expand their scope and role, including: to lead all school constituencies and satisfy their needs and expectations, to lead stake holders in different aspects of the school. Furthermore, to lead multi -level developments including individuals , groups, the school and the community , to lead social networks and build up alliances among diverse constituencies for partnership and collaboration, to lead and ensure the school to meet external challenges and competition (Schlechty,1990:112).However, stake holder's involvement in school improvement program is; Improving the fruit fullness of the program , To secure resources for SIP such as human, financial, material and information, to minimizing the burden of school leader managing SIP, Identity the real problem and appropriate solution to be addressed in SIP, To enhance better decision in relation to SIP, To improve the preparation, implementation and evaluation of SIP, To enhance contribution of SIP for student academic achievement and to develop sense of owner ship for school activities.

2.8. Objectives of School Improvement Program

In the Ethiopian context, school improvement program has the following objectives:- Developing students' educational attainment and learning out come in high level, Ensuring good governance, democratic performance, enable and making them effective in schools bases on openness accountability and participative way; Building decentralized school leader ship and management system at school level and empowered them to have broader administrative freedom (MoE, 2006).

The main target for school improvement is to achieve high student to outcome; Schoolprincipal is the leader of school improvement; Students and parents have adequate knowledge about school improvement; School improvement planning process is a team work that demands stake holder's adequate understanding about the task to actively participatein the development.; School improvement planning a continuous process that requires follow up to take immediate corrective measures; School improvement plan target /goals are set based on reliable data sources,the quality of school improvement plan documents determined by the quality and efficiency of those professionals involved in the development of the process. Basedon principles,school which implements school improvement programs pay attention to the following six issues for plan and implement(MoE,2006, 2007b).These are \contextual understanding, collecting, and organizing, analyzing, setting goals prioritization and issue of concern, selecting best practice, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Throughout the process without active involvement of key school improvement stake holders such as parents, community members, principals, teachers and students; attainment of the objective of the school improvement is un thinkable. In strategic and the annualpreparation all the concerned need to work collaboratively with strong sense of team.

According to MoE (2010), the objective of school improvement program is to support schools in addressing the following four school domains: Teaching learning, school leadership and management, parents-community school relationship, and safe and healthy school environment. Specifically, the objective of this program to support school-based improvement plans, enhance the quality of school, achieve the enrollment, attendance and completion rates that meet the Education for All goals; achieve equality of access to school for both girls and boys and achieve better students' academic performance

2.9. Challenges of school principals in Implementing School Improvement Program

Hopkins (2002) has noted the difficulty to change working school culture as a challenge to implement school improvement program in developing countries. Implementing school improvement program is a complex activity that faces barriers and problems. Beginning of new work inevitably creates some difficulties for individuals and institutions. Members of the school resist the new improvement change for fear, vulnerability or a sheer indifference for improvement and the need to stay safe is powerful than risk taking (Stoll, and DeaFink, 1996). School improvement program is very complex that it might be hindered by various impediments that challenge the implementation. These challenges include: complexity of the program, mobility of teachers and principals, principals coordination problems (ineffectiveness of leadership) and sustaining commitment, low support from top level officials and lack of involvement of the stakeholders. Factors such as lack of common understanding among the practitioners on the program, complexity and instability or change in school factors like staff turnover, change in prentices from education authority and public enrolment can affect sustainability of school improvement (Chinsamy, 2002) finally in the local context, reports on the regional level school improvement practice reveal some factors might handicap program implementation effort. Some of the major expected challenges as summarized by OEB (2009) include; lack of qualified teachers required mainly at secondary level; Lack of proper leadership training for school principals and there under going poor commitment to enforce the program; defective strategic school improvement plan preparation and implementation and of course; weak follow up monitoring and evaluation of the program implementation by all concerned.

Dereje (2013) and Ampune (2009) indicate that educational leaders lacked enough capacity to implement SIP. In addition it is also showed that absence of adequately trained school principals in the field of educational leadership and management added to the weak implementation of the program. Principals may face problems in their attempt to prepare actionable school plan. Among these problems, teachers conditioned to believe that their job description does not go beyond teaching and conducting a few extra-curricular activities. Here, Baily (1991) argues that many school leaders are not aware of that school planning and problem solving tasks are part of their roles. The reality shows that principals seek support all school stakeholders within the school or outside in school improvement

program. A high level turnover of teachers and principals also causes problems for school improvement and the new staff may not be committed and influence other colleagues (Stoll, and Dean fink 1996). As teacher collaboration is desirable for improvement, it is not always easy to achieve in practice (Linda Lambert, 2003).

Adedoy (2013) states that “the school improvement is riddled with series of problem which include shortage of funds and materials, incessant strike, poor academic performance, cultism and drug addiction among students, examination malpractices, students and staff in discipline and so on.” The solutions to these problems cannot be guaranteed where school principal fail to use the appropriate leadership styles for specific situations in the process of achieving the aims and objectives of the schools improvement program. To this end, the need for smooth running of the school system calls for effective principals. (Lezotte, 2006) states, “each demands a different set of knowledge and skill, most of which today’s leaders have not had the opportunity to learn”. One reason principals are ill-prepared for the job may due to the lack of appropriate professional development opportunities. Kaplan (2005), Most of the school principal who are in the leading position did not get adequate educational training leadership. Due to this reason they have lack of ability to design vision and coordinate the school community so as to lead for the attainment of the goals .The lack of commitment of school society, other stakeholder and non-government organizations are not enough to solve the problem of the schools by providing instructional materials and other financial supporting; currently school slack the required educational inputs (MOE, 2007)

2.10. Monitoring and Evaluation for School Improvement Program.

The questions rise in school improvement process like; what does it mean to be improving school? How can it be measured? Needed to be answered and decisions about schools and children are likely to be based on this evidence. This point stretched to the evaluation process of school improvement. Although school effectiveness and school improvement research have been areas of intense activity for several decades, they are, in many ways, still in their infancy (Earl et al, 2003). Certainly, the work that has been done in many different countries extended our knowledge and understanding about ways in which education and the broader and community can engage in process to improve school. Goldstein (1998) in Earl et al. (2003) indicate that the academic research community is just

beginning to establish some comprehensive models of how school can change to become more effective and to develop research methodologies and analysis techniques that capture the complexity of change. It is imperative that the concept of the school improvement is clearly defined and understood and the measurements used to represent in congruent within the definition. The implication of measuring school improvement is for reaching with regard to the trends in evaluating of school improvement initiatives.

Earl et al (2003:14) describes that: Evaluation process allows us to investigate the trajectory of change in a particular school improvement program as it has developed over more than a decade. We have been fortunate to be able to adopt a contextually rich longitudinal approach by following schools over a period of year as they have engaged in school improvement initiatives, because the evaluation team has been closely involved in from the beginning, we have been able to watch the various stages that the schools go through in implementing major changes.”This indicates the importance of evaluation is the ongoing implementation of school improvement program. It serves as a means to check how improvement and /or change have adopted in school. Monitoring and evaluation consist in measuring the status of objective or activity against an “expected target” that allows judgment or comparison These includes: conducting evaluation, documentation and reporting activities that are connected with national curriculum evaluation and learning capacity studies supervising improvements in student result and providing assistant as a needed; making sure that teacher and other staff members have developed s sufficient skill in monitoring and evaluation and assessments conducted and using them in plan preparation; supervising the progress (improvement) of students according to the outlined targets; identifying low academic performance in individual student level, section, class level and subject type (MOE, 2006).

School improvement by its nature is continuous process that can systematically put in to the reality. Formerly the ministry of education SIP training manual (2006) out lined different stages that the school need to pass through to realize the improvement effort. Latter both the frame work and the blue print clearly identified key steps in the school improvement process. This comprises of preliminary stages such as formation of school improvement team, understanding the context and setting issue of concern and other phases like, preparation of school improvement plan implementation, followup and monitoring the implementation as well as Evaluation (MOE, 2007b and MOE, 2007c)The process as

depicted in the Ethiopian school improvement Framework document has shown in the following three year school improvement cycle (MOE, 2007c:4).

During the school improvement process one thing to be remained is that an effective school improvement results when the entire key stakeholders workers a team throughout stages of the process. In other words school improvement team should lead the process to establish priorities set goals and evaluate. In all planning prevents poor performance.

2.11. Conceptual Framework of the Literature Review

This study was mainly aimed at an assessment of practices and challenges of school principals in the implementing of school improvement program in secondary schools of Bale zone Oromia regional state. In order to develop the theoretical frame work for the study; an attempt was made to review the related literature on the basis of research questions. The literature organized by referring previously done research papers or theses, books and internet sources. The review related literature of this study is summarizes as follows;

School improvement program were designed by focusing on quality provision of education in the classroom and improving the achievement of students learning outcomes by identifying the domains that have an impact on learning outcomes of the pupils (MoE 1999:1)

Nowadays, the success accomplishment of the school improvement program depends largely on the ability of the principals. Here, principals are prominent figures to lead all tasks for School Improvement. School principals can play a key role in efforts of creation of sustainable and better school environment that ultimately promotes effective implementation of school improvement program and increase student academic achievement. (Warren Bennis, 2003:54) has argued that thus, effective school principal is the core of every successful school improvement. Initiatives must be taken by school principals, because they act as a catalyst in the overall efforts of bringing about effective implementation of school improvement.

