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School Improvement Program in Secondary Schools of The Amhara Region: an Assessment of Preparation, Practice, Implementation, Challenges, and Opportunities

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BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE AMHARA REGION: AN ASSESSMENT OF PREPARATION, PRACTICE, IMPLEMENTATION, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

BY

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April, 2026

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES, BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION POLICY AND LEADERSHIP

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Declaration

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “School Improvement Program in Secondary Schools of the Amhara Region: An Assessment of Preparation, Practice, Implementation, Challenges, and Opportunities”, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education Policy and Leadership of Department of Educational Planning and Management, Bahir Dar University, is a record of original work carried out by me and has never been submitted to this or any other institution to get any other degree or certificates. The assistance and help I received during the course of this investigation have been duly acknowledged.

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Approval of Dissertation

I hereby certify that I have supervised, reviewed, and evaluated the dissertation titled "School Improvement Program in Secondary Schools of the Amhara Region: An Assessment of Preparation, Practice, Implementation, Challenges, and Opportunities," authored by Desalegn Ejigu Tefera, which was prepared under my guidance. I recommend that this dissertation be submitted for oral defense (mock viva and viva voice).

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Approval of Dissertation for defense result

We hereby certify that we have examined this dissertation entitled "School Improvement Program in Secondary Schools of the Amhara Region: An Assessment of Preparation, Practice, Implementation, Challenges, and Opportunities" by *Desalegn Ejigu Tefera.* We recommend that _____ is approved for the degree of "Doctor of Philosophy in Education Policy and Leadership"

Board of Examiners

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Acronyms

ACT Australian Capital Territory

AREB Amhara Region Education Bureau

CEEP Civic and Ethical Education Program

CIP Curriculum Improvement Program

CPD- Continuous Professional Development

ETP -Education and Training Policy

ESDP-Education Sector Development Program

FDRE- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GEQIP-General Education Quality Improvement Package

ICT-Information Communication Technology

MOE-Ministry of Education

NLA- National Learning Assessment

OECD- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PTA- Parent Teacher Associations

SDGs- Sustainable Development Goals

SIC- School Improvement Committee

SIP-School Improvement Program

SPSS - Statistical Program Software for Social Science

SML- School Management and School Leadership

TDP-Teacher Development Program

TGE- Transitional Government of Ethiopia

UNDP-United Nation Development Program

UNESCO- United Nation Education, Science, Cultural Organization

UNICEF- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

USAID- United States agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

The School Improvement Program (SIP) is central to Ethiopia's strategy for educational quality, yet regional adoption remains inconsistent. This study investigated SIP preparation, practices, challenges, and opportunities in Amhara Region secondary schools using a pragmatist stance and an Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods design (QUAN → QUAL).In the quantitative phase, data were gathered from 1,152 teachers, 84 students, and 84 School Improvement Committee (SIC) members via 5-point Likert scale questionnaires. Analysis included one-sample t-tests to measure implementation against the expected mean (3.0) and One-Way ANOVA to identify perception gaps. The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with 10 principals and documentary reviews. Thematic analysis explained statistical trends, while content analysis evaluated the alignment between SIP documents and school realities.The findings revealed significant readiness challenges, with mean scores ($M = 2.175$, $p < .001$, $d = -2.51$) falling well below expectations, indicating under-preparedness. Reported practices reflected symbolic compliance rather than substantive reform; schools prioritized administrative checklists over pedagogical improvement. A critical 65% funding deficit forced leaders to divert academic resources toward urgent infrastructure repairs, reducing principals to clerical managers rather than instructional mentors. Furthermore, contextual mismatches existed, as SIP frameworks ignored local linguistic realities and agricultural cycles.Despite these hurdles, community resilience offered key opportunities. Informal support systems, such as Iddir associations and alumni networks, sustained schools by offsetting budget shortfalls. Ultimately, SIP implementation was found to be compliance-oriented, producing structural changes without deep pedagogical impact.To address these gaps, the study proposes a Phased Implementation Model requiring a minimum infrastructure baseline before evaluating advanced teaching practices, decentralization of SIP toolkits to reflect local language and culture, and the hiring of school office assistants to reduce administrative burdens, thereby enabling principals to prioritize instructional leadership.

Keywords: School Improvement Program (SIP), Secondary Schools, Amhara Region, Preparation, Practices, Challenges, Opportunities.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, an overview of the study is provided. Specifically, the background of the study, research problem, purposes, importance, and scope/limitations are covered. The organizational structure of the study and operational definitions of important concepts are also presented.

1.1. Background of the Study

A quality education is one of the common goals of all policies, which have been widely accepted to be the primary engine of human capital and economic development (UNESCO, 2015). This international pledge, as stipulated by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, calls for all countries to ensure equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all individuals. However, to operationalize such a global policy agenda in terms of micro-policies and actions, an overhaul of the unit of implementation is needed the school. Hence, the School Improvement Program (SIP) came to be the leading strategy for quality education and student learning (Hopkins, 2002; Adelman & Taylor, 2007).

SIP can be defined as a very popular systematic and continuous program that aims at improving the quality of teaching and learning processes as well as results through addressing internal organizational issues within the school environment, management, and stakeholder participation (Hopkins, 2001; MoE, 2007). In general terms, SIP can be viewed as a cyclical and dynamic process of planned educational change (Hopkins, 2005). The main components of the implementation process according to SIP framework include PDCA (Plan- Do- Check -Act): Preparation (Assess/Plan) - the stage where there is a need for collecting data, assessing the situation, making a diagnosis, as well as developing a three year strategic plan and an annual action plan (MoE, 2007); Implementation/Practices (Do/Act) - the process where there is implementation of planned actions in four different domains, namely, Teaching Learning, School Leadership and Management, Parent Community School Relationships, and a Healthy School Environment through using effective practices (Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024); Evaluation/Monitoring (Check) - the stage when the results achieved are evaluated in

comparison to the targets outlined in advance (MoE, 2010); and Refinement/Sustainability (Act) stage.

In this context, the four major variables identified by the study, namely, Preparation, Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities, form an uninterrupted cause-and-effect cycle, and not a set of separate constructs. Preparation in terms of stakeholders' awareness and data driven planning affects the implementation process in subsequent phases, with poor assessments and training leading to inconsistent and ineffective practices (Lemessa, 2016). Furthermore, the implementation process is influenced by both internal and external forces, which could either limit the process (challenges), such as lack of resources and low commitments, or promote implementation (opportunities), such as committed leaders and community involvement (World Bank, 2008). In fact, the identification of the challenges and opportunities inherent in each implementation cycle creates a feedback process that influences the Preparation process in the subsequent implementation cycle.

The development of the concept of school based improvement was introduced in the US in the 1960s and gradually adopted in Europe, North America, Australia, and Asia (Wijesundera, 2002). With time, the concept became a global phenomenon, leading to reforms in whole systems that would guarantee sustainable and comprehensive improvements in student performance (McKinsey, 2010). The philosophy of decentralized education forms the basis of such reforms, giving schools and local institutions more autonomy over their management and planning of improvements. This concept reflects the core principles of SIP and is evidenced in countries like Estonia and Finland, among others (OECD, 2025). International cases of successful reform initiatives in Germany, Singapore, Taiwan, and Estonia have proven that the application of evidence based decision making and self evaluation on the basis of data can effectively detect low-performing areas and implement improvement strategies (OECD, 2025). Most importantly, however, such strategies have transcended the scope of outcome assessments to include internal factors like school culture, collaboration between teachers, and leadership roles, all of which contribute significantly to sustained change (Hopkins, 2005; Park, 2013).

The essence of SIP is embedded in the concept of School Based Management (SBM), which calls for devolution of decision-making power to the school level (MoE, 2010). This implies that the principal, teachers, and members of the community from the locality must have the capability and freedom to manage the process of improvement, and local ownership becomes a vital consideration in determining the success of SIP (Upadhyay & Rajasekhar, 2022). Within the context of the above discussion, the emphasis of the study on secondary schools is noteworthy. Secondary education poses specific challenges such as complicated curriculum content, high student-to-teacher ratio, and need for highly skilled specialist teachers among others, in comparison to primary education (MoE, 2007). It is therefore important to ensure the efficacy of SIP at this level of education.

The African continent, adhering to the continental education strategy for Africa and SDG 4, is working hard to address issues that arise from lack of education and, more importantly, the quality of education (UNESCO, 2025). The school improvement program is one of the main tools used by countries in Africa to solve issues relating to lack of quality due to causes such as poverty, conflicts, and gender inequality (World Bank, 2024). The implementation of the SIP process in Africa is closely tied to national policies towards attainment of international educational objectives and is supported by organizations such as the Global Partnership for Education.

SIP was adopted by the Ethiopian government as one of the core pillars of the GEQIP program that was introduced in 2007, although revised in 2010 (MoE, 2007, 2010). In its implementation in Ethiopia, the concept of SIP is perceived as a continuous cycle of activities which encompass planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting, all performed within schools (MoE, 2010). As such, SIP revolves around four main domains that include Teaching-Learning, School Leadership and Management, Parent-Community School Relationships, and Health School Environment for the improvement of educational quality and academic achievements (MoE, 2007; Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024). It is worth noting that SIP has been embraced by the Ethiopian Government as the core approach aimed at overcoming the problem of low quality of education against a background of increasing accessibility after 1994 Education and Training Policy (MoE, 2023; World Bank, 2018).

In this research, the school improvement program will be fully evaluated using its four steps: Preparation, Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities specifically in Amhara Region secondary schools. First, there is the systematic planning step, where schools gather data to help them make a strategic plan of three years and an action plan each year (MoE, 2007). Nevertheless, according to studies done at the national level, it was found out that one of the major challenges that face SIP in this step is lack of knowledge about SIP among all concerned parties, especially in the preparation step (Lemessa, 2016). For successful implementation of SIP, there should be a full self evaluation and capability audit process (OSPI OSSI, 2025). It is true that Ethiopian schools undertake self enquiry; however, this practice is often characterized by inconsistency and over-reliance on local standards.

However, although the model is highly systematic, the degree of SIP practice tends to be moderate to low among schools within Ethiopia, including the Amhara Region (Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024; Tadesse et al., 2020). Poor practices are apparent in aspects such as poor instructional practices and assessments, as well as lack of involvement from the local community in school matters (Tadesse et al., 2020). There is ample evidence demonstrating that effective SIP practices depend significantly on distributed leadership and core domain orientations, especially teaching and learning (Yang & Chang, 2024). Many studies within Ethiopia consistently document common problems that impede successful SIP practices. Such problems include lack of funding and other physical resources, inadequate mobilization of the local community, poor leadership abilities among schools, poor engagement from teachers and school principals, high turnovers among school principals, and regional insecurity (Dereje, 2012; Rahel Ashagre, 2014; Tadesse et al., 2020; Gezahegn & Abebe, 2019; Solomon, 2020). The effects of regional conflict and security challenges have become increasingly problematic recently (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data, 2021).

Though faced with many limitations, there still exist several avenues through which the implementation of SIP can be enhanced within the context of secondary schools in Ethiopia. First, research suggests that awareness amongst stakeholders should be developed as an integral component of effective SIP practices (Negussie Zeray, 2019; MoE, 2010). Another key aspect that needs to be considered is the establishment of a process where regular, data-driven self-

evaluation is implemented within institutions (MoE, 2010). The use of distributed leadership in schools has also proven effective when it comes to implementing the practices associated with SIP due to the distribution of responsibility and problem-solving among all stakeholders (Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024). Another important aspect is the prioritization of teaching and learning as the core domain of improvement, as this will ensure alignment between the practice and the fundamental goal of SIP practices, namely improving student achievement (Tadesse et al., 2020).

There have been previous researches and policies that mentioned different possibilities related to SIP. First, GEQIP's existence and the country's support for SIP can be considered enablers of changes within the school (UNICEF, 2009). SIP itself, which is a strategy, is predicted to enhance the ability of the internal forces of the school, generate resources from the surrounding environment, and make decisions (MoE, 2010; World Bank, 2008). Similarly, capacity building for school administrators and teachers has been proposed as another field where possibilities could be explored (Tadesse et al., 2020). Yet, what extent such opportunities are materialized in reality, especially in the secondary schools in the Amhara Region, is not clear yet.

The role of leadership is a vital component in linking the variables of preparation, practice, and challenges in the cycle of the school improvement program. Research has repeatedly found the position of the principal to be the most significant internal factor for creating change (Bush, 2007; World Bank, 2008). Leadership takes many forms throughout the SIP process, including visionary leadership in the preparation stage in order to determine clear vision and gain stakeholders' commitment (Bush, 2007); instructional leadership in the practice stage to assist and supervise the teaching and learning processes; and distributive leadership empowering teachers and members of the School Improvement Committee, thus diminishing dependence on one person (Eisenschmidt & Vanari, 2025). Nonetheless, research reveals ongoing gaps in the management skills of school principals in Ethiopia (MoE, 2010). This study aims at conducting an analysis of the leadership skills required for the effective management of SIP in secondary schools in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia.

In conclusion, it should be clear from the above discussion that SIP is accepted all around the world and at a national level as an absolutely necessary method for ensuring the quality of

education (Hopkins, 2001; World Bank, 2008; McKinsey, 2010). In the case of Ethiopia, even though SIP is adopted as a framework, empirical evidence indicates a gap in the implementation of the framework despite its ambitious goals (Jemal, 2019; Zewdu Cherenet, 2020; Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024). In the Amhara Region, the current empirical research clearly identifies the potentials and constraints of implementing SIP in practice as well as issues like security threats that are hindering the process of implementation (Merawi et al., 2024). However, the absence of empirical research on a comprehensive, holistic and integrated analysis of preparation, implementation practices, issues/challenges and opportunities concerning SIP in secondary schools calls for further research, thus providing the reason for conducting this study. Therefore, this study will seek to bridge this knowledge gap by conducting an assessment of SIP implementation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region, focusing on the following key elements: (1) preparation (planning and readiness); (2) practices (implementation practices in all four domains), (3) challenges and (4) opportunities.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The quest for quality education continues to be one of the main priorities on the global agenda, explicitly stipulated in SDG 4. One of the methods used all over the world in an attempt to realize this SDG includes the school improvement program, whose aim is to improve students' performance, boost school administration, and create effective teaching environments (UNESCO, 2020; Fullan, 2016). SIP theory postulates that any successful educational reform can be achieved only through local efforts and ownership (Hall & Hord, 2015). All over the world, many SIP initiatives have brought about impressive results, including distributed leadership in systems in which a sense of collective responsibility and improved instruction practices have taken root, as exemplified by Finland and Singapore (OECD, 2018; Harris & Jones, 2020). Notwithstanding the positive effects observed so far, the adoption of SIP practices elsewhere poses certain challenges both systematically and culturally speaking.

In Africa, SIPs have been introduced with a view to solving issues associated with poor completion rates and student-teacher ratios. However, implementation is hampered due to inefficient bureaucracy, inadequate infrastructure, and poor leadership (AFDB, 2021; Sayed et al., 2018). Scholars examining sub-Saharan Africa have repeatedly emphasized the presence of a “gap between policy formulation and implementation” owing to a lack of funds, inadequate

capacity building among policymakers, and political volatility (Abebe, 2020; Mourshed et al., 2010).

In Ethiopia, SIP was introduced as a flagship strategy to tackle critical issues such as poor quality education and high dropout rates (World Bank, 2018). However, empirical studies across the different regions, like Oromia, SNNPR, and Amhara, have shown that the implementation level of the initiative is moderate to low (Dabesa & Cheramlak, 2021; Miruts et al., 2021). Although SIP attempts to create ownership of the schools, there is still a gap between its policy objectives and the required skills to implement the strategy (MoE, 2010). Furthermore, national examination scores and studies (UNESCO, 2013, 2017) demonstrate a continuous gap in education quality, where poor academic achievement is linked to teachers' lack of knowledge, ineffective teaching strategies, poor leadership, weak evaluation practices, lack of community involvement, and negative learning environment (MoE, 2015, 2017; Altinyelken & Hoeksma, 2021; Mulugeta & Mathivanan, 2018).

Amhara Region is a case study in difficulty. Research suggests that there are very low levels of implementation within the key SIP areas, with studies showing that up to 99% of schools within some zones are operating at sub-standard levels (Merawi et al., 2021). There is a notable lack of understanding of the SIP process, and important tasks like self-assessments and data analysis for strategic decision-making are conducted inappropriately (Lemessa, 2016). In addition, ongoing issues of insecurity and conflict have made the construction of classrooms difficult, preventing SIP activities from being completed and monitored (ACLED, 2021; JICA, 2020).

There is an ongoing gap that warrants further investigation regarding the lack of a holistic integrative study on the four major variables including Preparation, Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities within secondary schools of Amhara Region. Previous studies mostly concentrate on the primary school level or specific variables like leadership or infrastructure. For example, they do not examine the relationship between preparation, such as increasing the awareness of the teachers and allocating resources, and the quality of practice, such as improving pedagogies. Besides, there is no empirical evidence to show whether the preparation influences the practices or both of these factors are affected by regional challenges like post-conflict trauma. In addition,

the importance of the power of local communities and local opportunities such as Iddir through which secondary schools utilize to continue operating despite failing budget allocations have not been considered. Moreover, most existing studies contain some methodological shortcomings since they mainly discuss the general challenges in terms of describing problems like inadequate funding and the insufficient involvement of stakeholders (Gezahegn & Abebe, 2019; Mengistu et al., 2019). They rarely consider using a structured evaluation framework in studying the effectiveness and adherence to the program. However, secondary schools, which have seen significant enrollment expansion and demand high quality to prepare students for university education and employment, have not been studied adequately, considering the crucial role of secondary education in the Ethiopian educational journey.

As such, what differentiates this study from previous research is that the research concentrates explicitly on the secondary schools within the Amhara Region, and evaluates the implementation of the SIP using a more balanced approach, covering aspects such as preparation (preparedness and planning), practice (practice in all four domains), challenge (barrier), and opportunity (leverage point). In accordance, the following research questions have been formulated:

Quantitative Research Questions (Phase 1)

1. To what extent do secondary schools in the Amhara Region prepared for SIP implementation?
2. How effective is the school improvement program in improving teaching and learning in secondary schools of Amhara Region?
3. How successful is the school improvement program in improving the learning environment of secondary schools in Amhara Region?
4. To what extent do school leadership and management improved as a result of implementing the school improvement program in secondary schools of Amhara Region?
5. To what extent does community participation improved as result of implementing the school improvement program in secondary schools of Amhara Region?
6. What are the challenges hindering the effective implementation of SIP in secondary schools of Amhara Region?

7. What opportunities exist to support effective SIP implementation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region?

Qualitative Research Questions (Phase 2)

1. What factors explain the level of SIP preparation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region?
2. How do schools conduct SIP self-assessment and planning, and what factors affect their effectiveness?
3. What factors explain the level of SIP implementation in secondary schools of the AmharaRegion?
4. What promising local practices and opportunities could be leveraged to strengthen SIP implementation?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the preparation, practice, implementation, challenges, and opportunities of the School Improvement Program (SIP) in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

To achieve the general objective, the study addresses the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the extent to which secondary schools in the Amhara Region are prepared for SIP implementation.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the School Improvement Program in enhancing teaching and learning in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.
3. To examine the success of the School Improvement Program in improving the learning environment of secondary schools in the Amhara Region.
4. To determine the extent to which school leadership and management have improved as a result of SIP implementation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.
5. To assess the extent to which community participation has improved as a result of SIP implementation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.

6. To identify the challenges hindering effective implementation of the School Improvement Program in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.
7. To explore the opportunities those exist to support effective SIP implementation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.
8. To analyze the factors that explains the level of SIP preparation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.
9. To investigate how schools conduct SIP self-assessment and planning, and the factors affecting their effectiveness.
10. To analyze the factors that explains the level of SIP implementation in secondary schools of the Amhara Region.
11. To identify promising local practices and opportunities that could be leveraged to strengthen SIP implementation.

1.4. Significances of the Study

The study is important since it deals with the process of implementing the school improvement program in secondary schools of the Amhara Region; thereby adding new information to the existing literature concerning reform measures taken in secondary level schools in Ethiopia. Policymakers from the Ministry of Education and Amhara Region Education Bureau can use the results of this study to improve their policy and guidelines for SIP along with making appropriate resource allocation to make future reforms more effective. Secondary school principals, school improvement committee members, teachers, cluster supervisors, and PTAs can benefit from the results of this study by identifying their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and problems during SIP preparations, practice, and implementations in the four domains to improve their performance within their respective domains. Future studies in the area of SIP implementation will also be facilitated as this study offers useful baseline information for research in the area.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The present study was undertaken with the aim of evaluating the extent of implementation of the school improvement program in public secondary schools in Amhara

region, Ethiopia. In particular, it analyzed how prepared and ready the participants were with regard to implementing SIP; the nature of implementation with respect to all of its four critical components (i.e., teaching and learning, school leadership and management, conducive learning environment, and community involvement); the obstacles that arose when implementing SIP; and the opportunities that can be tapped to enhance and maintain the program. For this study, the scope was delimited in that it covered secondary schools only as there exists a unique set of circumstances and challenges at this level. Secondary schools are under pressure to accommodate an ever-growing number of students and get them prepared for college life or work, which has been a less studied area than primary schools in previous SIP-related researches. Besides, the study considered only the last cycle of SIP in the Amhara region that was conducted between 2014 E.C. and 2016 E.C.

1.6. Limitations of the study

However, it is necessary to note some weaknesses in the design and approach used in carrying out this study. First, although the sampling technique used was appropriate for a research study of this nature and ensured coverage of secondary schools under different circumstances in the Amhara Region, there is a possibility that the results cannot be generalized to all the schools, especially those located far away or in conflict areas. Second, use of self-reported information from teachers, principals, among others, may be problematic due to various biases that respondents can exhibit, even if triangulation techniques have been used. Third, lack of accessibility to some school records and stakeholders might have led to less information on some SIP practices. Fourth, being a cross-sectional research, the information on SIP practices captured the status at the moment of collecting data, without considering any future effects or longitudinal trends. Finally, the research findings are relevant only to secondary schools in the Amhara Region and cannot be applied to primary schools, private schools, or other parts of Ethiopia.