Implementing school improvement program is a complex activity that faces barriers and problems faced to principals. Kaplan (2005), Most of the school principal who are in the leading position did not get adequate educational training leadership. Due to this reason they have lack of ability to design vision and coordinate the school community so as to lead for the implementation of school improvement program.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section presented the research methodologies that were employed to achieve the objective of study which encompasses description of the study area, design, sources of data, population and sampling techniques, target population, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, method of data analysis and ethical consideration were included

3.1. Description of the Study Area

This study was conducted in Bale Zone of Oromia Regional State of Ethiopia. Bale Zone is one of the Zone's in the Oromia Regional state. Bale is located in the east of Ethiopia; 430 km from Addis Ababa .This Zone is bordered on the north by the west Arsi Zone, on the west by the east Arsi Zone, on the southwest by Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region, by south Borana Zone ,at the east Somali regional state. Robe is the zonal city and some of the towns such as Goba, Ginir, Delomena, Agarfa, Dinsho and etc. are include in Bale Zone. Bale has 18woreda and 3 Administration towns. Bale Zone has one Government university, one Government teachers college, one Government agricultural college, 16 TVET, 24 preparatory schools and 55 secondary schools.

3.2. Research Design

Parakash (2005) described that a survey research design is important to collect a detailed descriptions of existing phenomenon with the intern of employing the data to justify current conditions and practice. Among different design, a descriptive survey design was employ for this study. This design was employ for the study because; it is a non-experimental research design, and descriptive research design can tell us about what is the existing at the present by determining the nature and the degree of existing condition. The research design which is appropriate to undertake, this study was descriptive research particularly survey study. The descriptive survey research design was selected with the assumption that helpful to obtained relevant information from concerned respondents on practices and challenges of principals to implementing school improvement program /SIP/ in secondary schools and to gain detailed data from large number of respondents to draw the necessary conclusion.

The research incorporated both quantitative and qualitative approaches that assessing the current practice and challenges principals faced in the implementations of school improvement program.(Kotheri(2005) describe that qualitative and quantitative research approach preferred because they enable researchers to make investigations with prediction of events, comparisons and drawing of conclusions based on the information obtain from relatively large and representative sample of the target population. The quantitative approach was incorporated in the study to validate and triangulate the quantitative data and qualitative approach was for the sake of understanding and describing the data practices and challenges of school principals in the implementation of school improvement program in narrative.

3.3. Sources of Data

3.3.1. Primary Sources

The primary source of data was collected from school principals, teachers, supervisor, PTA and educational office experts at their respective positions.

3.3.2. Secondary Source

The researcher got additional information about the study, the researcher was try to use document of plan and practice about school improvement so as to obtained what had been done in secondary schools of Bale Zone.

3.4. Population, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The researcher was selected the research areas (Woreda) by simple random sampling method specifically lottery method. Among 18 Woreda and 3 administrative towns, 8 woredas and 2 administrative towns were selected .One school from each woreda a total of 10 schools were selected. After selecting the sample schools from the total population size of teachers in the 10 sample schools 500, 222 teachers were taken as a sample size by Yemane (1967) sample size formula. The number of teachers in each school varied due to differences in the number of students. Therefore, to determine the sample size of teachers to be drawn from each selected school, a simplified formula for proportions to calculate sample sizes provided by Yamane (1967) was used.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \text{ and } \textit{For Proportions Constant \%} = \left(\frac{n}{N}\right) 100$$

$$\textit{For teachers} = \frac{500}{1+500(0.05)^2} = \frac{500}{2.25} = \underline{\underline{222}} \text{ and } \textit{For Proportions \%} = \frac{222}{500} \times 100 = \underline{\underline{44.4\%}}$$

(n=sample size, N=population size, e=error (0.05))

Numbers of the Parent Teacher's student Association (PTSA) were selected using random sampling technique. The principal, vice principal, supervisor and educational experts were selected based on non- probability sampling technique. Thus, the researcher has used purposive sampling techniques because these respondents are assumed to have the experiences, when they can share to the study as a result of their position and involvement in leading and facilitating the programs and their highly attachment with current resource. This is because it gives the researcher a chance to get more relevant and resourceful individuals. Additionally teachers were chosen by using simple random sampling technique, specifically lottery method. Lottery method was simple by writing the name of teachers in piece of paper. Simple random method or probability sampling technique was used to give equal chance for all potential sample frames.

The target populations of this study were secondary school teachers, principals, supervisors, parent-teacher- student-associations (PTSAs), woreda education office experts and zone education office experts in Bale Zone of Oromia regional state. Out of the 18 woredas and 3 administrative towns in the zone, 8 woredas and 2 administrative towns were selected by simple random sampling technique. Then, one school from each woreda was selected. The names of the woredas and schools included in the study were Agarfa woreda (Agarfa High School), Robe town (Galema Secondary School), Goba woreda (Misra Secondary School), Goba town (Batu Secondary School), Goro woreda (Goro Secondary School), Sinana woreda (Alemgena Secondary School), Gasera woreda (Gasera Secondary School), Dinsho woreda (Dinsho Secondary School), Goro woreda (Goro Secondary School) and Gindhir woreda (Delosebro Secondary School).

Table : Population, sample size and sampling techniques

No	Name of secondary school	Principal			Vic. Principal			Supervisor			PTA			Teachers			WEO focal expert			ZEB focal expert			Total		
		Pop	Sam	%	Pop	Sam	%	Pop	Sam.	%	Pop	Sam	%	Pop	Sam.	%	Pop	Sam.	%	Pop	Sam	%	Pop.	Sam.	%
1	Galama	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	64	28	44.0	-	-	-	1	1	100	77	40	46.7
2	Alemgena	1	1	100	2	1	100	1	1	100	7	7	50	32	14	44.0	-	-	-	1	1	100	45	26	48.8
3	Batu	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	82	36	44.0	-	-	-	1	1	100	95	48	46.31
4	Misra	1	1	100	2	1	100	1	1	100	7	7	50	18	8	44.4	1	1	100	-	-	-	30	19	50
5	Dinsho	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	50	22	44.0	1	1	100	-	-	-	62	33	46.7
6	Goro	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	54	24	44.4	1	1	100	-	-	-	66	35	46.9
7	Agarfa	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	59	26	44.0	1	1	100	-	-	-	71	37	46.4
8	Gasera	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	55	25	45.4	1	1	100	-	-	-	67	36	47.7
9	Bidire	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	24	11	45.8	1	1	100	-	-	-	36	22	50
10	Delosebro	1	1	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	7	7	50	62	27	43.5	1	1	100	-	-	-	74	38	45.9
	Sampling technique	purposive			Random sampling			purposive			Random sampling			Random sampling			Purposive			Purposive					

3.5. Data Collection Instrument

3.5.1. Questionnaires

For this study, both open-ended and close-ended questionnaires were developed for 222 teachers and 20 school principals. The questionnaires were designed and prepared in English used to collect data from respondents. Some of these questions were measured by using Likert scale. This approach is preferred due to its many fold advantages. Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003), have argued that Likert scale provides more flexibility to the respondents and affords greater accuracy in recording their views on given subject. Farther more, Best and Kahn (2004) have also added that Likert method is a summed rating that offers an interesting possibility for student descriptive study. The response on the practices and challenge of principal on the implementation of SIP was collected by using a Likert type of scale on five alternatives; very low = 1, low = 2, medium = 3, high = 4, very high = 5, based on this calculated mean value and interpreted as 1.00 - 1.49 = very low, 1.50 - 2.49 = low, 2.50 - 3.49 = medium, 3.50 - 4.49 = high and above 4.49 = very high (Aron et al., 2008)

The questionnaire had two parts; the first part was personal information of the respondents include sex, age, experience, position and name of the school. The second part was content of questionnaires developed from the related target of the study by referring the practices and challenge of principal in implementation of SIP in selected secondary school.

3.6.2. Documents Review

The documents were gathered for secondary data. Documents from school strategic plan, minutes and plan reports were used plan to obtained background data for the study and the researcher was used documents as reference for cross-checking the responses obtained from the respondents and also used for supporting the analysis of data.

3.5.3. Interview Guide

Interview questions were prepared to study the practices and challenge of principal in implementing SIP in selected secondary school of Bale zone. To set interview questions were prepared in English for educators and translate to Afan Oromo for not well or miss

understanding respondents. Interview was used by researcher to get supplementary information to validate the information obtained from the questionnaires. In addition, both structured and unstructured interview with educational experts and supervisors members of all 10 selected secondary schools of Bale zone. Taking some ideas from questionnaires and prepared in design with open-ended item for cross checking.

3.5.4 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussions were held with the members of PTSA. The issue of discussion was about the practices, problems and opportunities that were existed but which the schools principals did not use when implementing the school improvement program. In addition to that, the discussion forums were also made with seventy (70) PTSA who were enrolled in each school. Guiding questions were prepared for the group discussion.