1.7. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Improvement: implies the planned and managed efforts in the schools towards improving student performance and increasing the overall quality of education in the institutions. The concept of improvement is operationalized as the process whereby schools transform their internal processes, such as instructional delivery, leadership, teamwork, and institution culture, to provide favorable learning contexts and increase change capacity.

School Improvement Program (SIP): This is an intervention designed by the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia for improving the quality of education in schools across different domains including: (1) teaching and learning, (2) leadership and management, (3) safe and healthy school environment, and (4) community involvement. In this study, the program is operationalized as the processes used by the schools in implementing SIPs.

Preparation: refers to the actions done by schools prior to implementing the SIPs. These include mobilizing of resources, creating awareness, preparing plans and carrying out training.

Practices: refer to the practical realization of the activities involved in SIP in all four sectors. They encompass teaching approaches, leadership, classroom management, support systems for pupils, and community engagement. In the present study, practices are understood in terms of the actual and perceived actions taken by the schools to facilitate the achievement of the SIP goals.

Challenges: refer to factors that prevent successful implementation of SIP programs. Resource shortage, poor leadership, bureaucracy, cultural limitations, security issues, and low stakeholder engagement are some examples of SIP challenges. In this research, challenges are considered based on stakeholder perception, documents, and problems with SIP implementation.

Opportunities: refer to sources of strength, resiliency and underutilized potential within a school to improve SIP implementation. Indigenous community institutions such as Iddir and other innovations within the context can be considered as opportunities. In the current research, opportunities are defined as locally available strategies and practices that can contribute to improving SIP.

Secondary Schools: are defined as formal education institutions in Ethiopia catering to grades 9-12. In addition to differences in grade levels, secondary schools are differentiated from primary schools and TVETs based on their curriculum, leadership

Stakeholders: is used to describe people who are directly involved in the SIP process. In this case, the stakeholders will be school principals, vice principals, teachers, students, and School Improvement Committee members.

Implementation: is the action that entails applying SIP policies and plans to secondary schools. Implementation, in this case, means integrating SIP preparation, practice, challenges, and opportunities into secondary schools in the Amhara Region.

Parental and Community Involvement: Parental and community involvement is a joint effort aimed at improving the schooling system and ensuring student success.

Learning Environment: Learning environment is the physical space in schools that significantly affects the behavior of teachers and students. It plays an important role in establishing and maintaining good learning and teaching environments.

School Governing Bodies: refer to bodies whose mandate involves working together with schools to ensure that high quality education is provided. Such bodies engage school principals in goal-setting, policy formation and implementation, strategy setting, and running the schools on a day-to-day basis.

Educational Officials: are officials who work in Woreda, Zone and Regional offices of education responsible for managing educational activities.

School Improvement Program Committee (SIC): can be described as the body made up of principals, teachers, students, parents, and community members responsible for coordinating, evaluating, monitoring, and implementing school improvement program activities in teaching and learning, leadership and management, school environment, and community participation.

1.8. Structure and Organization of the Dissertation

The current research work consists of six chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the introduction of the research, where the background of the research, problem statement, and objectives of the study, importance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, definition of some key concepts are given. Literature review is presented in the second chapter. The third chapter focuses on the research design and methodology used in the research. Data analysis and presentation are provided in the fourth chapter. Findings and their discussion form the fifth chapter. Conclusion and recommendations are discussed in the sixth chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. The Concept and Theoretical Foundations of School Improvement

The School Improvement Program (SIP) represents an extensive strategy aimed at improving the quality of education at the school level. It is crucial, however, to define the necessary conceptual/theoretical framework for an investigation into its preparation, practices, problems, and opportunities. This study presents a review of how the school reform movement developed over time, defines the concept of "School Effectiveness" compared to "School Improvement," discusses various theories on the change process, and describes the policy of SIP in Ethiopia.

2.1.1. Historical Evolution and Modern Perspectives

The idea of school improvement (SI) emerged from the larger educational reform efforts in the second half of the 20th century, mostly spurred by political pressures associated with neoliberal policy and demands for accountability (Harris, 2017). The process of SI itself is not an isolated phenomenon; rather, it is a dynamic system approach that involves internal and external forces working together to develop and strengthen the organizational ability of a school to produce effective learning results and create more equitable learning environments for all students (Hopkins, 2013). As such, school improvement (SI) can be defined as planned reform efforts within an education institution that aim to improve its learning processes and develop the necessary capabilities for implementing change at the same time (Hopkins et al., 2014). In this respect, SI differs significantly from previous approaches that sought to initiate change externally without building internal capacity (Hopkins et al., 2014). The theory of school improvement (SI) has experienced a number of stages throughout its development; starting with OD efforts in the early 1960s to address "organizational health" with help of team training techniques (Hopkins et al., 2014).

The connection between School Effectiveness (SE) and School Improvement (SI) constitutes a matter of academic discussion which is likely to provide the main source of theoretical understanding for a dissertation on school improvement program. The essence of the difference is associated with the objects of interest for scholars. While SE involves diagnostic work and research aiming at discovering "what works" and what correlations determine the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of schools (e.g., "strong instructional leadership and high expectations," as explained by Teddlie & Reynolds, 2020), SIP aims at identifying how it would be possible to reach such level of performance ("how to get there"). While SE uses approaches based on input-output relationships and is based on quantification and philosophy of the product, SI represents an interventionist approach which emphasizes change management and organizational development and is grounded in the philosophy of the process (Harris & Jones, 2021).The fields of School Effectiveness Research (SER) and School Improvement (SI) have come to be seen as inherently interconnected, representing a holistic approach commonly referred to as School Effectiveness and School Improvement (SE-SI). While SER provides the essential knowledge base for what works, SI is needed as a means to implement that knowledge (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000). There is academic agreement that, in order for any true improvement in education to take place, both SE and SI must meet and work together in a holistic approach (Creemers & Kyriakides, 2010).

The choice for SIP over strictly effectiveness-oriented models within the context of Ethiopian secondary education is due to a vital scholarly dispute between school accountability and sustainable development. The SIP program, especially within the setting of resource-limited schools suffering from systemic issues and capacity gaps, such as leadership, teaching, and resource management, as observed in areas such as Amhara (Merawi et al., 2021), fundamentally embodies the spirit of sustainable development (MoE, 2007; Yishak & Triegaardt, 2024). SIP emphasizes building capacity and making culturally appropriate changes that foster school improvement through an internally led, continuous, and iterative process. On the other hand, the SER approach, which is indispensable in diagnosis and deficit identification, has the potential to become a coercive accountability model that disregards the critical importance of a strong internal improvement mechanism in SIP (Fullan, 2015). Within the Amhara region, where there is minimal implementation of SIP dimensions (Merawi et al., 2021), an effectiveness-based

model will fail by merely pointing out the underlying problems without addressing the key internal process responsible for sustainable improvement, which is the fundamental purpose of SIP.

2.1.2. Key Theoretical Models of School Improvement

SIPs, in the first place, are not a series of randomly implemented processes, but rather are based on elaborate academic discourses using theories of change and innovation diffusion. An adequate analysis of SIP planning and implementation entails consideration of numerous theoretical approaches that would allow for comprehending the complex interdependence of different factors involved in successful and sustainable educational reform. CBAM model, first of all, provides an analytical framework that is focused on the psychological aspect of change as it examines the process through which individual change adopters, such as educators, pass different Stages of Concern on their way to achieving competence in innovation use (Hall & Hord, 2020). The second important approach, Six Secrets of Change, suggested by Fullan (2008), stresses the importance of relational aspects, stating that systemic change implies the development of moral purpose, high-quality relationships, creation of knowledge, and systemic coherence. Thirdly, the systems theory proposed by Hoy & Miskel (2013) provides a broad framework for analyzing educational institutions, considering schools as dynamic ecosystems in which there exists an interdependence of inputs, throughputs, and outputs; that is, education policy and financial resources used as inputs become transformed into instructional practices and leadership skills resulting in student

2.1.2.1.The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)

According to Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), largely designed by Hall & Hord (2015), a comprehensive micro-diagnostic tool that can be used in order to understand the process of educational change, as well as its underlying aspects, lies in the analysis of the individual psychological and behavioral reaction towards the innovation. The CBAM serves as an important tool to help shift focus away from implementation issues, and more toward the individual's maturity stage during the adoption process. CBAM presents a dual perspective of change, namely, the Stages of Concern (SoC), which describe a person’s changing psychological

attitude toward the innovation starting with Self-concerns (Unrelated, Informational, Personal) to Task-issues (Management), and finally Impact-orientations (Consequence, Collaboration, Refocusing). The other dimension of change discussed by CBAM is the Levels of Use (LoU), which descriptively describe the behavioral implementation of the change.

The academic literature on CBAM revolves around the issue of whether CBAM is a useful tool for both prediction and prescription in change management, particularly within the decentralized context of education. Although CBAM is generally recognized to be a strong model in terms of its descriptive function, any criticisms of the same tend to raise questions regarding the ability of the model to sufficiently encompass complex systemic barriers that could obstruct progress through the various stages despite addressing the needs of individuals at each stage. Nevertheless, the usefulness of CBAM is unmistakably clear, specifically in terms of diagnosis, as evidenced by the applicability of CBAM in the case studies from the SIP in Amhara (Merawi et al., 2021; Yishak & Triegaardt, 2024), wherein issues such as lack of adequate training, lack of awareness among stakeholders, and insufficient capability of leaders coincide with the first few stages of CBAM (Informational/Personal Concerns and Non-Use/Mechanical Use of use). In this regard, CBAM remains a very appropriate theoretical framework for this particular study.

2.1.2.2. **Fullan's Six Secrets of Change**

Specifically, Fullan's Six Secrets of Change, proposed in 2008 and further elaborated upon in 2015, is particularly useful in providing an analytical perspective on the cultural and leadership-related reasons for the failure of top-down approaches to reforming education. As pointed out by Fullan, educational reform is, primarily, a cultural rather than a procedural task, one that revolves around principles such as "Learning is the work," "Capacity building prevails," and the need to "Connect peers with purpose." Addressing these issues is particularly important because many attempts at introducing educational changes, especially those based on a top-down approach to reform, fail due to the absence of collaboration, common vision, and the necessary capacity-building measures, which are essential in ensuring that teachers develop their expertise and adopt best practices (Dabesa & Cheramlak, 2021). At the same time, moving beyond the "my classroom" approach to a more collective "our school" orientation, a fundamental mandate

of the SIP project, involves precisely that shift in organizational practices that can be identified within the framework outlined by Fullan. In fact, using Fullan's Six Secrets of Change is instrumental in identifying some of the key organizational and leadership factors contributing to the lack of stakeholder participation in educational administration.

2.1.2.3. Systems Theory

The Amhara SIP can be considered as a good example of a complex and decentralized educational reform that takes place in a very difficult socio-political context (ACLED, 2021). With the help of the Systems Theory, it is possible to analyze the situation from a macro-perspective, where the school itself is perceived as an open system whose elements (school leadership, teaching staff, curriculum) interact in a dynamic way with their environment (MoE, regional politics, and community) (Glickman et al., 2000). It is important to understand that when implementing any reforms at school, they need to fit into the system as a whole, so that any modification of one element (for instance, curriculum) should cause the adaptation of all other elements of the system. Indeed, Systems Theory provides a vital transition into a new paradigm of analyzing the implementation process failure, going from the micro-level of analysis to the macro-level, where scholars should focus on the lack of coordination at this higher level (Getachew, 2023). In the context of Amhara SIP, it allows researchers to see how exogenous factors, such as the lack of financial means, poor school infrastructure, and the disruptive impact of a prolonged conflict in the region (Merawi et al., 2021), contribute to the widening gap between the policies and practice by undermining the very process of coordination within the organization of schools. Therefore, it helps the scholarly discourse move in the direction that the success of educational reforms depends entirely on the adaptive and robust nature of the broader socio-political system.

2.1.3. Global and National Policy Context of SIP

The School Improvement Program (SIP), as illustrated by the case study from Ethiopia, serves as an essential policy framework for national-level education policy-making, particularly in addressing the global commitment to educational quality through Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), particularly goal 4.1 concerning learning outcomes and target 4.A concerning effective learning environments (UN, 2015). The academic discourse surrounds the relationship

between global and local policy commitments in achieving sustainable quality education. Supporters contend that SIP, with its emphasis on holistic quality factors (Teaching-Learning, Leadership, Environment, and Community Participation), directly aligns a global quality agenda with practical school-level priorities (MoE, 2010). On the other hand, one significant critical analysis identifies the intrinsic conflict between the broad global commitment to educational quality and the constrained capacity at the local level, especially within developing nations like Ethiopia's Amhara region. According to this line of thought, global-level quality initiatives are inherently hindered by systemic challenges, notably socioeconomic factors such as poverty, regional instability, and resource inadequacy, which SDG 4 seeks to tackle (Yishak & Triegaardt, 2024).

The SIP of Ethiopia constitutes a substantial national initiative aimed at improving the quality of education, as the quality pillar of the larger ESDP strategy (MoE, 2007; ESDP V, 2015-2020). The program has been launched first in 2007 and later modified in 2010 as one of the GEQIP initiatives. The policy rationale behind the SIP is directly related to the academic discussion on the concept of School Based Management (SBM) and decentralization reforms (MoE, 2010). Various SBM frameworks emphasize the need to devolve authority, planning, and responsibility to schools so that there would be a higher degree of responsiveness (Cheng & Cheung, 2004). As a result, the SIP prescribes the continuous cycle of self-inquiry, three-year planning, implementation, and evaluation intended to promote changes from below (MoE, 2010). It is necessary to note, however, that the most significant issue in this regard stems from the problem of the existing gap between policy and its implementation in Ethiopia (Merawi et al., 2021).Despite its aim to be a bottom-up and SBM reform, the reality of the situation based on the local experience shows that SIP is frequently regarded as a top-down process facing challenges due to poor capacity of the school principals, weak participation of stakeholders, and lack of proper performance of the initial step of self-enquiry, particularly in places such as Amhara (Merawi et al., 2021). In this regard, despite decentralization being implemented using centralization strategies, there exists an important academic void.

The investigation of such a complicated relationship demands an elaborate theoretical foundation that goes beyond mere description and into diagnosis and explanation (Fullan, 2016). The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is the principal tool used for diagnosing the intensity

of the problem by measuring it empirically. CBAM helps assess the level of implementation of a new innovation based on analyzing the SoC of all involved parties towards that innovation (the teachers and principals concerning the SIP) and their LoU of the relevant aspects (Hord et al., 2006). In turn, Michael Fullan's Change Theory and Systems Theory become key to understanding the results. According to Fullan's Change Theory, internal cultural issues, namely, the presence of social bonds within a community, common visions, and capacity building efforts, become crucial when implementing an innovative practice (Fullan, 2016). At the same time, Systems Theory helps examine external structural problems, such as policy-practice gaps, insufficient resources, and sociopolitical disturbances (conflict) that ultimately define and limit internal transformations (Hall & Hord, 2015).This means that the research question, which focuses on the effect of top-down implementation of a bottom-up strategy on school preparedness and practice, is formulated to investigate systematically the dynamics between these CBAM/Fullan and Systems factors in Amhara secondary schools.

2.2. School Improvement Program (SIP) in the Ethiopian Education System

The school improvement program denotes the emergence of decentralized school-based management system whereby schools can analyze their needs and come up with relevant solutions to promote the education of students (Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024; Tiruneh et al., 2021). On the global level, educational decentralization, which includes the SIP model, is recommended for its capacity to increase technical and social efficiency due to higher participation of local consumers, increased accountability, and development of innovative models based on the diversity of experiences (Hoddinott et al., 2019; Ritman Hendra et al., 2023). Nevertheless, as SIP forms part of major initiatives aimed at improving the educational situation in Ethiopia, such as the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), it is viewed rather negatively and sparks heated academic debates. Recent empirical research suggests that although massive initiatives have been launched in the field of education and considerable investments have been made, the current state of educational quality indicators, such as the extent of SIP implementation in four main areas, is moderate, and the levels of learning outcomes decrease among students (Rolleston et al., 2025; Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024).This makes it apparent that even though the logic behind school autonomy and

decentralization is valid in theory, the actual application of the concept faces challenges such as low stakeholder awareness, resource constraints, and limited oversight mechanisms, which prevent the program from achieving its intended influence on student performance (Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024; Tiruneh et al., 2021).

2.2.1. The Genesis and Evolution of SIP in Ethiopia

The inception of the school improvement program within Ethiopia can be characterized as a deliberate policy decision by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in reaction to a major problem: addressing the issue of educational quality after years of highly effective and accelerated growth in terms of access (World Bank, 2017). It should be noted that SIP did not emerge in isolation from the broader efforts of the government, being one of the central components of its primary program of educational reform, the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), which started in 2008 and continued through phases I, II, and E (GEQIP-I: 2008-2012, GEQIP-II: 2012-2018, GEQIP-E: 2018-2022) (Endale et al., 2023; MoE, 2007). As stated officially, the SIP framework has been adopted from the Australian school excellence models to promote a cycle of planning, implementing, evaluating, and reporting at the school level in four important areas: teaching-learning, school leadership and management, parent/community-school relationship, and creating a healthy school environment (MoE, 2007; Yishak & Triegaardt, 2022).The most recent phase, GEQIP-E, intensified the focus on equity, aiming to close the achievement gaps between regions and disadvantaged groups (Endale et al., 2023; World Bank, 2017).

In spite of the huge financial commitment and comprehensive approach to reforms that included SIP as an essential part of the program, the academic literature offers a contradictory representation of its results – increased access to education coexists with poor or even deteriorating performance in some regions (Araya et al., 2024; Endale et al., 2023). This is the primary research problem addressed by the literature. The empirical evidence consistently indicates that although the SIP was carried out by the school, plans were developed and funds allocated, the level of implementation remained moderate or even low, especially concerning instructional quality improvement programs like curriculum implementation and teacher training (Araya et al., 2024; Yishak & Triegaardt, 2022). In fact, the extensive scale of the project, which

led to the involvement of the first generation of learners and less experienced instructors, may have hindered the effectiveness of the reform process, preventing the translation of inputs into learning gains (Araya et al., 2024).As such, there still exists uncertainty regarding the specific reasons for the limited and, at times, adverse changes observed in students' academic performance following the implementation of a quality-based initiative such as SIP in schools, especially among students enrolled in upper-primary and secondary grades (Yishak & Triegaardt, 2022).

2.2.2. Structure and Components of the Ethiopian SIP Framework

As its name suggests, the SIP of Ethiopia has been designed as an all-inclusive four-dimensional model that seeks to achieve the objective of creating an overall school improvement through holistic development (MoE, 2007, 2010). The main four domains of this framework comprise: Teaching-Learning domain, which concerns itself with issues related to instruction, the delivery of the curriculum, and the academic performance of students; School Leadership and Management, which is centered on developing the capacities required in transformational and instructional leadership to effectively manage visions and resources (Bush, 2007; Hallinger, 2002); Parent-Community School Relationship, which is critical for decentralization efforts and harnessing resources from the community to support and participate in decision making (Tekeste, 2007; Yusuf, 2024); and Healthy School Environment, which deals with issues of adequate physical structure, learning resources, and psychological environment (World Bank, 2018). The above-mentioned framework is implemented through the use of SMS and a classification method using Level 1 to Level 4 gradations. Here, the requirement of 70% grade for success in SIP is established (World Bank, 2013). An important structure for decentralizing support and professional development of the school is Cluster-Based Approach.

While the framework of the SIP appears robust, with its four domains and the implementation cycle consisting of self-evaluation, SIP plan, implementation, and monitoring, there is consistent empirical evidence that the implementation of the policy faces difficulties and suffers from an important gap between policy design and practice. The scholars note that the implementation in all four domains is at a lower level and is characterized by shortcomings, especially in the case of the Amhara Region (Merawi et al., 2021; Tadesse M. et al., 2020).

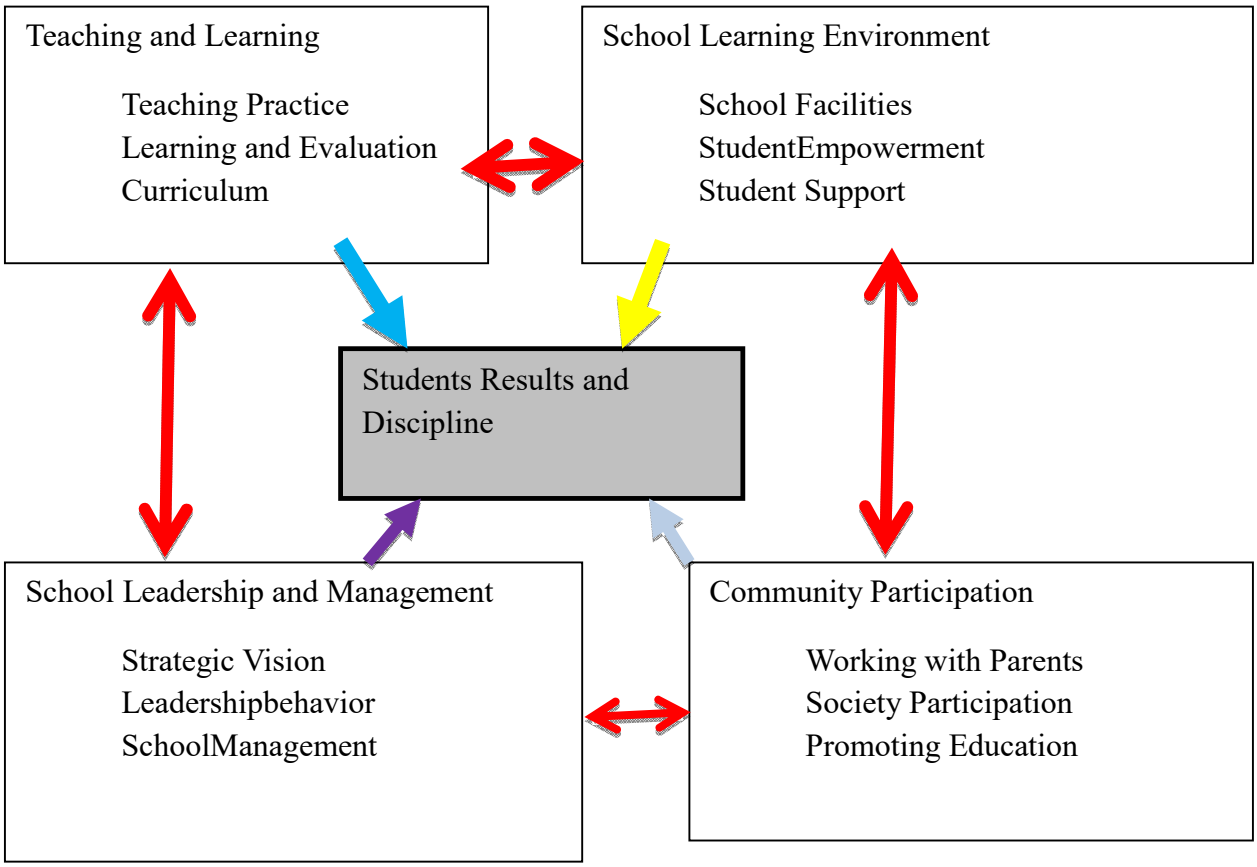
Commonly identified problems include weak capacities for planning, inadequate professional development and support for school principals, and inability to engage the community (Merawi et al., 2021). These difficulties in implementation are further exacerbated by the large share of schools that fail to meet the minimum requirement of the 70% standard, thus casting doubt on the effectiveness criterion itself of the policy (World Bank, 2013). Therefore, an important question arises: is the problem with the national standards themselves, or is it with the implementation process?

There is also a notable lack of research about the efficiency of the Cluster-Based Approach in promoting instructional leadership and CPD especially in secondary schools located in the Amhara Region. The success rate of the decentralized approach to improve instructional quality has not been sufficiently researched, thereby failing to provide empirical evidence for an important component of the policy. To address such issues in implementation and research, there should be a need to determine whether the policy needs to be revised (such as the standards and structure of the Clusters) or the major emphasis is on improving the capability of school administrators and Woreda level supervisors in implementing the policy framework (Tadesse M. et al., 2020).

2.2.2.1. The Domains of the School Improvement Program and Their Components in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian School Improvement Program (SIP) forms one of the main pillars of the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP). The Ministry of Education (2010) states that the SIP framework is organized into four major domains, which are further broken down into 12 elements and 15 standards.The framework has been developed to ensure that school improvement is approached from a comprehensive perspective, rather than just concentrating on physical inputs.

Figure 1: School Improvement Domains and its Major Elements in Ethiopia



Source: adopted from school improvement blue print manual (MoE, 2010).

The bidirectional arrows that connect the four components of the school improvement program, namely, Teaching and Learning, Leadership and Management, Safe and Healthy School Environment, and Community Involvement, depict how interdependent and continuously interconnected they are with each other. Improvements to the Teaching and Learning component cannot take place without the presence of successful Leadership and Management components to provide guidance and ensure appropriate use of resources. On the other hand, improvements in the effectiveness of the Leadership and Management component will rely on creating a safe and healthy school environment as well as involving the community actively in improving the situation in the school. Similarly, the creation of a safe and healthy school environment and active community involvement depend on the success of other components of the SIP model,

namely, successful Teaching and Learning, Leadership and Management, and safe and healthy school environment components.

Teaching and Learning Domain

This is what is considered as the "heart" of the SIP model. It contains three vital components: Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum. International scholarship, as reflected in Hopkins (2023), underscores that sustainable school improvement requires initiatives that extend beyond the immediate confines of classroom practice. In the case of Ethiopia, the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2010) stresses the need for student-centered teaching and CPD. However, current research in the Amhara Region indicates a gap between what is prescribed by policies and what occurs in reality. As Gezahagn (2023) shows, although lesson planning is a skill possessed by many secondary school teachers in the Amhara Region, teachers find it hard to implement new teaching methods and give constructive feedback to students. Furthermore, an investigation conducted in the South West Oromia region showed that student-centered active learning was only practiced "moderately," due to big classes and limited instructional materials.

Safe and Conducive Learning Environment Domain

This domain relates to the physical and psychological climate of the institution. The components include Student Empowerment, Student Support, and School Facilities. Academic debates from the World Bank (2018) argue that; a "healthy school environment" is an essential factor in educational success. In Amhara State, there are distinct obstacles in this domain. Recent studies (ACLED, 2021; Abere & Misganaw, 2023) indicate that ongoing regional conflict has severely damaged school facilities and contributed to psychological distress among learners, ultimately undermining the “safety” component of this domain. Studies conducted in Waghemra Zone, Amhara, have shown that 99% of schools had not reached their potential standard for a conducive learning environment (Merawi et al., 2021).

School Leadership and Management Domain

Leadership effectiveness acts as the driving force of the SIP framework. The components included in this aspect are Vision, Strategic Planning, and Instructional Leadership. International discussions regarding this issue focus primarily on moving away from "administrative

management" towards "instructional leadership" (Harris, 2024). In terms of empirical evidence from Ethiopia, most secondary schools' heads fail to receive the proper training needed for running SIP cycle processes. According to Yusuf (2024), school administrators in Amhara are mostly occupied with administrative duties and political reports, making them unable to supervise teachers as required by the SIP framework.

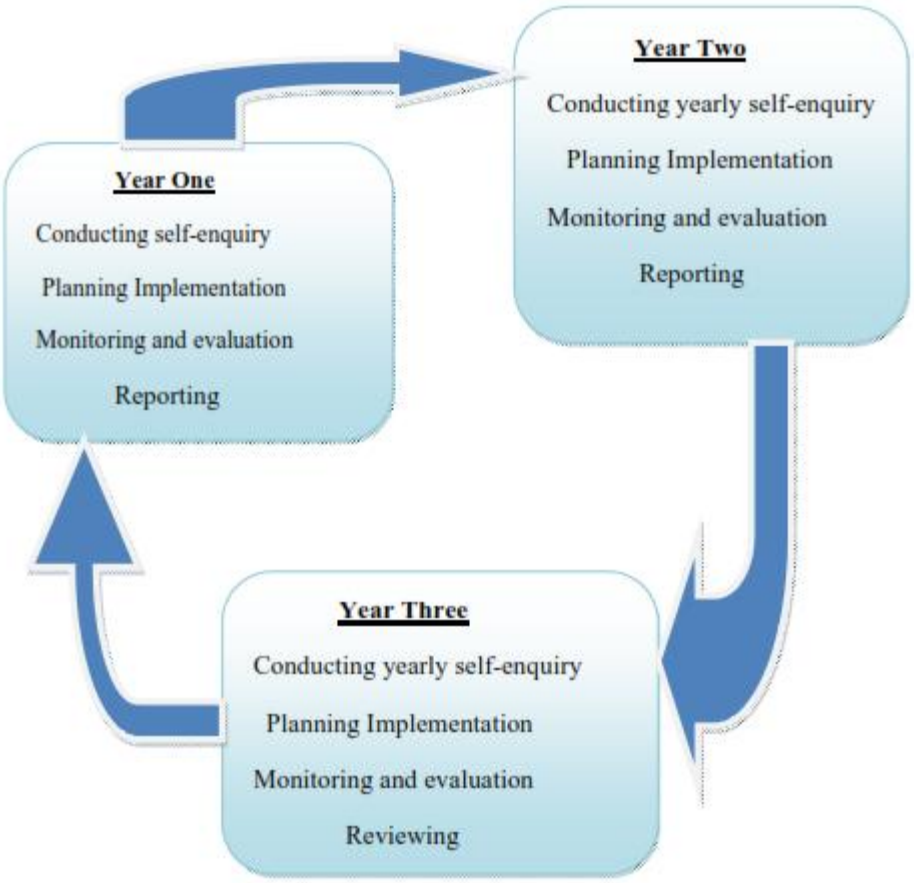
Community Participation Domain

This particular area focuses on the relationship between the school and its Stakeholders, which includes Parents and the Local Community. In the Ethiopian context, community involvement has only been restricted to financial and/or physical efforts (e.g., classroom construction). On the contrary, contemporary literature views this as a time for a "paradigm shift" to become involved in the decision-making process within schools (MoE, 2021). According to research conducted by Tekeste (2007) and later by Yusuf (2024), community resource mobilization is relatively high in Amhara; however, involvement is still low.

2.2.2.2. The School Improvement Cycle in Ethiopia

Improvement Cycle in Ethiopia schools is a four-step process that aims at ensuring that there is continuity in the improvement process, unlike being a single event. The Improvement Cycle is based on the "Plan-Do-Check-Act" (PDCA) quality management concept.

Figure 2: The School Improvement Cycle in Ethiopia



Source: adopted from school improvement blue print manual (MoE, 2007).

Stage 1: Preparation and Self-Assessment (The "Inquiry" Phase)

The process starts with the School Self-Evaluation (SSE). Schools must gather information on the 15 standards defined by the SIP. Scholarly debates by Reynolds (2023) indicate the importance of this stage because the quality of data determines the overall outcome of the cycle. In other words, the failure of schools to provide reliable data would lead to ineffective planning. The empirical study conducted in Assosa (2025) and Amhara (2024) shows that secondary schools find it difficult to carry out the self-assessment due to their incompetence regarding data management. According to Merawi et al. (2021), teachers regard the self-assessment process as "compliance exercise."

Stage 2: Strategic and Action Planning

According to the findings from Stage 1, schools formulate a Three-Year Strategic Plan and the Annual Action Plan. According to the guidelines issued by GEQIP, the Teaching and Learning domain should be prioritized in such plans. Globally, the controversy revolves around whether it should be bottom-up or top-down planning. Although it should be bottom-up planning, recent findings by Amare et al. (2016) reveal that secondary schools tend to use generic plans supplied by the educational bureau in Amhara region.

Stage 3: Implementation

The third step is referred to as the "Practice" step in which the planned actions are put into practice. The key success factors at this stage include resources and teachers' commitment. One of the major gaps found in the literature is the "implementation-performance" gap. Research conducted recently by Kassaye and Geleto (2021) shows that despite the fact that school improvement domains strongly predict students' academic success, the extent of implementation at schools in Ethiopia is quite modest due to resource shortages. Globally, current research emphasizes the fact that despite the comprehensive nature of SIP planning, it may be difficult for school staff to translate this planning into action (Harris & Jones, 2022; Mombourquette, 2023).

Monitoring and Evaluation (The "Reflection" Stage)

This stage includes evaluation and assessment of outcomes and adjustments. According to Abebe (2022), there are two kinds of monitoring practices employed in schools in Ethiopia, namely, internal self-monitoring done by the SIC and the external monitoring performed by Woreda/Zone inspectors. One of the gaps highlighted by Abebe (2022) is that monitoring in schools tends to be punitive, not supportive.

2.2.3. The Role of Regional Education Bureaus (REBs) and Woreda Education Offices (WEOs) and School Principals in SIP implementation

The effectiveness of the educational system in Ethiopia largely depends on the decentralization process within the federal structure that grants regional and district authorities much autonomy in carrying out the policies, thereby putting the Regional Education Bureaus

(REBs), Woreda Education Offices (WEOs), and principals in charge of the SIP project (UNESCO, 2010). The Regional Education Bureaus like the Amhara Regional Education Bureau have to ensure that the national framework of the SIP is adapted with a high-level of technical support and capacity development for WEOs and schools (Bereket, 2024; World Bank, 2020). The Woreda Education Office, which serves as an intermediary level of supervision, is responsible for allocating budgets and resources (GEQIP funds), among other tasks, and giving practical advice to the school principals and teachers on the implementation of the SIP program.

School principals, positioned at the frontline of SIP implementation, play a pivotal role in translating policy into practice. They are responsible for leading instructional improvement, mobilizing teachers, coordinating SIP committees, and ensuring that school-level plans align with both national frameworks and local realities (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood & Sun, 2018). Principals also act as mediators between WEO directives and classroom practices, balancing administrative demands with pedagogical leadership. In contexts of resource scarcity, principals often assume adaptive leadership roles, leveraging community support systems and informal networks to sustain SIP activities (Merawi et al., 2021).

However, a prevalent academic discourse, which is sometimes referred to as the "Woreda Paradox," reveals a striking dissonance between the support role required of WEOs and the reality of the situation (Workneh, 2012). Regardless of the significant contribution they make as the intermediaries of policy to practice, research evidence continues to show that the WEOs tend to be ineffective or to be sources of systemic barriers to improving individual schools. The Woreda Paradox is evident in numerous capacity and accountability gaps that include the tendency of WEOs to retain school grants, reluctance on the part of WEOs toward contextualizing SIP at school level, and lack of qualified staff and proper coordination between regional and Woreda officials (Merawi et al., 2021; Regassa & Geda, 2025; Workneh, 2012). The above mentioned institutional constraints, together with the overwhelming administrative workload of principals, play an important part in widening the large existing policy implementation gap in SIP where the policy implementation rate is very poor.

While the existing literature identifies the challenges of institutional nature as well as confirms the overall low implementation status, there are three gaps which hinder the development of an encompassing perspective on the issue at stake. Firstly, existing empirical studies focus predominantly on primary schools, failing to account for specific peculiarities of secondary schools, their curricula, requirements to teachers' expertise for teaching secondary school subjects, and the need for preparing students for national exams in accordance with the established procedures (Merawi et al., 2021). Secondly, there is a clear need to go further than stating the low level of implementation and conduct a functional analysis of the decentralized support system. In this context, there should be conducted research focused on analyzing the effectiveness and quality of the technical and supervisory support provided by REBs, WEOs, and school principals to the school principals from the Amhara Region, as far as instructional leadership is concerned, and taking into consideration the use of the Cluster-Based Approach. Thirdly, research should consider the local and external factors limiting the implementation process of the policy in question, for example, insufficient resources available to the schools and disturbance caused by security concerns of the region (ACLED, 2021).

2.3. Preparation for School Improvement

The School Improvement Program (SIP) is one of the foundational programs within the larger General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP) initiative that was established in 2007 (MoE, 2007). The main goal of the program is to improve the quality of education through enhanced teaching, effective school leadership, favorable learning environments, and community involvement (Merawi et al., 2021). The preparation stage of the program is generally agreed to be the most vital aspect of the process, dictating whether or not the SIP would align strategically and ultimately succeed or fail (Fullan, 2015; Hopkins, 2017). Preparation entails a series of interrelated actions, which include mobilizing stakeholders, conducting an assessment of the need based on data analysis, capacity development, and proper utilization of resources. For the case of the Amhara Region, local studies reveal a substantial discrepancy between the policy and its implementation, with the ambitious policy aspiration of SIP juxtaposed with its actual implementation level, which remains relatively low, often due to systemic constraints, contextual challenges, and even political tension (Merawi et al., 2021).

2.3.1. Stakeholder Mobilization and Commitment

Stakeholder mobilization is defined as the strategic engagement of relevant stakeholders, such as the district administration (Woreda Education Office, WEO), school management, teachers, parents, and the wider community, in order to enable their combined involvement, ownership, and resource provision in the School Improvement Program (SIP) (Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024). Theoretically, stakeholder mobilization is similar to School-Based Management (SBM), which is a widely used international educational policy approach that shifts the locus of control from higher levels of authority down to individual schools (Isa et al., 2020; Pangaribuan et al., 2023). The rationale behind mobilizing the stakeholders involved in education improvement is that change cannot be sustained effectively without a common vision, leadership roles, and commitment on the part of the stakeholders (Kareem et al., 2023; Vanlommel et al., 2024). In this respect, commitment is more than just following a certain set of instructions and procedures; it represents a deep-rooted conviction in the SIP vision and readiness to make discretionary efforts to materialize it (Bush & Sargsyan, 2020).

In addition to all of these barriers, the effectiveness of the school improvement program of Ethiopia is largely hindered by a lack of continuous engagement on the part of key stakeholders at a moderate to low level. Such engagement levels have been observed through various studies conducted in the country, including the Amhara Region (Tadesse & Geda, 2021). The main problem associated with low engagement relates to a very poor presence of important external institutions, such as the Woreda Education Office, along with significant internal institutions, namely, PTSA and SIC, in the organization process (Kebede, 2023). Low engagement can be explained by several problems associated with this issue, including unclear role assignment, the Decentralization Paradox, the lack of commitment among the school personnel, and exclusion of the local population from the planning process, resulting in lack of transparency and accountability (Dagne, 2020; MoE, 2017; Shiferaw & Berhanu, 2018; Yusuf, 2024).

Research at the global level has shown that effective family and community engagement is an essential component that leads to better academic results, less misbehavior, and efficient allocation of resources within schools (see Deslandes & Bertrand, 2021). Despite the evidence, many emerging economies, especially those in Africa and Asia, find it challenging to transition from mere lip service to practical and productive FCE (see O'Mara & Smith, 2023). The international body of literature emphasizes that successful mobilization of family and community engagement requires visionaries among school principals who would strongly advocate for the concept of family and community engagement and fully commit their teachers and community members to a common future (see Harris & Jones, 2024).Indeed, the literature indicates that low commitment is one of the challenges in implementing change. There is still a lack of information about the complexity involved in the relationship between WEO, school, and teacher commitments to leadership in the Amhara Region, more precisely, on how the specific challenges in the region, such as prolonged conflicts and administrative unrest, have undermined the commitment to the SIP mandate among the principals and teachers.

2.3.2. Needs Assessment and Priority Setting

The essence of SIP lies in conducting an evidence-based need assessment to analyze previous performances and set high but realistic targets. This concept has its origins in Data-Driven Decision Making (DDDM), which uses data analysis in a collaborative manner among the members of the school to identify any weaknesses in their performance and determine what needs to be done to improve the situation (Fullan, 2023; MoE, 2021). In Ethiopia, the School Report Card (SRC) is the tool employed to implement this stage of the SIP process. Nevertheless, several empirical findings indicate a number of weaknesses in the SIP process implementation, especially within the Amhara Region. One problem that has been found to be consistent in this regard is that of the limited application of research-based data in the process of SIP implementation, as exemplified by the SRC project (Merawi et al., 2024). There is often limited ability in schools to analyze data and formulate appropriate improvement priorities through these. The problem is further worsened by evidence from a study conducted by the Ministry of Education indicating that many principals of schools do not have adequate levels of education and leadership skills to conduct proper planning and, more importantly, data analysis

and performance assessment (MoE, 2022). Poor performance in National Learning Assessment is another issue in this respect (JICA, 2023).

The international best practices stress the application of research-based evidence in Practice along with the need to ensure that the needs assessment is an extremely collaborative process involving all parties – the teacher, the parent, the stakeholder, and the student. According to Fullan (2023) and Darling-Hammond et al. (2021), this will help guarantee contextual relevance and wide support. However, even though the literature review confirms the poor usage of School Records Card (SRC) data in the Amhara Region, there seems to be a notable lack of analysis in regard to why that may be the case. There should be an analysis of the monitoring activities performed by the Woreda Education Office (WEO) concerning the needs assessment documentation (SIP/SRC). Moreover, there must be an evaluation of the statistical literacy and analytical skills of the school principals and SIC members with respect to prioritizing the goals based on the results provided by the SRC.

2.3.3. Capacity Building and Training

The essence of capacity-building in a school improvement program revolves around a continuous and holistic approach, aimed at developing the capacity of an institution to participate and continue learning to achieve desired results (Stoll & Bolam, 2021; Mitchell & Sackney, 2019). The process is not only intricate but also involves more than mere training since it requires developing the right conditions, allowing for differentiated and skill-based learning as well as achieving synergy between all elements (Stoll & Bolam, 2021). The most common approach to SIP capacity-building continues to involve training with a focus on key participants like school administrators, SIP teams, and educators. Nonetheless, successful capacity-building should move beyond isolated and short-term workshops, commonly known as "drive-by" professional development, into professional learning communities with a long-term perspective (Fullan, 2023).

Though the importance of capacity building in the Ethiopian educational sector has been acknowledged and even seen through initiatives by the Ministry of Education in terms of training related to leadership and management (MoE, 2022; FDRE, 2020), there seems to be some kind

of disconnect regarding its successful execution from a local perspective. It can be mentioned that the competency skills gap exists to an extent, especially when considering the lack of skills required in management and teaching in order to implement the decentralized education management effectively and accomplish the aims set out in the SIP (Ayalew, 2023; MoE, 2022). Moreover, according to local studies, although practices such as coaching and workshops are used, the availability and quality of capacity building activities remain insufficient (Merawi et al., 2024).

In this regard, international models emphasize differentiated and data-based capacity building approaches that are context-specific to each school (Hopkins & Taylor, 2021). In any good capacity building exercise, distributed leadership which is characterized by creating a strong team and involving other people in leadership activities, Sustained Learning through integration within the professional learning community model and data-based coaching through using the evidence to drive continuous coaching should be prioritized (Fullan, 2023; Roderick et al., 2020). This comparison brings into light an evident gap in capacity building exercises since what is needed here is capacity-building measures that go past raising awareness and help build skills to apply in their SIPs. Literature shows that there is inadequate capacity building on the part of the school principals and SIP committees. There seems to be a gap that needs to be filled in relation to whether the capacity-building trainings that the secondary school principals receive have been effective and relevant to their roles within the four dimensions of their SIP.