3.6. Reliability and validity

To check the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted to examine the internal consistency of the items in each instrument type. To make necessary corrections and to maintain the reliability of instruments, pilot test was first carried out on non-sampled schools comprising 20 respondents (2 school principals, 18 teachers,) of the Alii Secondary School in Agarfa woreda before the final data collection was conducted. In the process of assessing validity, the researcher collects supporting comments from advisors and experienced experts. In light of the advisors' and experts' opinions, the items were improved in terms of language, format and content. In order to avoid test contamination, participants of pilot test were excluded in the main study. After the questionnaire were filled and returned the reliability and validity of the items was measured by using Cronbach's alpha method. The obtained test result was 0.823 was used to check the consistency of data collection instrument. According to Nunnally (1978) reliability coefficient of 0.7 higher is considered acceptable. Then, as the result indicated it was a good indicator of the internal consistency of the items.

3.7. Procedures of the Study

Before the actual data collecting activities were done, the researcher first would conduct literature search, identify and formulate research problem and accomplish the thesis proposal. After proposal defense, questionnaires were prepared and submitted to advisor to check the relevance. The expected relevant data was gathered by using questionnaires, interview and FGD. Next, the researcher obtain letter of cooperation from Haramaya University, Bale Zone and Wereda Education Office to secure permission letter to collect data. Then, the researcher was directly leads to each sampled school according to the schedule outlined and the researcher in every step followed all important ethical procedures until all required data was collected and completed from intended sampled schools.

As regard to the procedures for the administration of questionnaires and pre-testing, the researcher administered the pilot and final questionnaire. Prior to distributing the questionnaire, conducting interview and focus group discussion and made contact with the principals of the respective schools. Then, principals of each participating schools were contacted to arrange a date for the administration of the survey, interviews and focused group discussions among supervisors, and PTSA respectively in their respective schools and areas. On the arranged dates, the questionnaires were disseminated and retrieved with the assistance of school principals and their management teams at each school selected for the survey. Interview and focus group discussion, the researcher contacted the participants to obtain permission to participate in the interviews and discussion. Interview was conducted with educational experts and supervisors, focused group discussions were done with PTSA. The researcher collected data by taking note during the interview and focus group discussions. Finally, the researcher reorganized the data in categories and analyzes

3.8. Method of Data Analysis

Data was analyzed and interpreted with descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean and narrative description. Frequency and percent were used to interpreted the response out of the whole of respondents in relation to the whole or hundred percent. Mean used to compare and interpret response from the respondents with the response of each item in the table. The quantitative data was analyzed and the results have been record and organize in terms of number. The qualitative data collected through open ended

questionnaire, interview and document analysis. Data analyzed using through data gathering instrument from school principal, woreda experts and educational officers, secondary school supervisors, members of PTSA's and teachers , also the data gathered from observation and document review was enriched the analysis and interpretation of the study. Regarding the questionnaires, distributed to sample size of 222 teachers, 20 school principals.

3.9. Ethical Consideration

According to Best and Khan, (1999) involving participants in a research work, it is important considering the ethical principles lay down to protect them. Furthermore, all the participants were reassured of confidentiality by explaining to them that their names and other clues of their status were not documented in the study. The participants made to understand what had been explained and given the opportunity to ask questions and they were answered. The researcher was effort to made research professional and ethical. The researcher was explained the purpose, objective and advantage of the study to the school principals and respondents to obtained permission and voluntarily participation for the work of the study.

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter comprises two major parts. The first part presents the characteristics of respondents in terms of sex, age, academic qualifications and service years. The second part deals with the analysis and interpretations of the results obtained through the questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion. Out of 56 questionnaires distributed to selected schools, 50 (89.2%) were filled out by respondents and were returned. Data obtained through close-ended questionnaires were presented in tables and analyzed in terms of frequency, percentage and mean score of respondents. Data obtained through open-ended questionnaires, interview and documents were organized and presented through narrative description.

Item scores for each category were arranged under five rating scales. The range of the rating scales were strongly disagree (SDA) =1, disagree (DA) =2, Undecided (UD) =3, agree (A) =4 and strongly agree (SA) =5 (MoE, 2002). For the purpose of analysis, the above 5 rank responses of closed ended questionnaires were grouped and labeled in to three categories i.e. disagree, undecided and agree. In categorizing the rating scales, the percentage results of Undecided as it was, strongly disagree and disagree were combined in to disagree and the results of strongly agree and agree merged to agree.

4.1. Respondents' Characteristics

Respondents of the sampled schools were asked to indicate their age, gender, experience in secondary schools, experience as principals, experience at their present school and their educational background. These summaries of the data are shown in the table below.

Table 2 Characteristics of School Principals

Variables	Categories	Principals		Education officers	
		F	%	F	%
Sex	Male	10	100	10	90
	Female	-	-	1	10
	Total	10	100	11	100
Age	26-35	4	40	3	30
	36-45	4	40	8	80
	46-55	2	20	3	30
	Total	10	100	11	100
Level of Education	BA/BED/BSC	6	60	9	90
	MA/MSc	4	40	2	20
	Total	10	100	11	100
Area of	Academic subject	6	60	9	90
Specialization	Educ.Leadership	4	40	2	20
	Total	10	100	11	100
Total Experience at school both as teacher and principal	≤5years	-	-	1	10
	6-10years	4	40	2	20
	11-15years	2	20	2	20
	16-20years	2	20	4	40
	≥ 20 years	2	20	2	20
	Total	10	100	20	100
Total Experience as school principal	<3	3	30	-	-
	3-6	5	10	-	-
	12-15	2	20	-	-

As shown in the Table 2 above, four principals and three educational officials were between 26-35 years old. Four principals and 8 educational officials were between 36- 45 years old, and two principal and three educational officials were between 46-55 years old.

In terms of sex all principals and educational officials were males. Furthermore, concerning the experience of the principals and educational officials, four principals and two educational officials had 6-10 years of experience, and the other two principals and two educational officials had 11-15 years, two principal and four educational officials had 16-20 years, and two principal and two educational officials have ≥ 20 Total years of experience. As to experience as principal, three principals had less than 3 years, five of them have 3-6 years, and the rest two have 12-15 years. This implies that the majority (80%) of the school principals had more than 3 years of experience as school leaders. Additionally, all of the principals had been serving as teachers for more than 5 years. In terms of educational level, all school principals and assistant principal's had first degree. This means that are relevant respondents to provide appropriate and reliable data for the issues under study.

Table . Characteristics of Vice Principals and Teachers

Variables	Category	Respondents			
		Vice Principals		Teachers N=75	
		N	%	N	%
Sex	Male	9	90	158	71.6
	Female	1	10	64	28.8
	Total	10	100	222	100
Age	≤ 25 years	3	30	64	28.8
	26-35 years	4	40	65	29.2
	36-45 years	2	20	64	28.8
	46-55 years	1	10	31	13.9
	Total	10	100	222	100
Level of education	Diploma	-	-	12	5.4
	BA/BEd/BSC	10	100	208	93.6
	MA/MSc/	-	-	2	0.9
	Total	10	100	222	100
Total Experience at School	≤ 5 years	2	20	36	16.2
	6-10 years	5	50	52	23.42
	11-15 years	1	10	56	25.2
	16-20 years	1	10	38	17.1
	≥ 20 years	1	10	40	18.1
	Total	10	100	222	100

As shown in Table 3, 90% of vice principals and 71.6% of teachers were males. This suggests that less proportion of females participating in the issues related to school administration was very low compared to males' participation. As far as age of vice principals is concerned, 30% of the participants was 25 years and below, 40% were 26-35 years old, 20% were 36-45 years old, and 10% were 46-55 years old. This implies about two third of the vice principals were older than 35 years. Similarly, ages of teachers were found that 28.8% were 25-years and below, 29.2% were 26-35 years, 28.8% were 36-45, and 13.9 % were 46-55 years old. Here, again more than half of the teachers were older than 35 years. Thus, the majority of the respondents were older than 25 years old. Vice principals and teachers had various experiences. Accordingly, 50% of the vice principals had 6-10 years of experience, 10% of them had 11-15 years, 10 % of them 16-20 years of experience. Here, about 90% of the vice principals served for more than 10 years. When we see the experience of teachers, 25.2% were between 11-15 years, and 17.1% were 16-20 years and 18.1% teachers had experience of five years or less.

4.2. Results of the Empirical Data

Practices of principals in implementing school improvement program (SIP)

This section offers the practice and challenges of school principals in implementing SIP. More specifically, how principals implement SIP and what challenges they experienced while implementing it in relation to its four domains such learning and teaching, student environment, leadership and management and community involvement are presented.

4.2.1. Teaching-learning domain

This domain focuses on the actual interaction between teachers and school principals. The teaching-learning domain is implemented by school principal in the school is the result of the learning opportunities organized for teachers and students in the school system. Not much powerful and sustainable change happens in teaching learning process unless it happens in classrooms (Earl, 2003). The best way to improve and change students learning is to learn new skills and approaches. The following items presented in the table below were stated as the practices of principals in teaching-learning domain.