2.3.4. Resource Allocation and Budgeting for SIP

Budgeting and resource allocation are important strategic elements in ensuring that the ichool Improvement program becomes a success. Resource-based approach to educational policy recognizes the fact that targeted spending is critical in obtaining the necessary inputs such as effective teaching staff, instructional materials and physical facilities required for improved learning outcomes (Greenwald et al., 2023; World Bank, 2024). As a result, there needs to be a strategic budget system which will ensure efficient use of money on the priorities of the SIP, including vital educational inputs and disadvantaged populations (World Bank, 2024). In the case of a developing country like Ethiopia, this problem lies in the issue of not only raising

sufficient resources but also radically reforming the inefficient and inadequate financial management system.

Evidence from empirical sources, whether domestically or globally, reveals underlying structural challenges in the management of educational resources. Although community involvement is a requirement aimed at generating resources (Yusuf, 2024; Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020), research conducted locally, even in the Amhara Region, indicates that SIP application remains highly limited by resource shortages and, more critically, financial misallocation (Merawi et al., 2024). The major issue tends to be inefficient or inappropriate resource allocation. Financial aid from the government is often associated with fixed costs and lacks effective utilization for enhancing students' academic achievements, hence necessitating decentralized budgeting that will allow school heads to allocate discretionary funds wisely (Banerjee et al., 2023; World Bank, 2024). Internationally, studies from Southeast Asia indicate that funds generated from non-governmental sources (communities or private institutions) may, on occasion, exert a greater influence on academic gains in secondary schools than government-fixed budgets (Emerald Publishing, 2024).

2.4. Practices of School Improvement

The School Improvement Program (SIP) in Ethiopia, conceptually adapted from international school excellence models (e.g., in Australia), remains foundational to the nation's strategy for enhancing educational quality, notably under packages like the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) and its subsequent phases, GEQIP-E (MoE, 2021; Endale et al., 2023). The SIP is structured around four interconnected domains: teaching-learning, school leadership and management, parent-community school relations, and a healthy/safe learning environment (MoE, 2021; Geleta & Misganu, 2023). International and local research consistently posits that the effectiveness of the entire program hinges on the robust implementation of best practices within each of these domains, necessitating a continuous and cyclical process of needs assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting at the school level (Dabesa & Cheramlak, 2021; Hanover Research, 2023; MoE, 2021).

However, a significant obstacle that needs to be addressed for efficient utilization of resources is the insufficient level of financial literacy and poor financial management capability at the school level (World Bank, 2024; Merawi et al., 2024). Poor capabilities will affect the efficient planning, allocation, and Monitoring and Evaluation of resources despite having good budget plans. In addition to that, the lack of disaggregation of budget according to the type of expense or educational level poses challenges in conducting systematic monitoring. Thus, an important gap in the literature that needs to be filled is the assessment of the financial management capability of the schools' managers and SIP committees and the efficiency of the M&E system in terms of resource allocations with regard to instructional priorities outlined in the SIP. The problem of resource constraint is mentioned above. However, the main gap is related to the analysis of financial oversight carried out by the WEOs and autonomy of Amhara secondary school managers in terms of allocation of the discretionary/non-government SIP budget.

2.4.1. Quality of Teaching and Learning Practices

Quality of teaching and learning is an area that is unanimously acknowledged as the focal point in the quest for continuous school improvement because the end game of education systems is to enhance learning and performance by students (Hopkins et al., 1994; Yusuf, 2024). One of the practices in the quality of teaching and learning area in the context of the SIP process in Ethiopia is that there must be a mandatory transition from passive lecture methods to Active Learning Methodologies (ALM). Research evidence based on meta-analysis studies indicates that ALM techniques such as collaboration, problem-solving, and discussion enhance learning outcomes, comprehension, and critical thinking better than passive lecture techniques (Freeman et al., 2014; Patel et al., 2025). ALM also plays a crucial role in fostering inclusiveness in learning environments while contributing to the academic success of both faculty and learners (Amare & Dagnew, 2020; UNESCO, 2020).

Nonetheless, an important issue arises regarding the practical application of ALM in regions with resource constraints such as Amhara Region. Although the theory behind ALM is clearly beneficial, Ethiopian research, specifically studies conducted in Amharan secondary schools, has shown recurring issues such as a lack of continuous assessment and feedback, which

impedes students' academic progress despite the clear communication of instructional goals by the instructor (Yusuf, 2024; Hailu, 2022). Additionally, international research on the implementation of active learning strategies indicates that although the instructors support the concept of ALM, factors such as the large number of students per teacher, absence of model lesson plans, a bulky and complicated curriculum, and resource limitations pose major obstacles to implementing ALM (Bartholomew et al., 2019; Ropo, 2024). This presents an important gap in the literature that requires local research: how can instructors in Amharan secondary schools overcome this obstacle through ALM?

The second crucial component of effective teaching involves appropriate lesson planning. Proper lesson planning serves as the framework through which pedagogical innovation such as ALM becomes incorporated into everyday classroom activities (MoE, 2007). In successful schools, there has been a move away from mere assurance of basic operations to a more strategic planning approach that emphasizes consistency of learning results at various grade levels (Bellei et al., 2015; Cevikbas et al., 2024). Research in the local context, on the other hand, indicates a disconnect in this regard. Whereas teachers may be involved in planned activities, the follow-through tends to be wanting in many cases because of time constraints and limited assistance (Yusuf, 2024; Ademas & Ayenachew, 2020). There is therefore a need for studies that can help determine the extent to which planning in classrooms serves a purpose beyond just bureaucratic compliance.

2.4.2. School Leadership and Management

School leadership is internationally acknowledged as an important leverage point in achieving better student outcomes and advancing school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Tucker & Yoon, 2024). Literature identifies the existence of two influential and interrelated models that are crucial for ensuring successful School Improvement Plan (SIP) implementation: Instructional Leadership (IL) and Distributed Leadership (DL).Instructional Leadership (IL) refers to leadership that puts the development of pedagogy at the center of every decision made in schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Akomodi, 2025). Successful IL is more than principalship, but a series of essential activities, including establishing and sharing a common school vision, managing the instruction process by means of observation and feedback,

coordinating the curriculum, and fostering positive classroom atmosphere, which lay the groundwork for quality pedagogy (Cansoy, Kılınç, & Türkoğlu, 2024; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987). Such leadership style is scientifically associated with greater teacher self-efficacy, learning climate, and better student performance results (The Education Hub, 2021; Zhang &Lee, 2023). Still, international literature emphasizes the importance of the IL model as secondary school principals cannot be knowledgeable in all disciplines; therefore, it becomes necessary to implement a DL strategy (The Education Hub, 2021).

This task will bring the concept of Distributed Leadership (DL) into light. DL changes the attention of focus from one heroic leader to a network of formal and informal sources of influence, grounded in expertise and where the duties of instructional leadership are diffused amongst members of the school community (Spillane & Coldren, 2022; Raymond, 2024). The idea is especially relevant in secondary education as it offers senior leaders a chance to build systems where middle leaders (for instance, heads of departments), alongside teacher-leaders, participate in activities of providing instructional feedback and support (The Education Hub, 2021). It has been found out that such a strategy is highly efficient for making school management less overloaded, promoting the autonomy of schools, facilitating collaboration, and improving teachers' self-esteem due to the active involvement of principals in organizing professional development aimed at developing competencies of teacher-leaders (Galdames-Calderón, 2023; Luo et al., 2023). However, local Ethiopian studies tend to speak about the lack of successful implementation, explaining it by the inefficiency of leadership, underqualification and incompetence of instructors, as well as preoccupation with management functions (Gebremedhin & Gupta, 2024; Assefa et al., 2023).

2.4.3. School-Community Partnerships

The development of efficient school-community collaboration, especially through the involvement of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and other similar structures such as School Management Committees (SMC), forms the third major area of the School Improvement Program (SIP) in Ethiopia (MoE, 2010; Shanko, 2024). Global and national policies highlight that higher participation of families and communities is anticipated to contribute to the mobilization of resources, offer significant assistance in different school matters, and result in

better academic achievements, fewer disciplinary problems, and higher levels of staff motivation (Yusuf, 2024; Tekeste, 2007). The formation of a robust PTA serves as an important intermediary between the school and the community, necessary for the shared responsibility of improvement efforts (Edamo & Netshitangani, 2018).

However, empirical investigations in the local environment prove that active involvement of parents is crucial for the development of schools, noting successful stories of solving financial issues within the community through mobilizing people and creating income-generating activities (ADRA, 2016). Literature suggests that close collaboration of the school community during planning, making decisions, and evaluating the process results in high ownership by community members of improvement initiatives (Edamo & Netshitangani, 2018). Nevertheless, the analysis shows several barriers to deeper involvement of stakeholders, which are consistently, discussed in numerous research papers. Several empirical investigations of SIP in the Ethiopian educational environment have found a generally low level of participation and willingness to implement the program among parents and community members (Tiruneh et al., 2023; Edamo & Netshitangani, 2018). Such factors as the lack of awareness regarding SIPs in the school community, poor collaboration between stakeholders, and low coordination level have been identified as the most common reasons (Edamo & Netshitangani, 2018; Ayenew, 2022). The gap in current literature concerns the issue of moving beyond raising funds to becoming pedagogically involved in the learning and teaching process and collaborating with teachers to improve their effectiveness.Understanding the structural and cultural barriers to deep, meaningful parental and community participation is essential for SIP's long-term success.

2.4.4. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback Mechanisms within the SIP

Fourthly, the fourth practice of SIP revolves around the construction and use of reliable Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback (MEF) mechanisms. The notion of MEF in school improvement is not just about accountability but entails the feedback loop required for continuous improvement by making changes in teaching and learning strategies through instructional and formative methods to ensure that the intended outcomes of SIP are achieved (Rogers et al., 2023; United Nations Population Fund & Burnet Institute, 2020). It should be noted that evaluation is regarded as the backbone of this process.

The academic argument revolves around whether feedback works efficiently and has any useful implications. Feedback is an important tool for improvement. However, problems arise when the process is carried out due to issues like inadequate feedback delivery, absence of effective ways of monitoring follow-up progress, and difficulties teachers have in using assessment data (United Nations Population Fund & Burnet Institute, 2020). Literature in international studies has shown that externally controlled standardized data, which can be used in monitoring, can be considered as something meant for exercising control over schools rather than for improvement, particularly in poor districts, questioning the efficiency of the top-down standards-driven reforms (Demski & Racherbäumer, 2017). Consequently, the need arises for improving teachers' data literacy skills and designing more efficient data-gathering systems that will support improvement of the school (Demski & Racherbäumer, 2017).

On the local level, there is a need for the application of formal monitoring and evaluation systems that will play an important role in improving the implementation status of SIPs (Abeje et al., 2024). Nevertheless, according to existing literature, the means employed by principals to monitor and evaluate are not designed to manage SIP activities. Instead, a higher degree of consistency and support should be ensured with regard to monitoring and evaluation frameworks (World Bank, 2021). In terms of the main research problem in relation to Amhara region, the need arises to study the process through which secondary schools switch from mere compliance-based monitoring to a feedback-oriented system that takes into account instructional factors and data-driven pedagogical decision-making (Rogers et al., 2023).

2.5. Challenges to School Improvement

The introduction of school improvement programs is a complicated process, especially in developing countries, where systemic weaknesses tend to exacerbate contextual and organizational problems. In Ethiopia, SIP, as well as School Based Management (SBM), which is another initiative linked to it, can be considered an important policy instrument of the government aimed at improving the quality of education and dealing with the double problem of accessibility and quality (Merawi et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the current literature demonstrates that there is a considerable difference between the ambitious policy intentions of SIP and its poorly executed reality, especially when referring to the Amhara Region (Merawi et al., 2021;

Solomon, 2020). The academic community agrees that the inability to implement SIP successfully is not a result of the program design itself but of the underestimation or poor consideration of various factors that may affect its realization. These include political, institutional, environmental, and other issues (Evans & Popova, 2015; Glewwe & Muralidharan, 2015). It is crucial to carefully examine the identified barriers to better understand the stakeholders' perspectives and evaluate the efficacy of SIP in practice (Merawi et al., 2021).

2.5.1. External Challenges

External or contextual challenges refer to the broad socio-economic, political, and environmental variables, which are mostly out of the school's immediate control, but which influence significantly its capacity to put into practice the SIP process (Ayalew, 1991). In Amhara Region, the combined effect of such external variables makes the task extremely difficult.

2.5.1.1. Poverty and Socio-Economic Disadvantage

Poverty continues to be one of the most important constraints to education in the world and in the case of Ethiopia. There is sufficient empirical evidence that there is a strong and negative relationship between socio-economic status and education (Young Lives, 2025). For instance, in Ethiopia, poor children have a low chance of graduating from high school than richer children (Young Lives, 2025).

The theory of the relationship between poverty suggests that high-poverty schools lack the capacity to improve the learning process significantly, without taking into account other financial factors (Evans & Popova, 2015; Glewwe & Muralidharan, 2015). Poverty in the Amhara Region means that the cost factors that hinder the SIP process include both direct and indirect costs. The failure to meet the costs of schooling, such as uniforms and contributions, together with the necessity of undertaking housework or agricultural work, leads to late enrolment and absenteeism, resulting in school dropout cases, especially for rural girls (Young Lives, 2025). These dropouts, referred to as 'silent exclusion,' are an indicator of the failure of the SIP in relation to access and retention issues (Young Lives, 2025). Conflicts that create insecurity and

are linked to poverty contribute to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, making it difficult for students to learn effectively despite schools' efforts and initiatives (Young Lives, 2025). One of the most important debates in development studies is between supply-side interventions (such as investments in schools, e.g. buildings/materials) and demand-side interventions (such as conditional cash transfers). The empirical research indicates that although costly "standard" investments in schools are ineffective, demand-side interventions, which reduce costs or raise the immediate benefits from attending school, are generally successful in increasing attendance and educational achievement (Glewwe & Muralidharan, 2015). It seems therefore that the SIP approach to schooling reforms could become obsolete if not accompanied by poverty alleviation initiatives.

2.5.1.2. Large Class Sizes and Resource Scarcity

The concept of school mprovement depends heavily on the existence of good learning environment that includes infrastructure and educational facilities (FDRE, 2020). However, from the reviewed literature, it was established that the quick growth and development in terms of education accessibility in Ethiopia, especially at the secondary level, have made it very difficult for the government to accommodate the need of quality learning environment (UNESCO, 2020; World Bank, 2013). One of the challenges in Amhara is the consistent shortage of classrooms, where students are taught in large numbers per class, and inadequacy of teaching materials (UNICEF, 2021). As Merawi et al. (2021) established, the SIP component of 'Learning Environment' had not been well implemented by failing to meet the standard in relation to availability of facilities such as library books, science kit, and ICT center. Although there might be an adequate number of teachers in Amhara, what lacks in Amhara is a sufficient number of facilitative staff that will support the teaching process (Merawi et al., 2021). It has also been pointed out that the capital investment in education in Amhara is poor (UNICEF, 2021). Although there has been some debate in the literature about the effects of increases in schooling budgets without restrictions, there is more agreement that focused and resource-intensive policies, such as reductions in class sizes, and investments in early childhood education programs, which have proven to yield a justified positive effect on educational outcomes, are better placed (Glewwe & Muralidharan, 2015).

2.5.1.3. Regional Instability and Conflict

Consequently, the adverse effects that the regional insecurity and the ongoing military strife have had on the educational quality within Amhara Region have been very profound and represent another important, relatively recently emerged exogenous variable that is absolutely essential for consideration (ACLED, 2021). Firstly, ongoing strife directly hindered the implementation of the SIP program which resulted in numerous school closings and construction delays and even destruction of some educational infrastructure (ACLED, 2021; UNICEF, 2021). Furthermore, the regional strife contributed to the creation of large number of IDPs and led to increase in number of out-of-school children within the country (UNICEF, 2021). Additionally, the cost of school reconstructions proved to be rather great and exceeded the amount of money that could have been provided from within the regional budget (UNICEF, 2021). Moreover, it must be noted that the mentioned security problems posed considerable difficulty in terms of conducting researches and obtaining necessary data regarding the impact of SIP (ACLED, 2021). Finally, it should be mentioned that according to the findings of the upcoming Young Lives study (2025), some schools are still closed within Amhara resulting in approximately four million children not attending the school at all.

2.5.2. Internal/Organizational Challenges

Internal barriers are those related to the organizational design, human resources, and cultural factors within the schooling system. These are usually the restrictive factors that cannot be easily overcome even by well-endowed program.

2.5.2.1. Teacher Motivation and Turnover

Teachers remain the main driving force behind SIP; however, several issues affecting their motivation, competence, and turnover create substantial organizational problems. In studies conducted in Africa, teachers' disapproval of their financial rewards and other incentives has negatively affected their motivation levels, leading to poor performance, which is often demonstrated by their frequent absence and little class time devoted to instruction (Cambridge Education et al., 2009). The degradation of teachers' social standing and reputation caused by an increase in the number of unqualified personnel in some education systems also reduces their

sense of dedication to their profession (Felix, 2005). Regarding the Amhara case study, a significant internal deficiency includes a failure to establish specific criteria for quality teaching and learning and the inability to innovate teaching methods (Merawi et al., 2021). Even though teachers follow lesson plans, inadequate assessment procedures, feedback mechanisms, and appropriate professional development activities hinder students' academic achievements (Merawi et al., 2021). Continuous training sessions on SIP, teaching methods, and assessment techniques are always emphasized as indispensable elements (Merawi et al., 2021). An insufficiency of qualified and competent teachers and school leaders has been pinpointed as one of the principal reasons for substandard teaching and assessment approaches (Merawi et al., 2021). The challenge is not just one of low motivation but also of insufficient capacity to deliver the pedagogical shifts required by SIP.

2.5.2.2. Weak Leadership and Administrative Capacity

According to Bush (2010) and Hopkins (2005), school leadership is one of the most vital components determining the success of school improvement programs. SIP tends to decentralize school administration through SBM, though the implementation of such program in Ethiopia is usually constrained by insufficient administrative capacity among other factors. According to Merawi et al. (2021), the lack of sufficient administrative capacity among school principals is a serious problem that impedes the successful implementation of SIP in the Amhara Region. The implementation of SBM in the region is viewed as ineffective due to inadequate administrative capacity among important personnel, uncertainty, overload, and insufficient collaboration between school leaders (Rosyida & Purwanto, 2022). Effective leadership is supposed to promote visions about education and implement changes in the process (Hopkins, 2002). However, the problem in this case lies not only in the insufficiency of administrative capacity but also in the misunderstanding of the concept of SBM by teachers (Rosyida & Purwanto, 2022), which indicates that leadership failed to socialize SIP and its vision. The research on school governance in developing countries shows that any measures related to improvement of school governance and teacher accountability prove to be highly efficient (Glewwe & Muralidharan, 2015).This implies that weak leadership is not just a deficiency in skill but a systemic failure to implement mechanisms of accountability required to drive improvement.

2.5.2.3. Resistant School Culture

Culture of schools, which includes values, beliefs, and attitudes of those involved, is another important factor influencing SIP success, as even a resisting culture may nullify any attempt of policy intervention (Fullan, 2007). The implementation of various disconnected initiatives results in a loss of instructional coherence and the creation of what Cooper et al. (2015) referred to as the "sustainability problem", undermining the earlier successes. The continuous change of priorities contributes to the development of resistance to new reforms in the form of staff's frustration (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Community participation is one of the main spheres of activity of the program, according to MoE (2007). Local research indicates a failure in community involvement in school activities due to expectations not being met (Merawi et al., 2021). It is known that internal culture features a lack of proactive participation of stakeholders, requiring their reorientation to promote the development of the school (Gezahegn & Abebe, 2019).

2.5.3. Policy-Related Challenges

The issues related to policy arise from the way the policies are developed and implemented at the regional and national levels, and how resources are allocated, which affects the school's planning and implementation efforts.

2.5.3.1. Frequent Policy Changes and Lack of Sustainability

Sustainability remains a crucial issue since policy changes will continuously endanger long-lasting SIP implementation. While it may be easy to understand the ambitious nature and proper structure of the policy intent underlying the SIP, the implementation gap revealed in local research from the Amhara Region remains large (Merawi et al., 2021). Hence, this implies that the perceived effectiveness of such programs will become weaker since their implementation will remain severely restricted due to a range of internal and external limitations, which goes far beyond simple organizational inadequacies. As was reported previously, stakeholders in various communities failed to gain sufficient awareness regarding the SIP even after training sessions

had been conducted (Lemessa, 2016). Such findings confirm the lack of proper implementation of the policy, where effective implementation can be achieved only through proper communication of the strategy at the local community level (Rosyida & Purwanto, 2022). Scholars agree that the policy in question must be considered a long-term process instead of a result achieved via the single SIP (Fidan & Balci, 2017).

2.5.3.2. Lack of Sustained and Adequate Funding

The implementation of SIP requires dedicated and predictable resources to each of its domains, but budget constraints remain the constant dilemma in any policy planning in the development states. The expenditure on education in the Amhara Region is almost entirely recurrent (such as salaries) which constitutes more than 90% of the total educational budget of the region, thereby making very few resources available for capital investments (UNICEF, 2021). The inability to have capital investment impacts negatively on the region's ability to construct new schools, decrease student-class size, and satisfy the requirements of infrastructural aspects of SIP (UNICEF, 2021). Many sector plans that were made in African countries were overly ambitious considering the limited administrative capacity and budget constraints (Cambridge Education et al., 2009). For the case of SIP, one of the major challenges is the inability to make adequate budget allocations which results in non-functioning of some crucial structures like school management committees (Felix, 2005). The research questions here ask about the extent to which the issue is funding or effective budget utilization. In the face of high inflation, the challenge for the regional government is to maintain the level of spending in real terms to avoid educational regression, which requires a strategic focus on improving expenditure efficiency.

2.5.3.3. Bureaucratic Delays and Administrative Rigidity

One aspect of SIP, School Based Management (SBM), seeks to enhance flexibility in schools. Unfortunately, it has been hampered by excessive delay in the bureaucracy and an administrative culture that is too centralized. In spite of attempts to push the policy towards SBM, with the goal of giving schools increased budgetary and definition powers over themselves, such efforts have been hindered by an existing centralized administrative culture.

This has made principals face challenges at levels of input, process, and output, all of which are delayed by processes in the administration outside (Gezahegn & Abebe, 2019). Successful implementation of the SIP policy rests on collaboration between the school, Woreda (district) and zone education experts. Whenever the schools' 'self-enquiry' exercise is not regularly carried out and does not meet higher expectation, then the whole process of SIP fails (Merawi et al., 2021). Such misalignment is definitely a failure of bureaucratic organization. The main policy related problem with respect to SIP is absence of any formal tool of evaluation of the process. Suggestions for improvement involve putting in place incentives for best practice and formal evaluation mechanisms.

2.6. Opportunities for School Improvement

The discussions around SIPs, especially those that have occurred in the Global South, have moved beyond a narrow emphasis on problems and deficits toward a more progressive discussion on exploring possibilities that currently exist or are emerging (Fullan, 2020; Henebry et al., 2021). Although secondary schools in Amhara Region, Ethiopia are in a unique environment characterized by resource limitations and particular socio-cultural dynamics (MoE, 2017), there is a rich academic literature that provides important openings for progress. Opportunities such as technology adoption, collaboration between institutions, human capital growth, and community involvement provide important levers for transformational changes through SIPs (Datta & Sharma, 2022). This review explored four particular possibilities, considering the scholarly debates and empirical support surrounding their potential contribution to the acceleration of secondary school improvement.

2.6.1. Leveraging ICT and Digital Learning Platforms

The possibilities presented by Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and digital learning platforms for democratizing access to quality education, as well as facilitating school improvement, have been widely discussed and empirically proven to be real (Murgor & Mweru, 2021). Although earlier initiatives of integrating ICT into education in Ethiopia encountered obstacles associated with infrastructure challenges, insufficient readiness of the teaching staff, and local adaptation of content (Komba & Pima, 2018), it is evident from modern

research that a crucial turning point is approaching when investments could bring tremendous results. Literature distinguishes ICT as an administrative tool used for organizing student records, tracking attendance, etc., and ICT used as an educational technology enabling blended learning, virtual laboratories, custom feedback, etc. (Lai & Huang, 2022). International experience shows that the latter option, in particular, using digital platforms for personalized and adaptive learning, is where the most substantial progress in students' learning outcomes may be observed, especially in economically developing nations such as India and Kenya (Kimani & Okinda, 2020). Also, the transition to digital platforms offers the opportunity to gather valuable data regarding students' performance as well as teachers' behaviors, giving school administrators evidence-based information required for effective SIP decision-making process, which according to Henebry et al. (2021) is critical for contemporary school management.

For the case of Ethiopia, including Amhara Regional State, the works of Teshome (2019) and Mengistu (2022) claim that providing hardware (such as computer laboratories) alone is inadequate. The opportunity here resides in harnessing the already present level of mobile phone penetration in order to provide OERs and digital content that is locally appropriate. Digital learning platforms such as Gojam Learning or other local initiatives (when available) offer opportunities for ensuring uniform quality in terms of education across various schools, particularly those located in distant regions where differences in the quality of teachers may be considerable (MoE, 2020). However, this is only possible when teachers receive proper training in order to utilize ICTs effectively in their lessons in the manner that would allow them to develop critical thinking skills among students rather than merely drill and practice them (Woldetsadik, 2023).

2.6.2. Role of Collaborative Networks

The existence of networks, such as established school cluster centers in Ethiopia, are known to be one structural opportunity which is used in school improvement paradigms as an instrument of horizontal capacity-building, resource-sharing, and professional accountability (Robinson & Lai, 2020). This kind of structural opportunity is intended to alleviate the situation in rural schools due to the creation of some formal mechanism of exchange, learning, and

support. According to international literature, the efficiency of networks depends not on their existence but on the interaction and the type of issues discussed there (Moolenaar et al., 2021). Namely, the network will prove to be highly efficient if it includes teachers themselves who work on evidence-based instructional improvement strategies rather than only administrative staff (Datta & Sharma, 2022). Studies conducted in the UK and Singapore in relation to 'Teaching School Alliances' and 'Professional Learning Communities' respectively showed that successful networks are characterized by collective efficacy, i.e. teachers are convinced that together they are capable to improve students' outcomes (Donohoo, 2017). Such an attitude creates a psychological opportunity for overcoming teachers' burnout and fostering innovation in the institution.

The use of Ethiopian school cluster center approach as an existing structure is one of the most critical structural opportunities within the context of SIP implementation for Amhara Region (MoE, 2017). However, the local research demonstrates that there are certain shortcomings related to the use of the school cluster centers that need to be addressed. In particular, Genet (2018) and Alemu (2021), who conducted their research at regional universities and published relevant reports, argue that one of the main challenges with regards to school cluster centers involves such factors as lack of funding, lack of coordination, and emphasis on administrative discussions rather than pedagogical practices. Therefore, the opportunity in question lies in revitalizing the very idea behind the school cluster centers through using them for conducting peer-to-peer instructional coaching and lesson study; creation of high-quality and localized assessments, as well as sharing specialists and educational materials (Genet, 2018). The fact of the matter is that school cluster centers provide a unique opportunity for establishing horizontal accountability in which peer schools can motivate each other regarding SIP implementation and improvements (Alemu, 2021).

2.6.3. Best Practices in Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Mentorship

Perhaps, no other variable within schools can impact the academic performance of pupils than the quality of the teaching workforce (Hattie, 2017). Therefore, the importance of professional development for teachers cannot be understated since mentoring and continuous

learning play an integral part in developing strategies that enhance the effectiveness of schools, particularly in settings where the level of preservice training is not adequate (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

International best practices regarding Teachers Professional Development (TPD) revolve around three concepts: that it should be continuous and sustained, focus on content (directly related to the curriculum), and be collaborative (part of the school culture) (OECD, 2021). Simply adding more training has not proven to be effective because quality and relevance are important elements in its success. For instance, research conducted on educational institutions in Finland and Canada shows the significance of Lesson Study, which involves collaboration between teachers in planning, observing, and improving their lessons as an effective way of transforming instruction and creating collective pedagogical knowledge (Lewis, 2019). Similarly, mentorship has transformed from just an induction program for new teachers into a peer-coaching and instructional leadership strategy (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). In this case, an instructional model where skilled teachers coach other teachers on complex instructional techniques has emerged as a collective commitment to evidence-based practice (Desimone, 2011). It is possible for TPD to shift from an imposed process to an internally driven one within the context of SIP.

Despite the existence of the TPD process in Ethiopia, there have been difficulties in ensuring consistency in its implementation and achieving practical results (MoE, 2017). Research conducted at a local level that focuses on Amhara and other areas repeatedly highlights the need to make the TPD process more practical and relevant to the needs of secondary teachers in terms of content (Mekonnen, 2020; Shiferaw, 2022). Thus, an area of opportunity is to exploit the potential of TPD and mentorship in the context of global best practices. Firstly, it should be shifted from general training to content-based training conducted among secondary school teachers through PLCs or school cluster centers (Genet, 2018). Secondly, instead of mentoring only newly appointed educators, it should include mentoring for instructional coaching in general, especially when master teachers become coaches themselves (Henebry et al., 2021). According to empirical research by Shiferaw (2022), mentoring by peers of secondary school teachers in Ethiopia in the form of student-centered teaching increased self-confidence and active

learning practices. Therefore, such mentorship programs could help to implement the desired changes in classroom practice, which would ultimately achieve the intended goals of the SIP.

2.6.4. Harnessing Community and Parental Support

Improvement of education institutions is essentially a socio-ecological process which involves elements outside the school walls (Epstein & Sanders, 2020). The participation of community members and the parents is an important yet often underused method for increasing resources, ensuring accountability, and aligning the educational aims with the society's values (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). The participation of the latter is especially important in the case of secondary education institutions where the role of parents changes from monitoring studies to supporting career planning.

However, the academic literature has identified several forms of parental involvement in the learning process and has noted that involvement in learning, such as tutoring children or conveying high expectations, is more effective than involvement in schools (such as attending school meetings and fundraising) (Epstein & Sanders, 2020). Several studies conducted in resource-limited environments in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia have shown the importance of the involvement of communities in resource generation and social accountability (i.e., monitoring school performance and teacher attendance) (Datta & Sharma, 2022). It is generally acknowledged that schools should take the initiative and provide opportunities for participation and involve the parents as active participants, not just as receivers of information. Therefore, the potential is strategic, allowing schools to draw on the social and cultural capital of communities to augment their institutional resources and power. In addition, parental involvement is an important element in keeping students in school, increasing motivation, and improving educational outcomes, especially at the secondary level (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Within the Amhara Region, existing structures such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) are formal avenues for engagement (MoE, 2017). Nonetheless, local research findings indicate that these formal avenues tend to be dominated by school administrators or local political elites that hinder genuine parent participation and constructive criticism (Tefera, 2019; Abate, 2021). The opportunity here for the

SIP is taking the existing engagement process towards transformational engagement through education and capacity building within the structures. One way is ensuring that the SMC members are trained on what their fiduciary responsibility entails, tying it directly to the student's performances and the objectives of the SIP, allowing for mentoring of students by community members with relevant expertise (e.g., health professionals, entrepreneurs), directly improving the educational curriculum of secondary schools and career guidance of students (.Dame, 2021), employing culturally appropriate methods for community engagements and communication (such as use of local languages and digital platforms) and directly improving attendance rate and student discipline. The findings from Tefera's (2019) study conducted among secondary schools in Ethiopia indicated that there is a significant link between effective communication between schools and parents, providing an avenue for introducing non-formal resources to achieve external accountability and thereby ensure ownership of the school improvement program.

2.7. Synthesis (Scholarly Conversation on School Improvement Variables)

The school improvement program is a complex, non-linear process. While traditional models often view school reform as a top-down mandate, contemporary scholarship suggests that the success of SIP in secondary schools is predicated on a symbiotic relationship between Preparation, Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities.

2.7.1. Preparation vs. Practices: The Fidelity Gap

The connection between preparation and practice is usually captured by what scholars call implementation fidelity. They note that the "readiness" of the school to implement SIP, characterized by teacher preparedness, stakeholder orientation, and resource mobilization, directly determines the quality of the implementation process. In the case of international literature, Fullan (2016) notes that "initial mobilization" is the most unpredictable part of reform processes. The lack of a thorough understanding of the conceptual framework among staff members reduces the implementation process to mere superficial compliance, resulting in little or no meaningful instructional change. This trend can be seen in the African setting. In South Africa, for example, Bush & Glover (2021) found out that when school management fails to

include teachers in the initial stages of SIP implementation, the outcomes tend to be fragmented practices without much pedagogical significance. At the local level, several studies have been carried out to show the "disconnect" that exists between the prepared and practiced SIPs. In Amhara, for example, Tefera et al. (2022) report that almost all schools develop complex SIP documents (the prepared part), while classroom practices remain teacher-centric.

2.7.2. Practices vs. Challenges: The Vicious Cycle of Weak Implementation

The scholarly discussion on the topic of practices and challenges can be described using the metaphor of a "vicious cycle." Not only do the inadequacies in the practices not help achieve better results; they increase existing organizational challenges. For example, poorly organized SIP practices such as inefficient monitoring of students' performance or the absence of collaborative peer observation make the organizational situation worse. According to Harris (2020), poor instructional leadership results in creating a void where discipline problems and teacher burnout arise. At the same time, existing structural organizational challenges, such as a high student-teacher ratio (which is typical for Amharan secondary schools) and a lack of information and communications technology can undermine even the best intentions of educators. Indeed, according to Abebe (2020), continuous professional development (CPD) practices in rural secondary schools in Ethiopia suffer from a challenge of excessive workload. In other words, since teachers are overwhelmed with the amount of work, they cannot apply SIP techniques, which results in poor performance among students.

2.7.3. Opportunities vs. Success: The Role of Strategic Resourcefulness

Based on the synthesis of literature, the "opportunity" serves as the moderator that has the potential to disrupt the cycle of failure. The examples of opportunities are community participation, NGOs, and policy changes from the government. According to the "asset-based community development" (ABCD) theory, successful schools that exist within a challenging environment are those that take advantage of opportunities within the community to overcome problems globally (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). In the Amhara context, the significance of education in their culture and "parent-teacher-student associations" (PTSA) are opportunities that

could be utilized to promote successful SIP. As demonstrated by the recent studies (Woldetsadik, 2023), secondary schools in Ethiopia that participated in interactions with local industries and alumni associations (opportunities) have succeeded in delivering better laboratory tools and tutorial classes that enable students to achieve successful SIP practices in spite of limited financial support from the government.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Paradigm of the Study

In the context of the study focused on preparation, practices, difficulties, and opportunities, pragmatism is the research paradigm that should be considered appropriate. The choice of pragmatism as the research paradigm was based on the capacity of pragmatism to overcome the dualistic divide between positivism and constructivism and instead emphasize the need to consider what works to resolve the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). As far as the investigation of the SIP in the context of the Amhara Region is concerned, there was a need for a theoretical paradigm that would take into account not only the objective aspect associated with measuring preparation but also the subjectivity associated with considering lived experiences. Therefore, pragmatism appeared to be an effective approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). At the same time, unlike positivism that would limit the scope of the analysis to quantifiable measures and exclude the consideration of socio-cultural aspects related to the issue of school leadership, or constructivism that would prioritize subjectivism and ignore generalizability issues, pragmatism made it possible to adopt a holistic approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). In support of this perspective, it is stated by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2021) that pragmatism can be considered the "third methodological movement," which allows scientists to use all necessary means in order to respond to research questions effectively.

In addition, the pragmatic approach is supported by its ability in theory to incorporate different types of evidence into the study and generate results that are not only reliable but can be put into action. According to King (2022), pragmatism places much emphasis on the incorporation of quantitative breadth and qualitative depth to ensure that the research results are anchored to reality rather than to mere theories. Similarly, Foster (2024) notes that pragmatism serves as a link between the qualitative and quantitative traditions in terms of methodology to increase validity in challenging educational situations. Moreover, in the Ethiopian case and in the Amhara Region in particular, this theoretical justification became even more relevant owing to the existing gap between the policy formulation process and practice. For instance, local

literature by Wossenie (2021) shows that the implementation of the SIP model in Ethiopia is characterized by what is called “decoupled” realities when schools show their commitment to the policy in writing while facing numerous obstacles in practice. While pragmatism may be appreciated for its extensive theoretical framework, its application in this study guaranteed that the results concerning the problems and opportunities facing SIP were both empirically supported and relevant, providing practical insights for the Amhara Regional Education Bureau.

3.2. Approach and Design of the Study

The choice of Mixed Methods Research (MMR) with an Explanatory Sequential Design (QUAN → qual) was based on the philosophical principles of pragmatism suggesting that the complexity of the School Improvement Program (SIP) in Amhara Region could not be understood through one methodology only. The reasons for choosing a mixed rather than mono-method approach included triangulation and completeness. Although quantitative data helped to provide a general picture of SIP preparation and implementation within the geographical diversity of the area, it could not be used to reveal why and how such implementation challenges appeared. As stated by Creswell and Creswell (2023), using the mixed approach allowed overcoming the disadvantages of both quantitative research (e.g., lack of context) and qualitative research (e.g., lack of generalizability). Regarding the case study in question, the importance of applying a holistic perspective was underscored by Merawi et al. (2020) who highlighted that the school improvement process should be considered as a social and political phenomenon. Hence, using statistical data only might mean neglecting the experiences of teachers in regions that had been experiencing instability and lack of resources. By integrating both data types, the study achieved a more holistic understanding of the synergy between SIP planning and actual school-level performance.

The particular rationale for selecting the explanatory sequential design was rooted in the capacity to leverage qualitative findings to fine-tune and clarify preliminary quantitative insights. In the quantitative phase, numerical information made possible the discernment of trends and disparities in the implementation of SIP programs among different secondary schools. However, as per Yishak and Triegaardt (2024), in the evaluation of Ethiopia's educational framework,

"numbers frequently obscure the entrenched cultural and structural opposition to innovation." Therefore, the qualitative phase was indispensable for providing the "flesh and blood" to statistical anomalies. For instance, in cases where high rates of SIP readiness were observed but low community involvement was documented, the qualitative phase helped identify the economic obstacles or social mistrust that led to this gap. Compared to the concurrent approach, the sequential design was preferable because it enabled researchers to purposively select participants who would be interviewed based on the quantitative results of the survey (Abate & Mekonnen, 2023). In the end, such an approach enhanced the internal validity of the study since the findings were not only based on surface reactions but rather on cross-referenced interpretations of the regional trends and the stories of specific institutions.

3.3. Sources of Data

Data gathering in the present study entailed the use of both primary and secondary data sources. The rationale behind the decision to employ both data sources in this study was due to the application of methodological triangulation in ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings on SIP in the Amhara region (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Justification for the choice of the combination of primary and secondary sources was based on the necessity to connect the two extremes and close the gap between the policies on paper and their practice, since the use of such an approach would allow obtaining additional credibility due to the integration of real-life examples and a broader context (Hung et al., 2024). The selection of primary data sources such as principals, teachers, students, and School Improvement Committee (SIC) members was determined by the fact that all of them were "living archives" of school practices. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), the use of primary data is critical in educational research since it allows capturing the subjective experience of participants and their lived realities. In the case of the Amhara Region, whose schools faced numerous socio-political and economic problems, ignoring primary sources would have meant neglecting various challenges and potential solutions to problems discovered by the school staff. According to recent local research by Berhanu (2023), it is only through primary participants that one can understand the human dimension behind the achievements or failures of SIP initiatives regarding leadership commitment and community engagement.

As a complement to the above-mentioned perspectives, secondary data sources, including SIP manuals, strategic plans, and evaluation reports, formed an objective longitudinal perspective for the study. In terms of conducting document analysis, the research was able to verify the information received from interviews and questionnaires, which are important in order to ensure construct validity, according to Yin (2018). Analyzing the minutes of meetings and academic plans, it was possible to evaluate the stage of preparation of SIP on the basis of comparison of intended goals and factual results. On an international level, Harris and Jones (2024) stated that the process of improvement should be viewed as a multilayered one where organizational memory obtained through the use of secondary data should be integrated with professional perception gained via primary research to form a holistic picture of school health. At the local level, findings by Merawi et al. (2021) obtained in the context of the Waghimra Zone indicated that gaps between the reports received from schools and reality were frequent. Therefore, utilizing secondary data helped avoid the social desirability bias.

The ultimate outcome of such a thorough approach meant that research findings did not rely on mere personal views or administrative figures, but rather an integrated evidence base. It is through the combination of primary findings with the secondary sources that the research managed to cover all intricacies of implementing the process, which improved internal validity, since the findings of "Practices" and "Challenges" were supported by corroborated evidence.

3.4. Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Techniques

The process through which the population was selected, sample size determined, and sampling methods chosen for this research followed a methodology that focused on making sure that the process of sampling was representative, minimally biased, and comprehensive regarding the school improvement program in the Amhara region.

To select participants from secondary schools in the Amhara Region—including teachers, students, and members of the School Improvement Program Committee (SIPC)—the study employed a multi-stage cluster probability sampling technique**.** This approach was chosen to ensure that every unit within the population had a known and non-zero chance of inclusion**,** thereby enhancing the representativeness of the sample and allowing statistical generalization to

the entire region. The procedure unfolded in four sequential stages, each designed to progressively narrow the sampling frame while maintaining randomness and proportional representation. In the first stage, secondary schools were clustered by zones and woredas to capture geographic diversity. In the second stage, schools within each cluster were randomly selected. The third stage involved random selection of teachers, students, and SICS members from the chosen schools. Finally, proportional allocation was applied to ensure that the sample reflected the relative size of each subgroup. This systematic process strengthened the validity of the findings and minimized sampling bias.

Stage 1: Selection of Zones and City Administrations (Primary Sampling Units)

The Amhara Region has been divided administratively into 13 zones and 6 cities. The zones include North Gondar, South Gondar, Central Gondar, West Gondar, North Wollo, South Wollo, North Shewa, East Gojam, West Gojam, Awi, Wag Hemra, Oromia Zone (Amhara), and Semen Goiam. The six cities include Bahir Dar, Gondar, Dessie, Debre Birhan, Kombolcha, and Debre Markos. Using the aforementioned administrative division, a sample was collected through the simple random sampling technique. Probability sampling is characterized by an equal opportunity of being selected for all units, and in the current case, each zone and city had an equal chance of being selected. Consequently, three zones (West Gondar, Central Gondar, and Awi) have been used for the analysis, along with three cities (Gondar, Bahir Dar, and Dessie). All the aforementioned selections occurred by random chance. The sample collection process involved probability sampling only. The use of this methodology has enhanced the representativeness of the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Stage 2: Selection of Woredas and Sub-Cities (Secondary Sampling Units)

Within the three selected zones, sixworedas were chosen through simple random sampling, while within the three city administrations, sixsub-cities were similarly selected. This stage preserved the principle of equal probability while ensuring coverage of diverse socioeconomic contexts.