Table . Extent of implementation of teaching learning domain of SIP

No	Item	respondents	SA=5		A=4		UD=3		DA=2		SDA=1		Mean
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The principal works for highest academic achievement of students.	Principals	1	5	6	30	3	15	8	40	2	10	2.4
		Teachers	5	2.2	32	9.9	70	31.1	85	38.2	30	13.5	2.3
		Total	6	2.4	38	10.7	73	30.1	93	38.4	32	13.2	2.3
2	The principal is effective in developing team work in the school.	Principals	2	10	10	50	4	20	2	10	2	10	3.4
		Teachers	28	12.6	110	49.5	34	15.3	20	9	30	13.5	3.3
		Total	30	12.3	120	49.5	38	15.7	22	9.09	32	13.2	3.4
3	The principal understand the importance of school improvement program	Principals	2	10	4	20	12	60	2	10	-	-	3.3
		Teachers	12	5.4	19	8.5	130	58.5	40	18.0	21	9.4	2.7
		Total	14	5.7	23	9.5	142	58.9	42	17.3	21	8.6	3.0
4	The principal visits the class room to ensure instructional practice.	Principals	2	10	6	30	8	40	2	10	2	10	2.9
		Teachers	10	4.5	70	31.5	64	28.8	47	21.1	26	11.7	2.8
		Total	12	4.9	76	31.4	72	29.7	49	20.2	28	11.5	2.8
5	The principal works on continuous attendance of teachers.	Principals	5	25	9	45	4	20	3	15	0	0	4.0
		Teachers	34	15.3	100	51.3	28	12.6	35	15.7	25	11.2	3.6
		Total	35	14.4	109	50.8	32	13.2	38	15.7	25	10.3	3.8
6	The principal create conductive students learning environment.	Principals	0	0	11	55	4	20	3	15	2	5	3.26
		Teachers	15	6.7	118	53.1	29	13.0	31	13.9	29	13.0	3.24
		Total	15	6.1	131	54.1	31	12.8	34	14	31	12.8	3.2
7	Principal makes teachers to become positive role models for their students	Principals	4	20	8	40	3	15	3	15	2	10	3.4
		Teachers	19	8.5	123	55.4	26	11.7	34	15.3	20	9	3.3
		Total	23	9.5	131	59	29	11.9	37	16.6	22	9.9	3.3
8	Teachers use active learning strategies to encourage students.	Principals	4	20	5	25	4	20	5	25	2	5	3.2
		Teachers	11	4.9	99	49	32	14.8	70	31.5	10	4.5	3.2
		Total	15	6.1	104	59.5	36	15.2	75	30.9	12	4.9	3.2

Consequently, while the average score for all dimensions of teaching-learning did not reach 5.00 for very high agree response, there was some moderate agreement on its practices.

On close analysis; thus, item 1 of Table 4, the teacher and principal respondents were asked to rate, whether the principal works towards highest academic achievement of student or not, the mean value of both principals and teachers respondents were responded 2.4 and 2.3 respectively, which only 13.1% respondents were responded strongly agree and agree .Additionally 10 (50%) of principals and 115(41.7%) of teachers respondents were responded disagree. This shows that attention has not been given by principals in strongly working towards highest academic achievement of students.

In item 2 Table 4, the principals and teachers respondents were asked whether their principals have effective in developing team work in the school or not. As the table shows 12(60%) principals and 138(62.1%) teachers respondents believed that their school principals has effective in developing team work in the school. In similar to the above Donaldson (2007) raveled that school leaders exert influence on teachers and teaching practices because of both their role in motivating teachers and the collegial professional climate they create. From this the researcher conclude that the principals have effective in developing team work in the school at moderate level

In item 3 of Table 4 , the teacher and principals respondents were asked whether or not their school principals has the understanding of the importance of school improvement program plan 12(60%) of principals respondents and 130(58.9%) of teachers respondents were responded undecided. Additionally, total of 37(12.9%) respondents revealed agree and 63(25.9) respondents responded disagree. This implies that, principals have gap in understanding of the importance of school improvement program plan.

Item 4 of Table 4, was paying attention on the assessment of the principal visits the class room to ensure instructional practice or not. 8(40%) of principals and 80(36%) of teachers respondents responded that, the principals have visits the class room to ensure instructional practice. But the researcher couldn't get evidence which supplements the option of respondents. Additionally the researcher has observed that, the school plans did not include class observation.

Item 5 in table 4 the mean score of principals and teachers respondents rated 4.0 and 3.6, additionally principals 14 (70%) and teachers 134(64.9%) were responded strongly agree and agree. For this reason, it is concluded that the principal work strongly on continuous attendance of teachers.

Item 6 of Table 4 was assessed the principal works create conducive working environment for student learning. The principals and teachers responded with the mean score 3.26 and 3.24 and it was rated moderate. In line with this Estyn (2001) suggests that, healthy school environment for teaching and learning reflect confidence, trust and mutual respect for cooperation between staff, students, government, parents and wider community is essential for purposeful effort and achievement. Therefore, from this it can be conclude that, principal works create conducive working environment for student learning at moderate level.

As Table 4, item 7, indicated that 12(60%) of principals and 142(62.9%) of teachers respondents reported strongly agree and agree on “principal to make which teacher are positive role models for their student” respectively. This refers to the attitude of principals to make which teachers were positive role models for their students

In Table 4 item 8, shows 9(45%) and 120 (53.9) principals and teachers respondents strongly agreed and agreed on teachers use active learning strategies, to encourage students learning. In addition to this, the combined mean was 3.2 also implies that both group rated moderate performance that the extent to which teachers use methods such as active learning strategies, to encourage students to actively participate in the lesson. In this regarded, the MoE (2011) stated that teachers are the main actors among the stakeholders in the improvement of schools and growing of student out come. They are expected to use participatory teaching methods, initiate students to have active roles in laboratories, integrate students and the curriculum, give class work, home work, individual or group project works to their students. Therefore, from this data the researcher can concluded that the teachers use active learning strategies, to encourage students learning.

Generally, the score above the principals and teachers of selected secondary school were confirmed with almost nearer responses that the practices of principal in implementation of SIP related to teaching learning domain, the overall mean scores of both principals and teachers fell at moderate level with aggregated mean value of 3.3 and 3.2 respectively. In

line to this, Philip Holiger and Ronald H. (1998 and 2000), school principals “exercise a measurable, though indirect, effect on school effectiveness and student achievement.”

In addition the mean score was rated high for item 5 of Table 4, the respondents were asked to reply whether the principal work strongly on continuous attendance of teachers or not. The teachers rated with mean values 3.6 and the principals responded with mean value 4.0. This indicated that principals give more emphasis working on continuous attendance of teachers.

Concerning improving teaching and learning domain, interviews were conducted with WEBE. Accordingly, one of the interviewed WEBEs stated:

“.... rarely providing administrative support to inbuilt supervision, planning and executing implementing program (teaching and learning domain) in the school, organizing experience sharing programs among colleagues, organizing training opportunities to improve the quality of teaching, arranging skills development training on teaching method for teachers, encouraging the practice of curriculum and program development and rewarding teachers for effective teaching learning in their schools.”

In addition, response to an interview response of school supervisors and observation, it can be inferred that most of the sample schools had no teaching facilities such as seat, class room, laboratory and library services which hinders the teaching learning process. Therefore, from the above data, it can be deduced that the implementation of teaching learning domain in implementing SIP was at low level.

The woreda education experts said that there existed no proper practices of following up to check the appropriateness of the educational planning and evaluation. In addition to the above descriptions, PTSA in focused group discussion reported that there were no activities that could motivate students to learn.

In general from the above data the researcher can conclude that, the principals have average score on teaching-learning domain practices is somewhat distorted by the minimum perception on this domain. When we see the score closely principals have more work strongly on continuous attendance of teachers. However, the principals competitively

less works towards highest academic achievement of student. During document analysis, the researcher was observed that, the principals did not include the class observation in their plan.

4.2.2. School Leadership and Management Domain

In this section of the finding report of the school improvement activities in relation to school principals in implementing leadership and management domain were addressed. School principals had vital role for the effectiveness of school improvement program. Building leadership capacity is an important duty to carry out school improvement program properly. Supporting this ideas Harris and Linda Lambert (2003:38-39) revealed that school principals empowers others to lead and serving as a catalyst for changes

Table : Practices Principal Implementing Leadership and Management Domain of SIP.

No	Items	Respondents.	SA=5		A=4		UD=3		DA=2		SDA=1		mean
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The Principal develops SIP plan based on its assessment.	Principals	1	5	4	20	2	10	9	45	4	20	2.4
		Teachers	1	0.4	20	9	70	32.4	73	33.7	58	26.1	2.2
		Total	2	0.8	24	9.9	72	29.7	82	33.8	62	25.6	2.3
2	The principal capable to manage the school with external environment.	Principals	2	10	10	5	4	20	2	10	2	5	3.3
		Teachers	21	9.4	118	57.6	30	13.5	25	11.2	28	12.6	3.4
		Total	23	9.5	128	57.0	34	14.0	27	15.2	30	12.3	3.39
3	The principal share responsibility and accountability among staff.	Principals	2	5	9	45	4	20	3	15	2	5	3.3
		Teachers	22	9.9	113	50.9	38	17.1	22	9.9	27	12.1	3.2
		Total	24	9.9	122	50.4	42	17.3	25	10.3	29	11.9	3.2
4	The principal understands about SIP plan.	Principals	2	10	4	20	10	50	2	10	2	10	2.9
		Teachers	21	9.4	30	13.5	128	57.6	15	6.7	28	12.6	2.6
		Total	23	9.5	34	14.0	138	57.0	37	15.2	30	12.3	2.75
5	The principal has good communication with staff, student and PTSA.	Principals	3	15	11	55	2	10	2	10	2	10	3.5
		Teachers	25	11.2	117	57.2	30	13.5	28	12.6	22	9.9	3.6
		Total	28	11.5	128	52.8	32	13.2	30	12.3	24	10.8	3.5
6	School principal develops clear guide line for school.	Principals	4	20	9	45	4	20	2	10	1	5	3.6
		Teachers	19	8.5	118	53.1	27	11.1	32	14.4	26	11.7	3.3
		Total	23	9.5	127	52.4	31	12.8	34	14.0	27	11.1	3.4
7	The principal cooperatively work with stake holders for solving problems and making participatory decisions.	Principals	4	20	8	40	3	15	3	15	2	10	3.4
		Teachers	19	8.5	123	55.4	26	11.7	34	15.3	20	9.0	3.3
		Total	23	9.5	131	54.1	29	11.9	37	15.2	22	9.09	3.3
8	The principal creates collegial relationship in the school.	Principals	4	20	8	40	4	20	2	10	2	10	3.5
		Teachers	28	12.6	114	51.3	30	13.5	20	9	30	13.5	3.4
		Total	32	13.2	122	50.4	34	14.0	22	9.0	32	13.2	3.4

As the data shown in the item1 of Table 5, the principal developed SIP plan based on assessment. Accordingly, the principals' response with the mean value 2.4 and teachers responded with the mean value 2.2. Additionally, 13(65%) of principals and 131 (59.8%) of teachers revealed agree. From the two groups score, the researcher could be conclude that principals don't develop school improvement plan based on assessment.

For item 2 and 5 of Table 5, deals with the school principal capable to managing the school with external environment, principals and teachers response with mean value 3.3 and 2.7, respectively. However, the majority of teachers and principals responded as moderate. Therefore, it can be said that, school principals capable to managing the school with external environment is average. In line to this, Bossert (cited in Beyene D.2011) the leader must to control the external interruption of the instructional time.

Table 5, item 3, showed, 11 (55%) principals and 145 (59.5%) teachers were revealed strong agreed and agreed on the principal share responsibility and accountability among staff. It is showed that the principals sharing responsibility and accountability among staff. This explains that providing opportunities for the staff about teaching and learning and encourage teachers to observe each others. In line with this, Stein forth, (1992) pointed out, leader ship is not a role of one person.

From the same Table item 4, 6 (30%) principals and 51 (18.9%) teachers respondents responded agree. In addition 50% of principals and 52% of teachers responded that, principals have the understanding of school improvement program plan. During document analysis, the researcher has seen that most of the schools have school improvement program plan. From these the researcher concluded that, principals have the understanding of school improvement program plan at moderate level.

In item 5 Table 5, shows that principal had good communication with staff, student and PTA” It also revealed that 14 (70%) of principals and 152 (68.4) of teachers believed that principals had that kind of communication. This indicates the principals were able to better communicate with staff and PTSAs. This view coincides with the focus group discussion with PTSA in face to face verbal exchanges. One participant commented that “the school principal always has something positive to say during meetings”.

Item 6 of Table 6, assessed whether School principal developed guide line for school or not. Accordingly, 13 (65.5%) of principals and 137 (61.7%) teachers respondents responded that, School principal develop clear guide line for school. During the document analysis, the researcher observed that, in most schools guidelines were developed by principals. Additionally the researcher observed that most of the time principals work on discipline issue of the student.

Concerning Table 5 item 7, from the assessment 12(60%) of principals and 142(62.9%) of teachers responded strongly agreed and agreed on “the principal cooperatively work with stake holders for solving problems and making participatory decisions”. The researcher assessed the schools minutes most of the school based decision are take place on meeting , the majority vote principle are employed . The researcher concludes that the principals have well understanding of the participative decision making and cooperative work.

In item 8 of Table 5, the principal creates collegial relationship in the school was assessed. The mean score of teachers and principals respondents were 3.5 and 3.4 were responded strongly agree and agree respectively. This total mean lead the researcher to conclude that, the competency of the principal creates collegial relationship in the schools was high.

More than half of items the principals and teachers agreed that school principals have leadership skill to implement SIP and they rated at moderate level. This indicates that educational leadership skill of school principals were at moderate level. This shows that the competence of school principals to lead SIP were moderate. MCREL, 1999 pointed out that school leadership and management is the most crucial force in school improvement needs require qualified principals. Without qualified, skilled and sustained school principals at school, school improvement unlikely to be achieved.

Through the interview conducted with schools woreda and zonal education experts was found that schools prepared their strategic plan based on self-evaluation results. However, supervisors and PTSA confirmed that schools’ self-evaluations were not made in accordance with the guideline and standards. In this regard, supervisors had this to say:

The school principals made us to review the performance of schools without discussing the school improvement program frameworks. This made all of us not to have a good understanding of the SIP Framework. Therefore, findings suggested that the planning process of school improvement program was not participatory, according to which school principals would implement policies.

Therefore, from this evidences it can be concluded that the ability and skill of school principals are crucial factor in promoting school improvement program. Hence, to impalement school improvement programs effectively and sustainably school leader ship capacity has to be enhanced. The overall skill and commitment of the school principals in

the studied school ,leadership and management domain was not reach to target and the expected attainment, on the ground the principals were not strong enough to address this domain

4.2.3. Create conducive learning environment

School improvement framework (MOE, 2007:6) suggested that schools should create a learning environment that could effectively meet the diverse needs of the learners. School class rooms should be neat, conducive and attractive in order to inspire students' motivation and learning process. Safety and conducive- learning environment helps school leaders, teachers and students to feel secured and to put in more efforts in their teaching so that they can achieve their maximum potential for teaching and learning process.

Table . Principals practices to implementing creating of conducive teaching – learning domain of SIP.

No	Items	Respondents	SA=5		A=4		UD=3		DA=2		SDA=1		Mean value
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The principal encourages staff for creating safe and health environment.	Principals	3	15	11	55	3	15	2	10	1	5	3.5
		Teachers	19	8.5	113	50.9	32	14.4	32	14.4	26	11.7	3.3
		Total	22	9	124	51.2	35	14.4	34	14	27	11.5	3.4
2	The principal mobilize resources effectively and efficiently	Principals	2	10	4	20	10	50	2	10	2	10	2.9
		Teachers	21	9.4	30	13.5	108	53.1	35	15.7	28	12.6	2.6
		Total	23	9.5	34	14.0	118	57.0	37	15.2	30	12.3	2.7
3	The principal work to improve students' disciplinary problems.	Principals	6	30	7	35	3	15	2	10	2	10	3.4
		Teachers	22	9.99	85	38.2	61	27.4	27	12.1	27	12.1	3.2
		Total	28	11.5	92	44.2	64	26.4	29	11.9	29	11.9	3.3
4	The principal works to make attractive school ground.	Principals	0	0	11	55	4	20	3	15	2	10	3.0
		Teachers	12	5.4	100	45	70	31.5	29	13	11	4.9	2.9
		Total	12	4.9	111	45.8	74	33.3	32	13.2	13	5.3	2.9
5	The principal works for making sufficient school facilities for students.	Principals	4	20	8	40	3	15	3	15	2	10	3.4
		Teachers	19	8.5	123	55.4	26	11.7	34	15.3	20	9	3.3
		Total	23	9.5	131	54.1	29	11.9	37	15.2	22	9.09	3.3

In Table 6 item 1 shows, 14(70%) of principals and 137(61%) Of teachers respondents were responded agree on the principal encouraged staff to create safe and healthy environment for learning of students. Accordingly the principals mean score 3.5 and teachers mean score 3.3. From this it was concluded that the principals have good competency in creating good student relation in the school. This result is consistent with Highland council Education, culture and sport Service (2010), for education in school to be effective, the environment need to be conducive to learning ,allowing the pupils space and time to interact within the learning and teaching process.

Item 2 in the Table 6, the respondents were responded to rate the principal uses and mobilize resources effectively and efficiently. The mean of principals respondents were responded 2.9 and the mean score of teachers' respondents were responded 2.6 .The score obtained from principals and teachers' respondents shown us, the principals have average competency and skill in implementing mobilize resources effectively and efficiently.

Item 3 of Table 6, the principal work to improve students' disciplinary problems in school was assessed .the mean score of principals respondents were revealed 3.4 and mean score of teachers respondents were revealed 3.2, additionally 13(65%) of teachers and 107(48.1%) of teachers responded strongly agree and agree. Therefore, it can be concluded that, principals engage in working to improve students' disciplinary problems in school.

In items 4 of Table 6, principals and teachers respondents responded on "the principal work to make attractive school ground". They have rated as medium with mean value of between 3.0 and 2.9 respectively. Besides 11(55%) of principals and 142(50.2%) of teachers rated strong agree and agree. However, the overall mean score of respondents of principals and teacher were at moderate level.