Stage 3: Selection of Schools (Tertiary Sampling Units)

To achieve the objective of reaching 42 schools, four schools were selected from each Woreda and three schools from each sub-city by applying stratified random sampling. Through this modification, both urban-rural and center-periphery dimensions were taken into account while still considering the proportion of each group among the twelve units (six woredas and six sub-cities). This resulted in selection of 24 schools from woredas and 18 schools from sub-cities, totaling 42 schools. In this case, schools that had relatively better facilities at their disposal in terms of resources (central schools) and schools that were more disadvantaged (peripheral schools) would be proportionally reflected in the selection process. Stratification was done because of the challenges that schools in the Amhara Region tend to face due to poor infrastructural facilities and less literacy rates among the communities and these issues affect the community participation dimension of SIP (Wondifraw, 2020). This method of selecting schools follows the international recommendation made by Cohen et al. (2018) for stratification since it helps to increase the accuracy of the sample.

Stage 4: Selection of Respondents (Final Sampling Units)

In each of the forty-two selected schools, three stakeholder categories, teachers, students, and School Improvement Program Committee (SIC) members, participated in this research. The teachers' sample was generated through systematic random sampling technique, thereby making sure that proportional representation is obtained in relation to the number of teachers in each of the selected schools. However, unlike teachers', both SIC members and students' samples were generated using simple random sampling technique in order to ensure that equal chances of selection were provided to each participant in the sample. Thus, there was little or no risk of selection bias in this study and hence high probability of getting valid and reliable results.

The required sample size of teachers was determined using Cochran's formula (1977), which is particularly suitable for large populations and allows incorporation of confidence levels and variability. The formula is expressed as:

$$no = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where (n0) is the initial sample size, (Z) is the standard normal deviate corresponding to the desired confidence level (1.96 for 95%), (p) is the estimated proportion of the population with the attribute of interest (commonly set at 0.5 to maximize variability), (q = 1 - p), and (e) is the margin of error (0.05). Substituting these values gives:

$$no = \frac{1.96^2 * 0.5 * 0.5}{0.05^2} \approx 385$$

So, the initial sample sizefor a large population is385. Since the population of teachers, in the selected schools is finite, the sample size was further adjusted using Cochran's finite population correction formula:

$$\text{n} = \frac{\text{n0}}{1 + no - 1/N} \approx 384$$

From the above calculation, this gives 384, multiplied by effect size (3) for this research = 1152. Hence, based on the above formula, the number of samples of the teachers will be 1152. Clustering effect is common when conducting a multi-stage cluster sampling where individuals within the same school or cluster have almost similar traits. The tripling of the sample size took into consideration the possibility of clustering, hence increasing the likelihood of achieving statistical power and generalization of the results with 95% confidence level among the entire secondary school population in the Amhara Region. Empirical evidences indicate that it is very important to conduct a large scale teacher survey in order to understand the practices and challenges of SIP because teachers are the implementors of the program (Ayenalem et al., 2025).

The research involved 84 respondents (students) and 84 members of School Improvement Committee (SIC) (two per school each selected from student council) via simple random sampling for data triangulation purposes. The former were consulted on learning and teaching, while the latter gave their views on leadership and management, as recommended by current scholars, emphasizing the need to include all interested parties in conducting research on school improvement issues (Yishak & Triegaardt, 2024). Further, purposive sampling technique was employed to select 10 principals of different schools as key informants based on their

management skills and ability to provide information regarding the problem at hand (Gashaw & Atanaw, 2024). Overall, the study involved 1,330 respondents, including 1,152 teachers, 10 school principals, 84 students, and 84 SIC members.

Table 1: Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Techniques

No.	**Respondent Group**	**Population (N)**	**Sample Size (n)**	**Sampling Method**
1.	Teachers	2,397	1,152	Systematic random sampling
2	Students	420	84	Simple random sampling
3	SIC Members	294	84	Simple random sampling
4	Principals	42	10	Purposive sampling
	Total		1,330	-

3.5. Instruments of Data Gathering

The choice of research data collection tools for this research was informed by the need to cover the broad and deep dimensions of SIP implementation in the context of the socio-political and educational realities of the Amhara Region. The use of an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods design in this research ensured the use of a combined approach of likert-scale questionnaire, interview and document analysis tools.

3.5.1. Questionnaire

The study initially used 5-point Likert-scale closed-ended questionnaires distributed among teachers, students, and SICS members to quantitatively assess the status of SIP prepatation, practices of the four standard SIP domains, challenges of SIP implementation, and possible opportunities for SIP implementation. The total number of items in the survey was 83. The research instrument was modified according to the nationally revised guidelines on school improvement (MOE, 2012) so that the context-related relevancy and content validity could be maximized. By using the instrument based on nationally established standards of educational effectiveness, the researcher makes sure that the collected data will reflect the particularities of the pedagogical and administrative process at schools (Abebe, 2020). Besides, modifying the existing valid frameworks is regarded as the best practice in educational research because it

allows measuring school performance and integrating modern quality parameters into the process simultaneously (Harris & Jones, 2020). It also helps minimize instrument bias and maximize the instrument fit for the current research purposes (Smith & Ng, 2023).

The justification for the use of questionnaires is based on their capacity to offer an objective statistically significant bird's eye view of the state of school performance in the region under investigation as well as identifying generalizable patterns from a geographically extensive region such as Amhara. As per the scholarly controversies brought forth by Creswell and Creswell (2023), one of the most essential components of investigating any phenomenon involves determining its size through the application of structured research tools. In the local setting, research conducted by Tadesse and Belay (2021) has shown that this was possible in the case of Amhara schools.

3.5.2. Semi-Structured Interview

In order to examine the low status of SIP preparation and implementation in relation to the systemic barriers revealed in the quantitative stage of the research, semi-structured interviews with the school principals were conducted. The reasons for selecting interviews as a data collection method in the qualitative analysis are related to the necessity to achieve interpretive depth not provided by any figures. As the schools located in the Amhara Region were subjected to numerous external shocks (e.g., shortage of resources, instability within the region), interviews enabled participants to explain why and how this situation came to be. This point supports the views of Bush (2024) who claims that improving school conditions is always contextual and social, which means that it is necessary to conduct an interview that enables participants to discuss such aspects as weak leadership capacity and lack of collaborative planning in detail. It is in line with the results obtained by Merawi et al. (2021) in the Waghimra Zone who claimed that interviews were the only way to discover hidden problems, e.g., psychological impact of conflicts on teachers' motivation.

Semi-structured interviews were used, and the process involved asking four fundamental questions. Although the interview guide was first prepared in English, it had to be translated to Amharic, the local language of the participants, to achieve language and concept equivalency. It

was critical to conduct the study using the native tongue of the interviewees to reduce communication barriers and capture their lived experiences effectively; this view aligns well with Abebe (2020), who asserts that speaking indigenous languages during Ethiopian education studies improves qualitative data collection. Moreover, the selection of a semi-structured interview guide was because of its inherent flexibility. Creswell & Poth (2018) describe this technique as offering an opportunity to explore more about an emerging insight when the interviewer feels so compelled but without deviating from themes being discussed. The flexibility aspect is vital when researching complex social phenomena because there is a tendency for rigid interview techniques not to capture nuanced data (Kallio et al., 2016). In addition, interviewing participants individually in school offices created a natural and private environment which is conducive to building trust. The one-on-one interview settings lasted between 45-60 minutes and represented an intensive exploration of the research issue, which aligns with Tadesse and Meaza (2023).

3.5.3. Document Review

Finally, the employment of document analysis (examining SIP plans, self-assessment reports, and regional monitoring) proved to be an essential instrument of data triangulation. It was used in order to validate the subjective information obtained from the questionnaire and interviews by the means of objective paper trail of school activities. According to Yishak and Triegaardt (2024), in Ethiopian schools, it is quite common practice to observe a separation when documents show idealistic goals, while classwork tells a completely different story. Hence, document analysis became the means to spot the difference between the effectiveness of self-assessment and strategic planning of the school. Altogether, use of multi-instrument research helped avoid describing "what" was implemented in terms of the SIP process, but also gave the opportunity to explain why such and not some other factors determine quality of school education in the Amhara Region.

3.6. Validity and Reliability Checks

The credibility and scientific nature of the research findings on SIP for the case of Amhara Region were guaranteed through the application of two layers of reliability and validity.

The design was geared towards addressing the challenge between the measurable elements of school preparedness and the qualitative aspect of implementation practices in the secondary schools of Ethiopia.

For the purpose of proving the validity of the quantitative tools, the researcher made use of Content Validity in terms of the expert view, and then carried out a Pilot Study. First of all, the researcher consulted the experts who are academic professionals and practitioners in the field of education policy and leadership in order to confirm whether each item is appropriate and technologically accurate and corresponds to the four standard domains of SIP proposed by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education namely: Teaching and Learning; Leadership and Management; School Environment; and Community Participation. Then, a pilot study was run in Angereb Secondary School using 26 respondents including 10 teachers, 12 students, and 4 members of SIP Committee who were not included in the final sample group. The role of the pilot study was checking face validity in terms of finding linguistic issues and making sure of terminology relevance to the Amhara region.

To determine the reliability of the research, the study has adopted the use of internal consistency determined by the use of the Cronbach alpha coefficient. It is significant to do so since the variables of the study are constructed using latent constructs, which cannot be measured directly and are estimated using more than one questionnaire item (Sobaih & Elshaer, 2022). In relation to the qualitative aspect, the study has changed from "reliability" to the wider term of "trustworthiness" (Bang, 2024). This was done through the use of credibility, which was ensured through the process of member checking, whereby the transcript of the interviews was sent back to the participant for verification (Killett et al., 2023; Wünsch-Nagy, 2025).

However, since there were varied subjects included in the discussion of the problems, the study needed to group all the items into separate Dimensions (Scales). Therefore, rather than obtaining the overall reliability coefficient, the researcher opted to obtain a different value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient depending on the theme associated with the specific dimension. Items were grouped according to themes of Preparation Dimension, Practice Dimension and Challenges Dimension. Such grouping made it possible for the researcher to know how

consistent the measurement of each of these dimensions was. The reason for opting for such methods was based on the need to have a scientific rigidity when dealing with the many variables. Considering the situation in which schools can exhibit various degrees of stability as well as availability of resources in the Amhara Region, the use of one source of information cannot suffice. There are some scholarly concerns that the content validity of the research is vital since without it, the measure becomes meaningless, as researchers may end up "measuring the wrong thing well." In support of this, Ayre and Scally (2014) note that CVR is statistically supported through expert consensus.

The importance of pilot testing in Ethiopia cannot be overstated due to the translation of the policy language (English to Amharic) and the administrative jargon of the SIP. Triangulation (Cohen et al., 2018) was chosen due to the social desirability bias common to self-report in the education system. The principals may overstate the practices to appear consistent with the guidelines provided at the regional level. However, the triangulation of these statements with the teachers' responses and qualitative interviews allows the researcher to provide a "conformable" and "truthful" picture of the SIP situation (Stahl & King, 2020). According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), for studies involving several dimensions, the application of one Cronbach Alpha index is not appropriate. Thus, the inclusion of indices for each scale in the study conforms to the new norms of psychometrics and makes the challenges scale as reliable as the preparation one.

Table 2: Reliability Coefficients for SIP Dimensions (Pilot Study, N=26)

No.	Dimension/Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation

1	Preparation Phase	13	.729	Acceptable
2	SIP Practices			
2.1	Teaching and Learning	15	.750	Acceptable
2.2	Leadership and Management	8	.802	Good
2.3	School Environment	12	.725	Acceptable
2.4	Community Participation	6	.803	Good
3	Challenges of SIP Implementation	16	.842	Good
4	Opportunities for SIP Implementation	13	.826	Good

Reliability of the instrument was conducted through Cronbach's Alpha in the pilot testing phase as illustrated in the table above. In order to not hide the low reliability among different components, it was important to disintegrate the scales into seven dimensions. Reliability coefficient for all dimensions was above 0.70, thus indicating high consistency of the measure. This means that the practices dimension was separated from one another so that there can be reliable measurement for four pillars of SIP including Teaching-Learning, Leadership, Community and Environment.

3.7. Procedure of Data Gathering

In collecting data for this study, the methodology employed the robust design process of mixed sequential explanatory design where quantitive data was collected prior to the collection of qualitative data as a means of addressing the trends revealed by the quantitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Data collection took place in two different, but complementary phases. The first phase entailed the collection of quantitative data. For this purpose, the researcher obtained an official letter of collaboration from the Amhara Regional Education Bureau and the corresponding Zonal Education Departments. Such permission was crucial since it facilitated access to the randomly selected secondary schools for the study. Once the researcher arrived at the selected schools, he/she gained rapport with the school administration and distributed self-administered questionnaire among selected school administrators and teachers. At this stage, data collection was intended to provide a general statistical insight about the state of the SIP preparation and its

implementation at regional level. As Ivankova argues, conducting a survey first gives the researcher a chance to find out "what" is going on before exploring "how" and "why" this takes place. Throughout the quantitative data collection process, the researcher managed to ensure high response rate due to personal follow up and clear instruction. Further analysis (mean scores and standard deviation) helped to detect particular issues (low community involvement, lack of SIP funding) that needed additional examination.

The second step entailed the adoption of nested sampling in the selection of key informants for qualitative data collection, whereby individuals with valuable insights on the difficulties observed through the survey were interviewed. In this process, interviews were done with school principals. The local empirical evidence from Merawi et al. (2021) in the Waghimra Zone states that context-related barriers in implementing SIP in the Amhara Region include administrative changes and lack of adequate resources, thus the need to use interviews in order to obtain such details. To improve reliability, the interviews were recorded in audio after obtaining consent from informants as well as carrying out document analysis by assessing SIP school plans and their monitoring reports. The multi-phased methods used helped in data triangulation, and as Tadesse et al. (2024) explain, ensured that the final results obtained were more than mere figures since they provided an understanding of educators' experiences in the Amhara Region. The collected data was then brought together in the last stage of discussion in order to address the research questions.

3.8. Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study was conducted using the explanatory sequential mixed methods, which involves first collecting the quantitative data and then explaining the findings using qualitative data. As recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018), this methodology is based on the fact that quantitative data give a general perspective on the research problem whereas qualitative data increase its scope by explaining why and how.

3.8.1. Quantitative Data Analysis (Phase 1)

The SPSS (version 26.0) statistical package was used for analysis of data obtained through questionnaires from teachers, students, and members of the school improvement committee. Descriptive statistics (i.e., mean and standard deviations) were used to measure the degree of school preparation, the state of practice in each of the four SIP domains, the level of difficulties faced, and the extent of opportunities that could support the process of school improvement compared to the average mean (3.0). In an effort to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the process of implementation of the school improvement program, this study adopts a two-fold approach of quantitative analysis of each major variable (Preparation, Practice, Challenges, and Opportunities). A One-Sample t-test is conducted to test the level/ extent of each variable against the average mean of 3.0 (Field, 2018). Secondly, since the study covers three groups of stakeholders (Teachers, Students, and SIC members); a One-Way ANOVA technique was adopted (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Although the t-test gives a regional aggregate mean, the ANOVA test is very important in establishing perception gaps among the different groups. The use of an aggregate mean may hide many internal discrepancies since the administrators might view preparation at a high level but the teachers view it at a lower level. Using the Tukey HSD Post-Hoc Test after conducting the ANOVA test enabled the researcher to establish exactly where there was conflict among the perceptions.

3.8.2. Qualitative Data Analysis (Phase 2)

In regards to the qualitative part that sought to provide an understanding of why and how of the quantitative findings, thematic Analysis was conducted. It used the six step recursive process that was put forward by Braun & Clarke (2022) which entailed data familiarization, initial code generation, theme search, theme review, theme definition and finally report production. Themes that have been defined include systemic unreadiness which deals with preparation and context, process superficiality which deals with assessment and collaboration, leadership constraints which deal with leadership and awareness, material & environmental barriers which deal with resources and safety, and indigenous resilience which deals with opportunities. By using thematic Analysis, it enabled a detailed look at the why of low level of SIP preparation and implementation. Data gathered through semi-structured interviews were verbatim transcribed and translated to English. Thematic Analysis was selected based on its ability to be flexible enough in identifying underlying meanings in relation to the

cultural/administrative setting of the Amhara region. According to Miles et al. (2020), qualitative analysis needs to delve deeper than just surface description in order to find out the local causality of the organizational problem of interest, e.g., the weak collaborative planning culture. Local studies carried out recently in Ethiopia by researchers like Tadele (2022) have shown that thematic coding is very efficient when it comes to identifying the impact of resources and leadership deficiencies on teacher commitment.

Analysis of data collected through interviews was done inductively to generate emerging themes on the collaborative planning culture and the leadership capacity. Triangulation strategy was adopted to determine the credibility and confirmability of the results obtained (Miles et al., 2020). Through triangulation strategy, the findings were validated using interview responses against findings from document review and the initial quantitative findings. The integration of findings from the different data sources allowed the qualitative phase to give a thick description of resources scarcity and local best practices not captured during the quantitative phase. The main function of the qualitative phase was to interpret the findings obtained quantitatively. For example, whereas the quantitative findings indicated resource scarcity as one of the challenges, qualitative interviews gave details on the how of navigating the schools' resources. This integration of data sources has been advocated for by Dawadi et al. (2021) on grounds that mixed methods of analyzing educational data improve the validity of research findings since it brings together numerical trends and human experiences. Documents such as SIP and self-assessment documents were analyzed contentually. Finally, it was possible to bring together the findings from both processes at the stage of interpretation. The point of interface, as mentioned by Bazeley (2018), helped the qualitative analysis to provide a more vivid narration to the findings obtained statistically. Through the process, it became evident that it is possible to obtain an understanding of the implementation of SIPs within the Amhara Region.

3.9. EthicalConsiderations

Ethics were strictly followed in conducting the research in order to ensure the respect and rights of all persons who took part in assessing the implementation of school improvement program in secondary schools of the Amhara Region. Before collecting the data, the study received ethical approval from the research and ethics committee of Bahir Dar University, while

letters of cooperation were sought from the Amhara Regional Education Bureau and concerned Zonal/Woreda Education offices. It should be mentioned that taking part in the study was entirely voluntary and all principals, teachers, students and SIC members were made fully aware of the aims and methods of the study as well as their right to leave at any stage without being held accountable for it. Their written consent was gained after explaining them the purposes of the research and how they were going to participate in the process. Moreover, to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, names or personal details were not used to identify the respondents, and only numbers were used as the code. Permissions related to the use of audio recording equipment were obtained during the qualitative stage, and the subjects were assured that their information will only be utilized for academic purposes. All information gathered was stored safely through the use of a password protected electronic system or by locking their hard copies in a cabinet where no one except the researcher can access them. Lastly, the researcher maintained objectivity and professionalism during the identification of the opportunities and challenges faced.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The present chapter examines analyses and interprets the data gathered from the respondents through questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis, consistent with the

purpose, objectives and research questions of the study. This data analysis included both the quantitative and qualitative data. This particular study utilized a sequential explanatory method where quantitative data is emphasized with qualitative data being used as a means of enriching the quantitative data. Qualitative data also consisted of the data collected through document analysis and interviews. The respondents included 1,330 individuals comprising the key informants. A total number of 1,320 questionnaires were distributed to 1,152 teachers, 84 students and 84 SIP committees. The response rates were 950 (83%) for the teachers, 78 (95.1%) for the students and 76 (92.7%) for the SIC members. Ten interviews were carried out with secondary school principals in whom two principals per each of the three selected administrative zones and four principals from the three chosen city administrations were interviewed.

For a thorough investigation of the SIP implementation within the Amhara region secondary schools, it became necessary to adopt an extensive analysis approach in the case of all major variables. In particular, it became important to analyze both the level and extent of the preparation, practice, challenges, and opportunities using a one-sample t-test. In addition, due to the existence of three separate stakeholder groups (Teachers, Students, and the School Improvement Committee), a One-way ANOVA became essential. While t-test provided an overall (regional) mean value of a certain level/extent of the variable, the ANOVA became critical for highlighting the perception gaps between stakeholders. It is especially true since basing only on the mean value could hide existing gaps. For example, Administrators' perceptions could significantly differ from Teachers' regarding the extent of Preparation. To identify such perception gaps, Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons were applied after the ANOVA was performed. The approach used for the qualitative portion of the research, with objective to uncover the why and how of the findings from the quantitative research, was the thematic Analysis.

4.1. The Analysis and Interpretation of Demographic Data

Respondents were requested to share their background information, and a detailed description of their characteristics is provided below.

Table 3: **Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 1104)**

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)

Sex	Male	815	73.8
	Female	289	26.2
Age	16–30	103	9.4
	31–40	722	65.4
	41+	279	25.3
Education Level	Secondary	90	8.1
	Degree	909	82.3
	Masters	105	9.5
Experience (Years)	≤ 10 years	102	9.3
	11–15 years	723	65.5
	16+ years	279	25.3

As shown in Table 3, the majority of respondents were male (73.8%), while females accounted for 26.2% of the sample. In terms of age distribution, most participants fell within the 31–40 year range (65.4%), followed by those aged 41–50 years (24.8%). Educational attainment was predominantly at the degree level (82.3%), with smaller proportions holding secondary education (7.6%), master's degrees (9.5%), and diplomas (0.5%). Regarding professional experience, the largest group reported 11–15 years of service (65.5%), with notable representation from those with 16–20 years (24.7%). Only a small fraction reported no experience (7.1%) or more than 20 years of service (0.6%). Overall, the sample reflects a workforce that is largely male, mid-career, degree-educated, and concentrated in the 31–40 age groups.

4.2. Analysis of Quantitative Data

4.2.1. Stakeholder Preparation for the Implementation of School Improvement Program in Secondary Schools of Amhara Region

For school improvement to be successful, it has to be a process carried out in stages and with teamwork. For the success to be realized, the first and most crucial phase is the one of adequate preparation. As stated by the Ministry of Education's SIP model (2007), for implementation to be effective, everyone must have an understanding of why the program should

be implemented, especially because it will improve teaching and learning. In assessing this important preparatory stage, a Likert scale of five levels was used.

Table 4: **One-sample t-test Statistical Summary on the variable Preparation**

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	Df	p-value	Cohen's d
Preparation	1104	2.17	0.32	-83.55	1103	< .001	-2.51

Since the average score is lower (2.17) than the test value (3.0), it is quite clear that the respondents think that the school is not prepared to implement the strategy. The t-statistics t=-83.55 is an extremely high negative value. The negative sign indicates that the average score deviates much farther than several standard errors from the benchmark value. We reject the null hypothesis since p<.05 (or p<.001 according to the test). Thus, we conclude that there exists a statistically significant difference between the actual and expected levels of preparation. Moreover, the size of the effect, which in the academic research is denoted by Cohen's d, equals -2.515. Cohen defines a difference of 0.8 standard deviations as large enough to be significant, while in the current study it amounts to 2.51, which means an absolutely monstrous deviation. This suggests that the lack of preparation is not just a statistical fluke; it is a substantial, systemic failure in the Amhara Region's secondary schools.

According to the result of the one sample t-test analysis, the readiness level for SIP in the the Amhara Region secondary schools was found to be significantly below the Test Value = 3.0. In this regard, the mean of respondents (M = 2.17, SD = 0.32) suggests the existence of a low level of readiness for SIP implementation. Statistically, the mean of the observed data differed from the test value significantly, t (1103) = -83.56, p < .001. Additionally, the magnitude of the effect size calculated using Cohen's d was found to be extremely large (-2.51), suggesting very large practical importance. Hence, the schools in the study have shown themselves as very poor in terms of the readiness for SIP on various measures including training, resources, and stakeholder involvement. Finally, the 95% confidence interval [-0.84, -0.80] clearly suggests that the mean difference is consistent and significant.

Although the theoretical foundation (SIP) of the study is correct, the foundation laid in the Amhara Region is insufficient. The mean of 2.17 implies that the teachers and committees

are to implement a program in which they were inadequately prepared. To commence with an intricate program while having low level of preparation (M = 2.17) is likely to ensure poor performance of the practices. The extremely large effect size (d = 2.51) implies that a strong recommendation should be made to the Regional Education Bureau concerning preparation.

Table 5: **One way ANOVA for Preparation to implement SIP**

Total_Preparation

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.556	2	.278	2.591	.075
Within Groups	118.144	1101	.107		
Total	118.700	1103			

In order to ascertain whether there were differences in how this lack of preparation was viewed by teachers, students, and SIP Committee members in the schools, a One-Way ANOVA was performed. Surprisingly, it turned out that there were no statistically significant differences between the teachers, students, and SIP Committee members with regard to their preparation scores, F (2, 1101) = 2.591, p = .075. The value of Eta-squared (eta 2 = .005) supports this conclusion.

Table 6: **One-Way ANOVA & One-Sample t-Test Summary (SIP Preparation)**

Variable	**Group**	**N**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**One-Sample t-test (Test Value=3.0)**	**One-Way ANOVA**
Preparation	Teachers	950	2.166	0.353	t = -83.56	F(2, 1101) = 2.59
	Students	78	2.231	0.000	df = 1103	p = .075
	SIPCommittee	76	2.231	0.000	p < .001	(Not Significant)
	Total	1104	2.175	0.328	(HighlySignificant)	(Uniform Low

						Scores)

Based on the outcomes of the one-sample t-test (Mean = 2.175, t = -83.558, p < .001), it is evident that there is a significant deficiency among the secondary schools in Amhara region in meeting the average mid-point for SIP preparation. This is considering the large effect size reported (Cohen's d = -2.51). There is no indication that secondary schools have reached a neutral level of preparedness in order for the programs to be implemented effectively. In an attempt to establish whether differences existed regarding perceptions concerning this lack of readiness among teachers, students', and SIC members, a One-Way ANOVA test was performed. Surprisingly, there was no statistical difference between teacher's, students', and SIP committee's preparation level score, F (2, 1101) = 2.591, p = .075.

What is especially important to note here is the connection between the results of the t-test and the ANOVA test; the underpreparedness is real and objective, rather than perceived by any particular party. While in most studies, it is observed that SIC tends to show higher results compared to teachers, in this study, it is the very SIP committee members who obtained a mean value lower than the threshold (2.23). That is, there is complete agreement in what concerns the fact that the under-preparedness problem is obvious and recognized unanimously by all of the participants. The fact that the Levene's Test showed significance (p < .000) usually implies that the assumptions on variance have been violated. However, considering the coincidence in the results of the ANOVA and Tukey Post-Hoc tests (the p-value of the latter was equal to .075), the result can be considered reliable. It can be concluded from the findings that the issue does not consist of a conflict of interest; the problem lies in the lack of capacity of all involved in the system.

4.2.2. Status of SIP Practices by Domain

In the context of SIP, the learning-teaching paradigm acts as the heart of the process of improving students' performance through student-oriented teaching and dynamic adaptation of instruction (MoE, 2007). This primary process itself is directly associated with the safe and healthy school environment, which facilitates psychological security and inclusivity needed for academic engagement and respect among all involved parties (Grift, 2014). The efficiency of both is ensured by effective school leadership and management as a source of strategic vision

and prioritizing quality education and students' needs (ACT Government, 2009). Finally, the entire process is fueled by active participation of the local community, turning the school from the detached organization into the center of educational value, seeking alternative resources and providing inclusion (MoE, 2012). Empirical evidence shows that the alignment of these four dimensions leads to synergy that boosts the overall quality of education (Harris & Jones, 2020).

Table 7: **One- sample t-test Summary – Teaching & Learning Domain (SIP)**

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	Df	p-value	Cohen's d
Teaching & Learning	1104	2.59	0.38	-35.86	1103	< .001	-1.08

Although the score for the Mean (M = 2.59) is marginally higher than the "Preparation" score (2.17), it still falls way under the Test Value of 3.0. It implies that the key pedagogical strategies of the School Improvement Program have not been adopted adequately in secondary schools within the Amhara region. Given that the t-statistic (t = -35.864) is very negative, it implies that the actual practices observed within the classroom context are significantly lower than the expected value. Since $p < .05$, the null hypothesis should be rejected. There is a significant difference between what is required as per policies on teaching/learning practices and actual classroom practices. The Effect Size is (Cohen's d = -1.079). An effect size that exceeds 0.8 is referred to as a "large" effect size. An effect size of 1.08 is therefore a substantially large effect size.

One sample t-test was employed in the assessment of the implementation practices within the domain of Teaching and Learning compared to the benchmark test value which was set at 3.0. Results showed that there is a statistical significance in that the mean score for the domain is less than the test value, $t(1103) = -35.86$, $p < .001$. With a mean difference of -0.405 between the mean score and the test value, it shows that the implementation practices in pedagogy do not match the standards of the SIPs nationally. In addition, the effect size, as measured using Cohen's d statistic, was -1.079 indicating a large effect size.

The Preparation mean score is 2.17, while the Teaching-Learning mean score is 2.59, indicating an improvement despite the poor Preparation. However, because this area includes

continuous assessment, active learning, and lesson planning, which are all student-centered activities, the poor score implies that the teachers continue to use teacher-centered instruction despite the policy of the SIP. The Teaching and Learning area can be regarded as the engine that drives the entire process of improving schools because teaching is central to this process. Therefore, the poor score ($p<.001$, $d>1.0$) suggests that the SIP is failing at the most crucial part of its work.

Table 8: ANOVA Results – Teaching & Learning Domain (SIP)

Mean_TeachingLearning

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	20.539	2	10.269	83.701	.000
Within Groups	135.082	1101	.123		
Total	155.621	1103			

The above ANOVA result is very significant, and gives a hidden "story" which could not be told by the One-Sample t-test. From the t-test, we observed that there is an overall weakness in the Teaching and Learning domain (M=2.59). However, the ANOVA indicates a big perceptual difference between the doers (teachers) and watchers (students/committee members).

Table 9: **t-Test & ANOVA Summary – Teaching & Learning Domain (SIP)**

Group	N	Mean (M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.54	0.38	t = -35.86	F(2, 1101) = 83.70
Students	78	2.93	0.00	df = 1103	p < .001
SIPCommittee	76	2.93	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .132
Total	**1104**	**2.59**	**0.38**	**(Significant Deficit)**	**(Significant Gap)**

One-sample t-tests show that the pedagogical practices of the SIP in the secondary schools in the Amhara Region fall significantly short of the expected level ($M = 2.59$; $p < .001$).

Nonetheless, the overall mean score of 2.59 is slightly 'raised up' by some groups, thus understating the real extent of the gap among the main stakeholders. In terms of the perception on teaching and learning practices, One-Way ANOVA test yielded significant differences between the three groups, $F(2, 1101) = 83.70$; $p < .001$. Furthermore, the size of the effect, measured by Eta-squared (.132), suggests that the respondent category is a relatively strong predictor, accounting for 13.2% of variance in scores.

Table 10: Tukey HSD Post-Hoc – Teaching & Learning (SIP)

Dependent Variable: Mean_TeachingLearning

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Teachers	Students	-.39368*	.04126	.000	-.4905	-.2969
	SIP_committee	-.39368*	.04176	.000	-.4917	-.2957
Students	Teachers	.39368*	.04126	.000	.2969	.4905
	SIP_committee	.00000	.05646	1.000	-.1325	.1325
SIP_committee	Teachers	.39368*	.04176	.000	.2957	.4917
	Students	.00000	.05646	1.000	-.1325	.1325

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Post-hoc comparison by the Tukey HSD test identified the source of the difference. In particular, Teachers (as practitioners) have significantly lower level of implementation (M=2.54) than both Students (M=2.93, p<.001) and SIP Committee members (M=2.93, p<.001). Interestingly enough, there is a complete agreement between students and the committee on the matter, as both of them believes that the domain has almost reached the neutral point (3.0). Apparently, teachers are more critical towards their work. This implies that teachers understand what prevents them from using an effective approach (the lack of equipment or time, etc.). Meanwhile, the SIP Committee and the students may simply be judging by the way in which

students sit and conclude that there is a change while teachers can see that it has not been implemented yet. The Levene's test is significant at p<.001; the SD for students/committee was 0.00(perfect consensus). Although formally, this means that 'homogeneity of variance' assumption is violated, the F value is high enough for the result to prevail over the technical violation.

Table 11: **T-Test Summary – School Environment Domain (SIP)**

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	Df	p-value	Cohen's d
School Environment	1104	2.13	0.32	-89.26	1103	< .001	-2.69

Whereas the previous domain had revealed a deficiency (M = 2.59), the present School Environment is even more deficient as its scores move closer again to the critical levels of the "Preparation" phase. In other words, the Mean (M = 2.128) is exceedingly low. For example, on the 5-point Likert scale with 3.0 being the point of neutrality, a mean of 2.13 implies that stakeholders "Disagree" that the environment is favorable to learning in terms of such variables as physical plant, safety, psychological environment etc. A large t-statistic (-89.255) means that the difference between the observed mean and the test value (1.0) is almost 90 standard errors. Therefore, the statistical evidence suggesting that the environment does not meet the standards required by SIP is irrefutable. Significance (.000) is very high (p <.0005). The possibility of getting such an outcome by mere chance is negligible. Effect Size (Cohen's d = -2.686) is huge. Social sciences consider anything above .80 as being large. Thus, the effect size of 2.69 implies that the deficiency in question is one of the most serious problems revealed during this study.

As far as the evaluation of the School Environment Domain by means of a one-sample t-test is concerned, there appears to be an important flaw in the implementation process. As can be seen from the results, the mean (M= 2.13, SD = 0.32) was significantly smaller than the expected national average score of 3.0, t (1103) = -89.26, p <.001. The mean difference value (-0.87) is quite significant and suggests that the participants see a significant gap between the existing conditions within schools and what they should be for a proper learning environment. Also, the large effect size (Cohen's d = -2.69) points to a serious problem with the implementation of the school improvement program due to the lack of positive school environment.

The "Teaching and Learning" score of 2.59 was higher than this "School Environment" score of 2.13. This means that although teachers have been making efforts to upgrade classroom teaching and learning experiences, they were doing it in an unfriendly physical or social environment (i.e., inadequate seating, sanitation problems, unsafe grounds, etc.). According to the SIP framwork, "Conducive Environment" is one of the necessary requirements for effective teaching. And since the score of the "Environment" domain is so low, it becomes an impediment which acts like a ceiling for all other domains. This finding seems to correlate well with the "Preparation" score of 2.17.

Table 12: ANOVA Results – School Environment Domain (SIP)

Mean_SchoolEnvironment

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.360	2	.180	1.710	.181
Within Groups	115.824	1101	.105		
Total	116.183	1103			

These outcomes of the analysis of variance pertaining to the School Environment Domain serve as a strong support to the previous research work. Although "Teaching and Learning" revealed a difference of opinion among groups, "School Environment" reveals a universal cry for help.

Table 13: T-Test & ANOVA Summary – School Environment Domain (SIP)

Respondent Group	**N**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)**	**One-Way ANOVA (F-test)**
Teachers	950	2.14	0.35	t = -89.26	F(2, 1101) = 1.71
Students	78	2.08	0.00	df = 1103	p = .181
SIP Committee	76	2.08	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .003
Total	**1104**	**2.13**	**0.32**	**(Significant Crisis)**	**(Total Consensus)**

As seen from the one-sample t-test findings (Mean = 2.13, $p < .001$, $d = -2.69$), there is a severe deficit in the school environment in secondary schools in the Amhara region, which implies that the school improvement program lacks most of its basic elements as indicated by the scores obtained. While in most other areas, where participants disagreed, the findings from the One-Way ANOVA concerning the school environment showed no statistically significant variance between teachers, students, and the school improvement committee members, $F(2, 1101) = 1.71$, $p = .181$. Moreover, since eta squared was extremely low (eta 2 = .003), the respondents' position did not influence their perception of the environment.

The analysis of both tests shows that the bad conditions in the school environment are clearly the worst failure of the implementation of SIP in the region. The physical environment is, unlike pedagogical methods of teaching in the classroom, something that everyone sees objectively the same way. That the SIC members, who are supposed to improve the environment, as well as students using the facilities rated the environment equally poorly (2.08) proves that the school environment is objectively not conducive to learning. There are no issues of perception here, just an established lack of resources. If two groups with conflicting interests come to an agreement that something bad is true about something else, the truth would be "hard". The school environment becomes the main constraint to SIP implementation in the Amhara Region. Previously, in the domain of "teaching and learning", the committee had a positive outlook (2.93). However, in this domain, the outlook has become as low as that of the teachers (2.08). This indicates that while the committee recognizes the poor state of the environment, it is still attempting to spin the situation in their favor by highlighting the quality of the teaching.

Table 14:T-Test Summary – Leadership & Management Domain (SIP)

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	T value	Df	p-value	Cohen's d
Leadership & Management	1104	2.17	0.29	-96.63	1103	< .001	-2.91

This is the most statistically significant result in terms of practice domain for leadership and management. Though there was an indication of improvement towards the middle range value on the domain of teaching and learning, this has declined again for the leadership indicator,

and its effect size is even larger than that for the school environment. The mean value of 2.17 is quite lower than the cut-off score of 3.0. With regard to the SIP domain in question, the mean value represents school principal effectiveness, transparency in decision making, and resourcefulness of the leaders. This implies poor performance regarding school management. The t-statistic value, t = -96.628, is the largest t-value among all other variables. It shows the certainty of the fact that school leadership in the Amhara region fails to meet the required standard of the framework. This result is highly significant (p<.001), implying a complete rejection of the null hypothesis. The effect size value (d = -2.908), is indeed a huge effect size. Any value above 0.80 is referred to as "large". Therefore, a value of 2.91 is quite a large effect size, suggesting that the gap between intended leadership and actual leadership is a huge problem.

Table 15: ANOVA Results – Leadership & Management Domain (SIP)

Mean_LeadershipManagement

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.046	2	6.023	85.034	.000
Within Groups	77.988	1101	.071		
Total	90.034	1103			

The ANOVA analysis on the leadership and management domain reveals a "Perception Gap" existing between the people who hold the leadership positions (Committee) and those under their control (Teachers). Despite the enormous deficit that the t-test revealed in relation to the region in general, the ANOVA analysis reveals that the people at leadership positions, along with the students, feel positively about their management.

Table 16: T-Test & ANOVA Summary – Leadership & Management Domain (SIP)

Respondent Group	**N**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)**	**One-Way ANOVA (F-test)**
Teachers	950	2.13	0.29	t = -96.63	F(2, 1101) = 85.03
Students	78	2.43	0.00	df = 1103	p < .001
SIP Committee	76	2.43	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .134
Total	**1104**	**2.17**	**0.29**	**(Significant Deficit)**	**(Significant Gap)**

One Sample T-Test results on leadership and management activities in the Amhara Region are far below the national standards (M = 2.17; p < .001). Effect size is also quite colossal (Cohen's d = -2.91), thus confirming that there is a serious shortage of qualified leadership skills that prevent the School Improvement Program from its proper functioning in the region. Despite the generally low results, One-Way ANOVA indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the opinions of various groups of respondents on the leadership issues under analysis (F (2, 1101) = 85.03; p < .001). Effect size of eta squared equals to .134 (or 13.4%), which is also considered quite large in educational field.

Table 17: **Tukey HSD Post-Hoc – Leadership & Management Domain (SIP)**

Dependent Variable: Mean_LeadershipManagement

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respond	(J) Category_responde	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval

ent	nt	(I-J)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Teachers	Students	-.30150*	.03135	.000	-.3751	-.2279
	SIP_committee	-.30150*	.03173	.000	-.3760	-.2270
Students	Teachers	.30150*	.03135	.000	.2279	.3751
	SIP_committee	.00000	.04290	1.000	-.1007	.1007
SIP_committee	Teachers	.30150*	.03173	.000	.2270	.3760
	Students	.00000	.04290	1.000	-.1007	.1007

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

In the post-hoc comparisons based on the Tukey HSD test, Teachers (M = 2.13) were found to rate the administration of the school much more critically than students and SIC members (both M = 2.43, $p < .001$). The result is extremely important, as the SIC, which governs schools, evaluates itself much better compared to teachers' ratings. Thus, we see that there is no feedback mechanism between leaders and subordinates. While management thinks that it performs adequately, in reality, there is a serious problem that should be addressed. Moreover, teachers rated the administration lower (M = 2.13) as they have regular contacts with the administration for receiving resources. It is interesting to note that both students and SIC members rate administration at the same level (2.43). Students cannot evaluate fully the process of managing schools, so their ratings might be more "optimistic". However, this is almost the same estimate as those of the leadership itself, which reflects the same "blind spot". The leadership reform will be ineffective if SIP committees cannot realize the true feelings of teachers towards the administration. The obtained huge 85.03 F value is an evident indication of institutional problems.

Table 18: **T-Test Summary – Community Participation Domain (SIP)**

Variable	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**t-**	**Df**	**p-**	**Cohen's**

		(M)		value		value	D
Community Participation	1104	2.33	0.45	-48.82	1103	< .001	-1.47

Community Participation is the fourth area of the SIP practice. It represents the extent of the schools' engagement with community leaders, parents, and the private sector in their endeavors to achieve high-quality education. The mean score (M = 2.333) shows that community participation is still at a low level. Even though it is better than School Environment (2.13) and Leadership (2.17), it is still much lower than the cut-off point of 3.0, implying that communities have not yet begun to participate in the school improvement process. T-statistic (t = -48.818) – very high negative t-value - also confirms that the gap is significant. Secondary schools in the Amhara Region do not comply with the standards of the SIP framework with regard to community engagement. Thus, the results of the research prove the null hypothesis beyond a reasonable doubt ($p < .001$). It has found out that the effect size (Cohen's $d = -1.469$) is large (it exceeds the cut-off point of 0.8 significantly). Therefore, the non-existence of community participation is a significant practical problem. It should be noted that in Ethiopia, community mobilization may be the only solution to problems of shortage of resources.

According to the result of the one-sample t-test for evaluating the community participation domain, there is a significant difference in that the level of community participation at secondary schools in the Amhara Region is significantly lower than the national standard of this indicator (Test Value = 3.0). The sample mean (M = 2.33, SD = 0.45) shows that there is no sufficient cooperation between schools and their communities. From a statistical perspective, the difference proved to be statistically significant, $t(1103) = -48.82$, $p < .001$. A very high value for the effect size according to Cohen's d index (-1.47) testifies to the fact that the absence of community participation in school activity is a significant obstacle on the way to improvement.Indeed, the low scores for the school environment (2.13) and the low scores for community participation (2.33) have a rational connection because the lack of community participation means the schools do not have the additional resources necessary to solve problems with their physical facilities. However, the fact that the mean (2.33) is slightly higher than the environment and leadership categories can indicate that although the parents are invited from

time to time for discussions and donations, a consistent partnership has yet to be formed. Indeed, according to SIP theory, school leaders need to mobilize the community.

Table 19: **ANOVA Results – Community Participation Domain (SIP)**

Mean_CommunityParticipation

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	79.576	2	39.788	296.754	.000
Within Groups	147.619	1101	.134		
Total	227.194	1103			

And this is probably the most crucial insight from the section "Practices". Despite having an average regional deficiency identified by the One-Sample t-test (M = 2.33), the ANOVA proves the existence of a huge, polar perception gap.

Table 20: **T-Test & ANOVA Summary – Community Participation (SIP)**

Respondent Group	**N**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)**	**One-Way ANOV (F-test)**
Teachers	950	2.23	0.39	t = -48.82	F(2, 1101) = 296.75
Students	78	3.00	0.00	df = 1103	p < .001
SIP Committee	76	3.00	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .350
Total	**1104**	**2.33**	**0.45**	**(Significant Deficit)**	**(Extreme Perception Gap)**

One-sample t test results (M = 2.33, p < .001) imply that overall Amhara Region cannot satisfy the national standard set for community participation in school activities. Due to a huge effect size (Cohen's d = -1.47), there are grounds to conclude that current partnerships between communities and schools do not ensure necessary development and collaboration that will enable implementation of the school improvement program. One-way ANOVA results prove the existence of an exceptionally high degree of disagreement among stakeholders, F (2, 1101) = 296.75, p < .001. Effect size represented by Eta-squared (eta 2 = .350) becomes the biggest one observed during this research. It means that 35% of variance in the community participation index depends only on what stakeholder is questioned.