As it is revealed in item 5 of Table 6, 12(60%) and 142(63.9%) principals and teachers respondents were respectively responded strongly agree and agreed on the adequacy of teaching and learning materials, while 5(20%) principals and 54(24.9%) teachers were disagreed on the issue and 3(15%) of principals and 26(11.7%) of teachers were asked decided. therefore the researcher conclude that ,The principal more emphasized work to make sufficient school facilities for student such as latrine, library, laboratory, seat.

Generally, Table 6 indicated that the opinions of respondents on the implementation of conducive learning environment in each sample schools, as seen from the data, for all of the items listed with total mean responses of principals were found between 2.6 and 3.5 at medium level respectively. Similarly, teachers' respondent for items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 they were rated as medium with mean value of 3.3, 2.6, 3.2 and 2.9. 3.3. Besides, the overall mean score of the respondents of principals and teachers were at moderate level with average mean of 3.04 and 2.98 respectively.

From the two groups, possible to perceives that principals in each sample school have similar perception on the making of safety and conducive learning environment. On the other hand, data collected from field observation on suitability of classroom for teaching-learning process also revealed that moderate level, but not as it is required to be. However, the researcher observed that there were attempts to make some school compound attractive for school community and to facilitate teaching learning process. Regarding to safety and health relationships among school communities', data were collected from focus group discussion with PTA reported that the school environment is safe and health; it is without harassment and suited to the teaching and learning activities.

Additionally, the researcher observed about adequacy of latrine provided for both genders showed that there were three of sample schools have toilet which was separated by common wall. However, seven schools separate latrine for both genders at different places. This showed that adequacy of latrine provided for both genders were satisfactory; but, the latrines quality is differing from school to school. Consequently, as can be from seen above can be concluded that there has been a good attempt in each school, regarding to make school safe and conducive environment for learning. It can also be concluded from the same information that school principals to spend more time in school compound to facilitate teaching learning process.

Based on the responses of the respondents the researcher can be concluded that, there was health relationship among school communities, this facilitates teaching learning processes in the study area. According to Louis (2010).principals influence learning by creating working conditions on which motivated teachers are provided the opportunity to work as professionals. Thus, creating conducive school environment play a great role in improving students learning.

4.2.4. Participating community

Table : The Principals' Practices of Implementing Community Participation in Domain of SIP.

n o s	Item	Responder s	SA=5		A=4		UD=3		DA=2		SDA=1		mean
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The principal involves parents and community for supporting school material, labor and money.	Principals	2	10	6	30	8	40	2	10	2	10	2.9
		Teachers	10	4.5	70	31.5	69	31	47	21.1	26	11.7	2.8
		Total	12	4.9	76	31.4	77	31.8	49	20.2	28	11.5	2.8
2	The principal involves stake holders to participate in planning of SIP	Principals	1	5	4	20	2	10	9	45	4	20	2.4
		Teachers	1	0.4	20	9	72	32.7	71	31.9	58	26.1	2.2
		Total	2	0.8	24	9.9	74	30.5	80	33	62	25.6	2.34
3	The principal has been well coming the parents	Principals	1	5	4	20	2	10	9	45	4	20	2.4
		Teachers	1	0.4	20	9	72	32.2	75	33.3	54	24.3	2.2
		Total	2	0.8	24	9.9	74	30.5	84	34.7	58	23.9	2.32
4	The principal has good relation with school community to promote community participation	Principals	1	5	11	55	3	15	3	15	2	10	3.0
		Teachers	12	5.4	40	18.0	70	31.5	69	31	31	13.9	2.8
		Total	13	5.3	51	21	73	30.1	72	29.7	33	13.6	2.9
5	The principal has been well coming for PTSA.	Principals	4	20	8	40	4	20	2	5	2	5	3.5
		Teachers	16	7.2	132	59.4	31	13.9	36	16.2	7	3.1	3.5
		Total	20	8.2	140	57.8	35	14.4	38	15.7	9	3.7	3.5
6	The principal encourages parents give comments on their children's academic performance.	Principals	0	0	2	10	7	35	9	45	2	10	2.4
		Teachers	8	3.6	20	9.0	34	15.3	130	58.5	30	13.5	2.3
		Total	8	3.3	22	9.9	41	16.9	139	57.4	32	13.2	2.3

The responses of item 1 in Table 7, show that the respondents 4 (20%) and 73 (32.8%) of principals and teachers on principal involve parents and the community for supporting school material, labor and money were rated disagree perspective. On the other hand, out of the total respondents, 88(43.4%) rated as high while 77(31.9%) respondents as moderate. The total percentage mean values for principals and teachers rated 2.9 and 2.8 moderate level respectively.

However, item 2 and 3 of Table 7, whether the principal involves stake holders to participate in planning SIP and the principal has well coming for parents or not, principals and teachers respondents were rated low with the total mean score 2.34 and 2.32 respectively. In addition, 55% of both respondents were responded disagree. This implies that the participation of stake holders in implementing SIP plan and the involvement parent were low. According to Nair, (2004) the basic idea in introducing planning is to insure involvement of all agencies concerned with education specially teachers, pupil, and parents in the planning process. However, the existing situation in the school contradicts this assumption.

While Item 4 of Table 7, the principal has good relation with school community to promote community participation or not, the mean score obtained from principals and teachers were 3.0 and 2.8 respectively rated moderate. In addition to this, combined mean was 2.9 also implies that both group rated moderate performance that the principal has good relation with school community to promote community participation was at medium level.

As Table 7 item 5, focuses the principals involving PTSA in SIP with the mean value 3.5 principals and teachers were responded high. This clearly shows that, with clear terms of mandates, utilization of PTSAs system would bring about in school improvement program activities. This in agreement with Fullan (1991) (cited in Kedir, 2015) who states that members PTSAs were on duty every time to see the orderly behavior of students and develop such character as self-sacrifice, integrity, cooperation, locality and consideration for other and empower staff on school improvement program

However, principals and teachers, with total mean score 2.78 and 2.61 on the principals' practices of implementing community participation in domain of SIP rated moderate respectively. This showed no significance difference between the respondents group with regarding principals involving community participation in SIP implementation.

Similarly, response of FGD indicates the principals' participation to involve community in SIP implementation was low as most of the time they were participate on meeting when school open and closed. This implies that the participation of community in SIP implementation was low.

From the above data, such minimum mean scores indicate that a number of teachers had minimally agreed with the minimum participation of community in school improvement program in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation. Thus, it could be said that a number of teachers have minimal faith in their principals' abilities to work very closely with parents and communities to improve participatory planning and implementation of SIP at school level. Thus, education might not be more relevant and suitable for students in such schools because parents have not a say in what teachers are teaching and how they are doing. This is due to lack of commitment to involve about the SIP implementation.

However, to enhance community participation on SIP implementation, it is mostly school principals' responsibility to aware and motivates the community actively to participate in the issue of the school. Finally, the researcher can concluded that insufficient involvement of school community is one of the challenges faced to principals in the implementation School Improvement Program (SIP).

4.2.5. Challenges faced by principals in implementing SIP

Table . Assessing the problems (challenges) principal faced in implementing SIP

n o .	Item	Responder s	SA=5		A=4		UD=3		DA=2		SDA=1		Mean
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The principal involves stake holders in the implementation of SIP.	Principals	0	0	2	10	7	35	9	45	2	10	2.4
		Teachers	8	3.6	20	9.0	24	10.8	140	63.0	30	13.5	2.3
		Total	8	3.3	22	9.9	31	12.8	149	61.5	32	13.2	2.3
2	Principal is committed to implementing SIP	Principals	-	-	4	20	11	55	3	15	2	10	2.8
		Teachers	15	6.7	22	9.9	70	31.5	85	38.2	30	13.5	2.3
		Total	15	6.5	26	10.7	81	33.4	88	36.3	32	13.2	2.5
3	Insufficient school facilities (lack of laboratory, library and pedagogical centers) hinder the implementation of SIP	Principals	1	5	4	20	2	10	9	45	4	20	2.4
		Teachers	1	0.4	20	9	68	80.6	75	33.3	58	26.1	2.2
		Total	2	0.8	24	9.9	70	28.9	84	34.7	62	25.6	2.3
4	Lack of training made influence on educational leadership	Principals	1	5	6	30	3	15	8	40	2	10	2.4
		Teachers	5	2.2	32	14.4	70	31.5	85	38.2	30	13.5	2.3
		Total	6	2.4	38	15.7	73	30.1	93	38.8	32	13.2	2.3
5	Lack of financial resource is a great problem in the implementation of SIP.	Principals	1	10	11	55	3	15	3	15	2	10	3.0
		Teachers	12	5.4	40	18.0	70	31.5	89	40.0	31	13.9	2.8
		Total	13	5.3	51	21.0	73	30.1	92	38.0	33	13.6	2.9
6	The principal has not competent enough awareness to implement SIP.	Principals	2	10	10	50	4	20	2	10	2	10	3.1
		Teachers	10	4.5	100	45.0	47	21.1	43	19.3	22	9.9	3.0
		Total	12	4.9	110	45.4	51	21.0	45	18.5	17	7	3.0
7	Lack of supervision influence on SIP implementation.	Principals	2	10	6	30	8	40	2	10	2	10	2.9
		Teachers	15	6.7	70	31.5	64	28.8	47	21.1	26	11.7	2.8
		Total	17	7.0	76	31.4	72	29.7	49	20.2	28	11.5	2.8
8	The principal has cooperative to work with school community	Principals	-	-	4	20	11	55	3	15	2	10	2.8
		Teachers	12	5.4	19	8.5	130	58.5	40	18.0	21	9.4	2.7
		Total	12	4.9	23	9.5	141	58.2	43	17.7	23	9.5	2.75

In item 1 of Table 8, the respondents were asked to rate the skill and competency of their principals in the principal involves stake holders in the implementation of SIP. The mean score obtained from the teachers respondents were 2.3; while the mean score obtained from school principals were 2.4. This shown us, principals could not attract the stakeholders in planning and implementation of the school improvement program. Controversial to this, (Biech, 2010) suggested effectiveness of the school system requires an atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and cooperation between school principals and their subordinate developed around the goal and the vision of their schools

The data indicated in the item 2 Table 8, above have shown that principals with mean value of 2.8 replied that shortage of commitment on the part of the principals was mostly affecting their effectiveness, while teachers with the mean value of 2.3. This indicates that the problems were found to be the top series problems to the effectiveness of principals in SIP implementation, the problem of commitment of principals in influencing their implementation as found to be observed always in the schools where this study was conducted .

A close inspection of table 8 item 3 discloses that insufficient school facilities (such as lack of laboratory, library, toilet, pedagogical centers and other teaching material. Principals and teachers were responded disagree with total mean value 2.3. This implied that, school principals did not provide a service to teach and students' basic instructional needs by collecting resource and materials. Contrast to this, Lieithwood and Jantzi (1990) as cited in Kedir, 2015 Yusuf) called ; it is mobilizing resources and leader ship behavior that described as rallying personnel, building and community resources, including material as well as information.

Accordingly, in item 4 of Table 8, Shortage of training on educational leadership was assessed. The mean score of teachers respondents were 2.3. This value was supplemented by the responses of principals respondents responded with mean value of 2.4. Therefore, it can be concluded that, shortage of training on educational leadership given for principals had been mostly affecting the principals in the implementation of SIP.

In Table 8, item 5, shows, 12(60%) of principals and 52 (23.4) of teachers respondents replies either agree or strongly agree that lack of financial resource to implement SIP is a problem. Accordingly, the principals and teachers respondents responded moderate with

the mean value 3.0 and 2.8 respectively. This result implies, lack of financial resource to implement SIP is a problem is average

This, additionally item, 6,7 and 8 ,principals and teachers respondents replies on, lack of awareness, and incompetence of school principals to lead SIP, Lack of supervision and cooperatively work with school communityare respectively the next challenges hindering the implementation of SIP at a moderate level with mean values 3.0,2.8and2.7 respectively. The overall mean score of both respondents of principals and teachers showed moderate level with aggregated mean score of 2.6 and 2.68 respectively. Moreover, which indicated that the listed expect challenges affect negatively at moderate level in sample schools.

On the other hand, data collected from secondary school supervisors through interview reported that shortage of finical resources are the most determinant factors that affect SIP implementation; since the school grant budget allocated for schools was not enough to keep effective schools improvement process. Besides, the respondents reported that lack of commitment of teachers is the critical one that negatively affects SIP implementation.

Therefore, to overcome this problem more awareness creation should be done by school principals and concerned bodies. Through open ended questions both respondents asked to describe additional challenges that hinder the proper implementation of SIP. In addition, they complained that resource allocation to SIP implementation is not enough and community participation to support schools in implementation of SIP program was low. As Blauw(1998)further put it large shortcoming in the provision of resources, facilities and equipment ; overcrowded class room ; lack of management skills needed to deal with the challenges of school management which are crucial to forming around culture of learning and teaching in school and poor relation among principals, educators, learners and parents.

Generally, the researcher can be concluded that smooth implementation of school improvement program was faced to principals, by different problems encountered at different levels.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

This final part of the thesis deals with the summary of the findings of the study, the conclusions and the recommendations forwarded on the basis of findings.

5.1. Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was triad to assess and analyze practices and challenges of principals towards school improvement programs. The main objectives (finding) of the study are:

- ❖ The first objective was to analyze the current practices of principal's in the implementation of School Improvement Program in Bale zone selected school.
- ❖ The second objective was to identify the challenges of principals in the implementation of SIP in Bale zone selected secondary school.
- ❖ The last objective of the investigation was to find out which of the four domains that have been properly implemented in Bale zone selected secondary school.

To attain the intended objectives, the researcher were used descriptive survey. Methods of the research incorporated a mixed methods design, consisting of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative research is best used to discover themes and relationships at the case level, while quantitative research is best used to validate those themes and relationships in samples and population. To select the samples of the study, simple random sampling and purposive sampling technique were used. The Zone was selected because of the researcher work experience in the Zone. Thus, the researcher believed that conducting the study in the Zone makes easier to access the data.

There are 18 woredas and 2 administrative towns in the Zone; among these 8 woreda and 2 administrative towns were selected using simple random sampling techniques .For this study total populations size and total sample size were 620 and 292 respondents respectively. Of the total sample size of the five groups were involving 222 teachers, 20 school leaders, 10 educational experts, 10 supervisors and 30 PTSA members as sources of information. Questionnaires were distributed for teachers and principals, all the school supervisors and educational officials were interviewed. As much as possible 50% of PTSA were included in the study. By the document analysis, the school plan, minutes were assessed and group discussions were used as instrument of data collection.

In this study the current practices of principal's implementation of School Improvement Program the selected schools in Bale Zone were assessed .Accordingly, the central focus of SIP is enhancing students' achievement so as to bring quality of education .In most of the schools, the result of the study showed that, the principal develop SIP plan based on assessment, and they were rated low with aggregated mean value of 2.4 and 2.2 for both respondents of principals and teachers, respectively. The survey conducted come up with result that showed low level of performance in practices of planning that reveals all sample schools prepared one or three years SIP plan without making self-evaluation and identifying problem areas. Similarly, the principals did not involve stakeholders and coordinate to develop the SIP plan and implement. The responsibility of planning was remaining in the hands of school principals. Since the present practices of these factors were at minor, moderate and considerable points, there appeared to be difficult to implement school improvement program in these schools.

This study was also assessed the challenges of principals encountered in the implementation of SIP in Bale zone selected secondary school, most common cited factors affecting the implementation of SIP as responded by the entire respondent groups revealed the shortage of budget for implementation of SIP, insufficient school facilities (lack of laboratory, library and pedagogical centers), lack of follow-up and supervision on SIP implementation, lack of commitment of principals in the implementation of SIP found to be the first four top series problems that faced to school principals in the implementation of SIP. Following the low stakeholders' involvement in SIP implementation, lack of training, and incompetence of school principals to lead SIP were the next challenges hindering principals in the implementation of SIP at moderate level with mean values 2.5 to 3.2.

The other objective of the study was to find out which of the four domains that have been properly implemented in Bale zone selected secondary school.The purpose of school improvement program is to increase students'achievement or education and improving the necessary resources for education and to create suitable condition for learning. But in its three domains (teaching-learning, safety and conducive learning environment, and leadership and managing) the study revealed that they were moderate. This is due to the problem of supplying schools with materials and facilities, (for instance, library and laboratory).One of the domains (community participation) is low. Moreover, the study

showed that there was weak involvement of stake holders (teachers, students and parents) in the planning and implementation of SIP plan.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

The study revealed that the planning of SIP for implementation in the most schools didn't involve conducting self-evaluation, identifying and prioritizing the problems. Moreover, there was weak involvement of stakeholders (teachers, students and parents) in the planning of SIP, the responsibility of planning remained in the hands of school leaders due to lack of commitment of leaders to invite stakeholders in planning. This implies that low involvement of stakeholders in planning and implementing SIP was the most challenge that affecting the school principals' task of implementing SIP in the secondary schools found in Bale zone.

It was also found out that the over-all process of school improvement program practices tends to lack proper planning and participation of others. On the other hands, in the school improvement program guidelines, it stated that school improvement program requires a broad-based effort by the entire community; including all stakeholders, involving during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school improvement program.

Generally, insufficient school facilities, lack of training on school improvement program implementation strategies, low level of stakeholders' participation, low level of supervisors' monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were challenges school principals encountered in the implementation of school improvement program in the zone. This seemed resulted from the low consideration given to the importance of School Improvement Program. School principals are more effective in their responsibilities and duties, if they were visionary and instructional leaders. In addition, the study indicated that lack of commitment; skills and competence of school principals in the implementation of SIP were problems of in sampled schools.

5.3. Recommendations

As shown above, practices of the principals in implementing school improvement program in the selected schools were found to be moderate due to various reasons, as already discussed above. The major challenges were lack of commitment and training on planning, organizing and implementation of SIP. Additionally the principals had lack of awareness on instructional leadership and being busy with routines that have less strategic relevance for the realization of schools improvement planning and implementation. The findings were implies that the planning process of school improvement program was not participatory, and lack of committed stakeholders in the schools were the other problems. It is hoped that by addressing the problems it would be possible to improve principals' leadership practice in the implementation of SIP; more over the following possible recommendations were made:

In order to implement SIP in line with the frame work, it is advisable that Zonal education department and WEO carry out their responsibilities and ensure effective implementation school improvement program by creating awareness and provide sufficient training for principals and stakeholders by Zonal Education Departments and WEO to carry out their responsibilities and to implement effectively school improvement program.

It is advisable that school principals need to use the scarce resources efficiently and effectively for the prioritized activities of the school improvement program.

The study indicated that community participation is low; this implies that school principals put in less effort to enhance their participation in implementation of SIP. Therefore, the researcher felt to recommend that the principals to implement teaching learning process in line with the standard set in the SIP frame work, the school principals discuss with all stakeholders (School community, parents, teachers, student, governmental organization and NGO's) regularly on implementation of school improvement program and should get more community participation for the implementation SIP.

It is desirable that the Woreda Education Offices better be responsible to assign the competent and skilled professionals' as secondary school principals,, because it is important that the assigned principals should be continuously monitored, guided and motivated by more competent and committed bodies. It is also advised that, Woreda

Education Offices in collaboration with Zonal Education Offices need to identify the gap and give sustainable training that can enhance school principals' capacity

Finally, Secondary school leaders should make great effort to solve or minimize these challenges by evaluating themselves and through feedbacks given to them on their day to day activities.

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7. APPEDICES

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANEGEMENT

Appendix I

General instructions

A. Questionnaire to be completed by School principals and Teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information on the effectiveness and challenge of principals in the implementation of school improvement program. It is only for academic purpose and does not personally affect you. Hence your honest response is vital for the success of this study and you are kindly requested to respond carefully and honestly.

Thank you for your cooperation

APPEDIX I**1. Personal Information for teachers and vice -principals**

1.1. Name of Your School _____

Woreda _____

School Level 1-4 1-6 1-8 1.2. Sex Male Female 1.3. Level of education certificate diploma Degree other 1.4. Service year in teaching 15 6-10 1-15 16-
20 above 201.5. Position Teacher Principal

1.5. Any relevant training taken _____

1.6. Have you got principal ship training (for principals only) yes

Part two

You are kindly requested to show your level of fillings by making **tick()**, ranging 1 to 5

1= highly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Undecided; 4= Agree; 5= highly agree

Table : Extent Implementation of Teaching Learning Domain SIP

No	Item	Scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	The principal works towards highest academic achievement of student.					
2	The principal is effective in developing team work in the school.					
3	Your principal understand the importance of written school improvement program					
4	The principal visits the class room to ensure instructional practice.					
5	The principal work strongly on continuous attendance of teachers					
6	The principal works create conducive working environment to learning of student.					
7	Principal to make which teacher are positive role models for their student					
8	The principal The principal works towards highest academic achievement of student					

Highly disagree =1, Disagree= 2, Undecided =3, Agree= 4, highly agree= 5

Table : Practices Principal Implementing Leadership and Management Domain

No	Item	Rating scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	The principal develop SIP plan based on assessment.					
2	The principal capable to managing the school with external environment					
3	The principal share responsibility and accountability among staff					
4	The principal has adequate capacity to implement SIP.					
5	The principal has good communication with staff, student and PTA					
6	School principal develop clear guide line for school					
7	The principal cooperatively with stake holders for solving problems and making participatory decisions.					
8	The principal creates collegial relationship in the school.					

Table : Principals Practices to Implementing Creating ofConducive Teaching – Learning Domain of SIP

No	Item	Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The principal encourages staff for creating safe and heath environment for learning of students.					
2	The principal uses and mobilize resources effectively and efficiently					
3	The principal work to improve students disciplinary problems in school					
4	The principal work to make attractive school ground					
5	The principal work to make sufficient school facilities for student such as latrine, library, laboratory, seat					

Table : The Principals' Practices of Implementing Community Participation in Domain Of SIP

No	Item	Scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	The principal involve parents and the community for supporting school material, labor and money.					
2	The principal involves stake holders to participate in planning SIP					
3	The principal has well coming for parents					
4	The principal has good relation with school community to promote community participation					
5	The principal has well coming for parents					
6	The principal encourages parents give comments on their children's academic performance					

Table : Assessing the Problems (Challenge) Principal in Implementing SIP.

N	Item	Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The principal involves stake holders in the implementation of SIP.					
2	Principal is committed to implementing SIP					
3	Insufficient school facilities (lack of laboratory, library and pedagogical centers) to hinder the implementation of SIP					
4	Shortage of training on educational leadership					
5	Lack financial resource to implement SIP is a problem					
6	The principals was not competent enough awareness to implementing SIP					
7	Lack of supervision and allocation of resources on SIP implementation is a problem					
8	The principal has cooperative to work with staff and school community					

2. Open ended question

1. What are the main challenges that face to principal when to implement SIP?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. What are the strengthens of principal in implementing SIP?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix II

General instructions

A. Interviews to be completed by supervisor and educational officers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information on the effectiveness and challenge of principal implementing school improvement program. It is only for academic purpose and does not personally affect you. Hence your honest response is vital for the success of this study and you are kindly requested to respond carefully and honestly.

Thank you for your cooperation

Part one**1. Personal Information educational officers and supervisors**

1.1. School name _____

Woreda _____

School Level 1-8 1-9 1-12 1.2. Sex Male Female 1.3. Level of education certificate diploma Degree other 1.4. Service year in 15 10 15 16-20
above 20

1.5. Any relevant training taken _____

Part I: Interview questions

1. Do you think that your principal has interpersonal communication and relationship with all school community? Can you describe the relationship? How do you judge your principal interpersonal skill? Can you support your response with practical evidence?
2. What problems does your school principal face in performing his/her tasks as school leader?
3. Do you think that school principals have been successful in setting their school vision and goals? Have you cross checked how closely school goal align with the national goal? What is your role?
3. Has your principal prepared any opportunity for students who need extra time to learn? Please describe.
5. How would you describe the relationship of school principals within their subordinate sand staff as a whole? How do you judge their interpersonal skill? Are they good in producing comprehensive report and report on time? Can you support your response with practical evidence?
6. What problems does your school principal face in performing his/her tasks as school leader?

Appendix III

(Sagantaa Barnoota Digrii Lammaffaa)

Gaaffii Marii Garee Bakkabu'oota GMBB tiin guutamu (FGD for PTSA). Jaalatamtoota :Hirmaattota

Kaayyoon gaaffii qomaa kanaa Manneen Baranootaa Sadarkaa 2ffaa saayikilii 1ffaa Godina Baalee keessatti raawwiisa gantaa foyya'insa manneen barnootaaila alchisee bu'a qabeessummaa Dura bu'oota manneen barnootaa sadarkaa 2 ffaa qorachuuf odeeffannoo funaanuudhaaf. Kanafuu milkaa'ina qorannookanaatiif haqummaafi dhugummaan odeeffannoo isin kennitan gahee guddaa qaba waanta'eef gaaffilee kanaaf deebii sirrii akka keennitan kabajaan isin gaafachaa mariigaree kanakeessatti odeeffannoon isin keennitan kaayyoo qorannoo kanaaf qofa akka oolu isin hubachiisna.

Gargaarsa Keessaniif baay'eegalatoomaa!

Kutaa 1 ffaa Ragaa

Dhuunfaa Maqaamana

barumsaa _____

Saala: Dhiira _____ Dhalaa _____ Sadarka barnootaa _____ Muuxxannoo

KGMBB tauudhaan _____

Qajeelfama II: gaaffiilee Marii garee armaan gadiitiif deebii sirrii kennaa

Group Discussion (Gaaffiilee Marii Bakka Bu’oota Koree GMBB)

Group Discussion for PTA representatives.

1. Did the school principal introduce you what the school improvements are?
2. The principal has good relationship with PTA to improving SIP?
3. What are the problems for school principal to implement the SIP?
4. What solution do you suggest the principal to solve the problems?

Gaaffii afaanii bakkabu’oota GMBB tiif.

1. Durabu’aan mana baruumsaa waa’ee sagantaan fooyya’iins amana baruumsaa isiniifibsaa?
2. Dura bu’aan manabaruumsaa sagantaa FMB hojiirra oolchuufyookaanfooyyeessuufhariiroocimaakoree GMB waliinumaa ?
3. Sagantaa FMB hojiirraoolchuufraakkooleenijoota’anjettumaali ?
4. Rakkooleendurabu’aabirajiranakkamittifuramu ?yaadakankeekenni.
5. Sagantaa Fooyya’iinsa Mana Barnootaa hojiirra oolchuu keessatti dura bu’aan mana baruumsaa keessan hawwasa hirmaachisaa? Yoo hin hirmaachisin dandeenye maaliif.

Galatoomaa .

Appendix IV

Each Sample Schools	Year in E.C.	No of students set for national examinations			No of students score 2.0 and above			No of students score below 2		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Total ten Sample Schools in each year	2015	1406	1070	2476	746	550	1296	660	520	1180
		In %			53.05	51.4	52.3	46.9	48.5	47.6
	2016	1484	1268	2752	950	800	1750	534	468	1002
		In %			64	63	49	35	36	36
	2017	1656	1562	3218	900	790	1690	756	772	1528
		In %			54.3	50	52	48	49	47

Bale Zone selected Secondary schools, grade 10 students' national examination from 2015-2017 (Source Bale Zone Education office)