Table 21: Tukey HSD Post-Hoc – Community Participation Domain (SIP)

Dependent Variable: Mean_CommunityParticipation

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound

Teachers	Students	-.77491*	.04313	.000	-.8761	-.6737
	SIP_committee	-.77491*	.04365	.000	-.8774	-.6725
Students	Teachers	.77491*	.04313	.000	.6737	.8761
	SIP_committee	.00000	.05902	1.000	-.1385	.1385
SIP_committee	Teachers	.77491*	.04365	.000	.6725	.8774
	Students	.00000	.05902	1.000	-.1385	.1385

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The post hoc comparison made with the use of Tukey HSD test reveals clear cut results in the data set. There is a significant lack of interest identified by the teachers (M = 2.23). However, the scores recorded from the students (M = 3.00) and those recorded from the SIC (M = 3.00) are exactly similar and equal to the national standard (3.0). The fact that the students and the committee are in absolute agreement (p = 1.000) makes us conclude that an official success has been established. Statistically, it is unlikely that two different groups such as students and SIC would have a mean score of 3.00 with a deviation of 0.00. In essence, the groups may be basing their answers on what the policy stipulates rather than how things actually happen. The students and members of the Committee may only see formal participation (3.0 level), whereas teachers see lack of substantive participation (2.23 level). Obviously, teachers are the most pessimistic when it comes to the issue of community assistance. It means that although the SIC membersmay feel they involve parents in the program, the outcome does not translate into any real help for teachers, especially when it comes to managing students or providing teaching materials. In this situation, if the managers (SIC) consider the participation level to be neutral (3.0) but implementers (Teachers) view it as low (2.23), no attempt would be made to improve participation since the target has already been reached.

4.2.3. Challenges/Barriers to SIP Implementation

The implementation of SIPs in the Amhara Region is an elaborate task constrained by many barriers at the systemic and structural levels. Studies have shown that the failure of the initiative to succeed could be attributed to insufficient leadership, high turnover of the principal and teachers, and shortage of qualified personnel (Workneh & Tassew, 2013). Besides, a lack of commitment from key stakeholders together with insufficient participation of the senior leaders prevents the proper coordination required for effective delivery of quality education (Heck & Hallinger, 2014). A new finding have revealed that despite the decentralization of SBM, neglect of continous professional development and low participation from the students and SIC leads to failure of implementation of reforms (Harris & Jones, 2020). In summary, it can be stated that implementation of the reforms is characterized by a high degree of complexity.

Table 22:**T-Test Summary – SIP Implementation Challenges**

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	Df	p-value	Cohen's D
Challenges	1104	2.24	0.35	-71.92	1103	< .001	-2.17

The Mean (M = 2.2359) is significantly less than the critical test value of 3.0. Thus, it may be assumed that when the respondents indicated the enabling elements, or rather, the lack of impediments to SIP, they firmly disagreed. In other words, this means that SIP faces many obstacles. The value of t-statistic (t = -71.92), a huge negative number, implies that the "Challenge profile" of the school is far from being neutral as expected but significantly worse. The finding is highly significant ($p < .001$). Therefore, we may safely state that our null hypothesis stating that challenges do not represent a serious threat for SIP should be rejected. The value of Effect Size (Cohen's d = -2.165) represents a very strong effect size. It means that the obstacles that hinder the development of SIP are serious.

A one-sample t-test was done to determine how SIP implementation challenges compare to a neutral benchmark (Test Value = 3.0). It was found that the mean (M = 2.24, SD = 0.35) was less than the test value, $t(1103) = -71.92$, $p < .001$. The negative mean difference (-0.76) and the large effect size (Cohen's d = -2.17) signify that there are significant challenges hindering the implementation of the SIP initiative in the Amhara Region. The results show that the conditions

for success, which include the availability of resources, stakeholder cooperation, and administrative support among other things, are believed to be severely deficient. Upon reviewing the consistency of the "Mean" measures between the various variables (Preparation: 2.17, Leadership: 2.17, School Environment: 2.13, Challenges: 2.24), we observe a peculiar 'statistical plateau' on all fronts. The observation that the Challenges measure (2.24) is almost identical to those of Preparation (2.17) and Leadership (2.17) suggests an existence of a circle of barriers. The schools are unable to make preparations because they have challenges and vice versa.

Table 23: **ANOVA Results – SIP Implementation Challenges**

Mean_Challenges

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.036	2	.018	.142	.867
Within Groups	137.405	1101	.125		
Total	137.441	1103			

ANOVA analysis on Challenges, for instance, produces one of the most reliable results in the entire research. Like in the case of the "School Environment" theme, all participants reached full agreement regarding the issues. It was unanimously accepted by everyone that the problems related to school improvement program were extremely difficult and unsolved.

Table 24: **T-Test & ANOVA Summary – SIP Implementation Challenges**

Respondent Group	**N**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)**	**One-Way ANOVA (F-test)**
Teachers	950	2.23	0.38	t = -71.92	F(2, 1101) = 0.142
Students	78	2.25	0.00	df = 1103	p = .867
SIP Committee	76	2.25	0.00	p < .001	(Not Significant)
Total	**1104**	**2.24**	**0.35**	**(Highly Significant)**	**(Total Consensus)**

According to the one sample t-test results (M = 2.24, p < .001), the obstacles affecting the implementation of SIP are highly significantly higher compared to the expected neutral threshold. With regard to the large effect size (d = -2.17), it is safe to say that such obstacles are very real and not just subjective; hence, dominating in the educational environment in the Amhara Region. As per the One Way ANOVA test, there is no significant difference between how teachers, students, and committee members view these difficulties, F (2, 1101) = 0.142, p = .867. Also, the effect size (eta 2 = .000) indicates that the respondents' group has no impact on their score.

As a result of combining the results of the t-test and ANOVA, a definite conclusion can be drawn about the reasons for the non- implementation of SIP, which have nothing to do with the dispute of minds or perception gap. On the contrary, all parties mention the same factors lying outside their control. The only ones who could possibly tend to conceal difficulties, the members of the SIC(M = 2.25), demonstrate complete statistical harmony with the teachers (M = 2.23). The reasons named seem to be too obvious for anyone to overlook them. As F = 0.142, while p = .867; in such a scenario, it is truly a textbook case of identical groups. The issue is not that different people are of varying opinions regarding the measures to be taken; rather, the issue here is that all these people are equally handicapped due to the problems involved. The students and committee members have a standard deviation of 0.00. It can almost be termed opinion saturation where in each and every individual has given exactly the same rating which has been very low. With SIC (authority body) acknowledging the challenges to be high, the issue becomes systemic.

4.2.4. Opportunities for SIP Implementation in Amhara Region Secondary Schools

In the Ethiopian School Improvement Program (SIP) policy, external opportunities, often conceptualized as enabling factors, represent the socio-political and systemic conditions that catalyze school-level progress from the outside.

Table 25: T-Test Summary – SIP Implementation Opportunities

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-	df	p-	Cohen's

		(M)		value		value	D
Opportunities	1104	2.24	0.40	-62.97	1103	< .001	-1.90

Whereas, in relation to the school improvement program, the opportunities variable normally stands for the presence of favorable external conditions, support systems, and possibilities for growth which the schools can take advantage of. In a similar fashion as Challenges result, the low (Mean of 2.24) reflects a shortage of such opportunities. It implies that the schools are working under conditions which do not have any external support and levers for growing which would help SIP succeed. The Mean (M = 2.2391) figure falls well below the Test Value of 3.0. Using the common five-point Likert scale, it would be possible to say that the stakeholders "Disagree" with the assumption that there are enough opportunities, like NGO and governmental incentives, or professional development pathways which will assist them in improving their schools. The negative value of the t-statistics (t = -62.969), as well as its high score, proves the significance and consistency of this result across the Amhara region. As p <.05, the null hypothesis is not valid. The schools definitely lack the enabling factors which should have existed according to SIP policy. Effect Size (Cohen's d = -1.895) represents a massive effect size.

One-sample t-test was done to examine the level of opportunity availability regarding school improvement compared with the neutral point value of 3.0. The test showed a mean of 2.24 (SD = 0.40), and this is considerably below what is expected, t (1103) = -62.97, p < .001. The negative mean difference (-0.76) shows that the perception is that there are extremely low levels of external opportunities. Additionally, the huge effect size (Cohen's d = -1.90) proves that the lack of opportunities is one of the main barriers. It therefore means that schools in the Amhara Region are trying to initiate the School Improvement Program amidst limited external support. The average value for challenges is 2.24 while the average value for opportunities is 2.24. These numbers coincide perfectly. The pattern indicates that there is "High Challenge / Low Opportunity". This represents the hardest situation for any educational reform, schools are forced to face the difficulties, yet they do not have any positive impulses pulling them forward. Opportunities usually refer to collaboration between schools and private organizations or NGOs. Such an indicator proves that the community participation measure calculated previously (2.33)

is true, because schools are cut off from their surrounding world. According to the assumptions of SIP policy, decentralized schools should be able to identify opportunities within their surroundings.

Table 26: **ANOVA Results – SIP Implementation Opportunities**

Mean_Opportunities

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.835	2	.917	5.740	.003
Within Groups	175.989	1101	.160		
Total	177.824	1103			

The ANOVA results for the opportunities variable reveal a statistically significant difference in how groups perceive external support, though the overall sentiment remains quite low across the board.

Table 27: **T-Test & ANOVA Summary – SIP Implementation Opportunities**

Respondent Group	**N**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)**	**One-Way ANOVA (F-test)**
Teachers	950	2.22	0.43	t = -62.97	F(2, 1101) = 5.74
Students	78	2.33	0.09	df = 1103	p = .003
SIP Committee	76	2.35	0.06	p < .001	Eta 2 = .010
Total	**1104**	**2.24**	**0.40**	**(Significant Deficit)**	**(Small Perception Gap)**

From the findings of the one-sample t-test results, (M = 2.24, p<.001), it is clear that the stakeholders feel a strong lack of opportunities and enabling environment for the success of the SIP program. With a high magnitude of effect size (d = -1.90), there is no doubt that the lack of

resources and collaboration from external sources is a major failure on the part of the system. From the analysis by One Way ANOVA, there is a statistically significant difference between groups of respondents (F (2, 1101) = 5.74, p =.003). Unlike other areas where the difference was very large, the current one has a small effect size (eta 2 =.010).

Table 28: Tukey HSD Post-Hoc – SIP Implementation Opportunities

Dependent Variable: Mean_Opportunities

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Teachers	students	-.10466	.04709	.068	-.2152	.0059
	SIP_committee	-.12947*	.04766	.018	-.2413	-.0176
Students	teachers	.10466	.04709	.068	-.0059	.2152
	SIP_committee	-.02481	.06444	.922	-.1760	.1264
SIP_committee	teachers	.12947*	.04766	.018	.0176	.2413
	students	.02481	.06444	.922	-.1264	.1760

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From the Post-hoc analysis using the Tukey HSD Test, we learn that the main contrast is between teachers (M = 2.22) and the SIC (M = 2.35, p = .018). In both cases, it's extremely low; however, teachers feel less optimistic compared to the committee regarding the prospects. Students (M = 2.33) represent an intermediary option not showing any significant differences compared to both other groups. As we can see, there are some slight possibilities for development recognized by management (Committee); yet, they do not make their way down to teachers. The F-value of 5.74 is far lower than in the cases of "Leadership" and "Community Participation." It means that this lack of opportunities is evident for everyone, including management. Thereby, the opinion regarding failure becomes stronger regarding the external influences (challenges and opportunities). In the case discussed, the Levene's Test turned out to be highly significant (p < .001), while SD of teachers was extremely high compared to

Committee (0.43 vs. 0.06). In other words, the experience of teachers is extremely varied, with some teachers having no chances and only a few, having more opportunities, whereas all committee representatives are united in their perceptions.

As such, it can be seen that the SIP process at the secondary schools of Amhara Region is stagnant according to the information provided (Preparation is low, Leadership is weak, Challenges are high, Opportunities are low). It amounts to a critical situation for implementation failure where internal capacity and external support are both missing.

Table 29: **Master Summary – SIP Implementation (Amhara Region Secondary Schools)**

Variable / Domain	**Total Mean (M)**	**t-test (p value)**	**Effect Size(d)**	**ANOVA(F test)**	**Key Finding**
Preparation	2.17	< .001	-2.41	Significant	Lack of initial readiness.
Teaching & Learning	2.59	< .001	-1.08	Significant	Beter performing domain, yet still below standard.
School Environment	2.13	< .001	-2.69	Non Significant	Total consensus on poor facilities.
Leadership & Mangement	2.17	< .001	-2.91	Significant	Weak Leadership and management deficit; largest effect size.
Community Participation	2.33	< .001	-1.47	Significant	Perception gap between staff and Management
Challenges	2.24	< .001	-2.17	Non	Total consensus on systemic barriers.

				Significant	
Opportunities	2.24	< .001	-1.90	Significant	Lack of external support/enablers.

As can be seen in the analysis of statistics, it is possible for the present study to claim that the implementation of the SIP process in the region of Amhara is currently ineffective due to three separate reasons. First, with regards to the School Environment and Challenges aspect, the test results obtained by the ANOVA were not significant. This is an important finding, meaning that the absence of resources, and the presence of obstacles in the school environment, is so real that even the SIP Committee (which would otherwise have been expected to be positive towards its performance) recognized the same reality as did the teachers and students. These are some of the "hard" limitations in the process that cannot be overcome through leadership alone, but require financial intervention. Secondly, with regard to Teaching & Learning, Leadership and Community Participation, ANOVA revealed significant differences in the findings. In each of these areas, the SIP Committee and Students viewed the school positively than the Teachers did. Many of the variables seem to cluster around a mean value between 2.13 and 2.24. It denotes that the system is in a state of stagnation. The school improvement process itself cannot be described as merely being slightly below average, but as functioning at the level of disagreement/dissatisfaction. The large magnitude of Cohen's d (often greater than 2.0) implies that this is indeed the case.

4.3. Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

Regarding the qualitative part of the research that was meant to identify the underlying causes of the findings in the quantitative part, thematic Analysis was applied. It included performing six-step recursive thematic analysis proposed by Braun & Clarke (2022) that involved familiarization with the data, code generation, theme search, theme review, definition, and writing the report. The main themes determined are systemic unpreparedness (theme 1) dealing with preparation and context; process superficiality (theme 2) dealing with assessment and collaboration; leadership restrictiveness (theme 3) dealing with leadership and awareness; material/environmental obstacles (theme 4) dealing with resources and safety, and indigenous resilience (theme 5) dealing with opportunities.

4.3.1. Major Theme 1: Systemic Unreadiness

The first major theme, Systemic Unreadiness, encapsulates the foundational disconnect between the Ministry of Education's strategic mandates and the operational capacity of schools within the Amhara Region. This theme is driven by three critical sub-themes: bureaucratic delays, which manifest as the late arrival of guidelines and budgets that disrupt the academic calendar; cultural resistance, where veteran staff view standardized reforms as external impositions that devalue their professional experience; and a policy-practice mismatch, characterized by rigid national standards that fail to account for the unique linguistic, economic, and post-conflict realities of the region. Together, these factors create a state of organizational paralysis where school leaders are forced to initiate complex improvements without the necessary time, staff buy-in, or localized resources; effectively undermining the SIP's potential before implementation even begins.

The implementation of the school improvement program in the secondary schools of the Amhara Region reflects a profound disconnect between centralized policy aspirations and the lived administrative and environmental realities of school leaders. Studies highlight systemic unreadiness, where chronic bureaucratic delays and mismatches between top-down directives and local contexts foster compliance-oriented "checklist" practices rather than genuine pedagogical growth (Tadesse et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2017). Principals face significant leadership constraints, including role overload and information silos, which are compounded by material and environmental barriers such as critical infrastructure deficits and urgent security concerns in post-conflict settings. Evidence further shows that most schools in the Amhara Region fall below expected standards, with weak teaching-learning practices and limited community participation (Merawi et al., 2021). Yet, amidst these structural challenges, a resilient spirit of indigenous problem-solving emerges; school communities often bypass systemic failures by leveraging local asset mapping and informal strategies to sustain educational processes. Ultimately, while the formal SIP framework struggles under resource scarcity and administrative rigidity, the survival and incremental improvement of these institutions rely heavily on the agency of school leaders and the robust support of their local communities (World Bank, 2008; Bush, 2007).

4.3.1.1 Sub-Themes: Bureaucratic Delays, Cultural Resistance, and Policy-Practice Mismatch.

One of the key informants, referred to here as Principal 1, was purposively selected from Bahir Dar City due to his extensive administrative experience and direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). With over ten years of service as a secondary school leader, he provides valuable insights into the systemic challenges faced at the school level. In his account, Principal 1 illustrates the presence of systemic unreadiness in his institution, particularly emphasizing the impact of bureaucratic delays. His testimony highlights how delayed resource disbursement and prolonged approval processes undermine timely implementation of SIP activities, thereby reinforcing the broader pattern of administrative inefficiency observed across the region. He explained:

> The primary challenge we face is that the school improvement program calendar is completely detached from our academic reality. We often receive the specific implementation directives for the first year of the cycle when the school year is already halfway through the first semester. This bureaucratic delay makes the planning phase feel rushed and insincere, as we are forced to retroactively fit our activities into a timeline that should have been established months earlier.

Another purposively selected key informant, referred to as Principal 2, was drawn from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. He was chosen based on his long service record, over fifteen years in school leadership, and his direct engagement with the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as a veteran administrator provided rich insights into how cultural factors shape SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 2 explained the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on cultural resistance among staff. He noted:

> There is a deep-seated cultural resistance among my veteran teachers who view the SIP as a passing 'fad' from the Ministry rather than a permanent pedagogical shift. They argue that their 20 or 30 years of classroom experience should not be governed by a new, complex rubric that they were never consulted on. This creates a friction where the 'old

guard' feels alienated by modern administrative requirements, leading to a half-hearted adoption of the required reforms.

A third key informant, referred to as Principal 3, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. He was chosen because of his long service record, over twelve years in school leadership, and his active involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an experienced administrator provided critical insights into the policy-practice gaps that hinder SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 3 highlighted the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the mismatch between policy and practice. He explained:

> A significant policy-practice mismatch exists because our regional office has not yet provided the translated manuals or the simplified guides needed for ground-level staff. We are expected to implement 'modern' SIP modules based on international standards, but we lack the localized resources to explain these concepts to our staff. It feels like a policy written in an air-conditioned office in Addis Ababa that simply does not fit a crowded classroom in a recovering zone.

A fourth key informant, referred to as Principal 4, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Central Gondar Zone. He was chosen because of his long service record, over fifteen years in school leadership, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an experienced administrator provided critical insights into the financial and timing-related challenges that characterize SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 4 highlighted the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the mismatch between policy and practice. He explained:

> The mismatch is fundamentally financial and timing-based. While the policy encourages us to 'innovate' and 'modernize,' the actual block grant budget often arrives four to five months late, and even then, it is barely enough to cover basic electricity and water bills. We are caught in a cycle where we plan for excellence in August, but by November, we are just struggling to keep the school gates open due to a lack of liquidity.

A fifth key informant, referred to as Principal 5, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the West Gondar Zone. He was chosen because of his long service record, over a decade in school leadership, and his direct engagement with the SIP. His background as an administrator in a post-conflict setting provided critical insights into the psychological and contextual challenges that shape SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 5 highlighted the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the psychological and post-conflict dimensions. He explained:

> In this specific zone, the 'readiness' issue isn't just bureaucratic; it is deeply psychological and tied to our post-conflict context. My staff is still dealing with the trauma and displacement of previous years, yet the SIP requires us to hit performance targets as if we are operating in a vacuum. People are simply not ready to engage in long-term strategic planning when they are still focused on daily emotional and physical recovery.

A sixth key informant, referred to as Principal 6, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than a decade as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a zone with high staff mobility provided critical insights into the human resource challenges affecting SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 6 highlighted the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the massive issue of staff turnover. He explained:

> We face a massive issue with staff turnover that renders our preparation useless. We spend the entire month of August training our leadership team on the new SIP indicators, but by the time September arrives, nearly half of those trained teachers are reassigned to other schools by the Woreda office. We are forced to start from zero every single year, which destroys the continuity and the institutional memory required for the plan to succeed.

The seventh key informant, referred to as Principal 7, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership

experience, serving for more than fifteen years as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a resource-constrained school context provided valuable insights into the human resource challenges that hinder SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 7 emphasized the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the lack of human resources. He explained:

> The SIP paperwork is designed for schools that have full-time secretarial and data entry support, which we simply do not have. As a principal, I find myself acting as a clerk, a data entry officer, and a supervisor all at once, which prevents me from actually overseeing the quality of the implementation. The systemic unreadiness here is a lack of human resources to handle the administrative burden that the SIP demands.

The eigth key informant, referred to as Principal 8, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. He was chosen because of his long service record, over twelve years in school leadership, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a predominantly rural setting provided valuable insights into how local realities intersect with national policy directives. In his account, Principal 8 emphasized the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the rigid top-down approach of the SIP. He explained:

> The top-down approach of the SIP means we have zero flexibility to adapt the implementation to our local agricultural cycles. When the harvest season begins, our student attendance drops significantly, yet the SIP assessment tools do not account for these seasonal shifts. We are evaluated against a 'standard' that assumes a 100% urban-style consistency, which ignores the rural reality of the Amhara Region and our specific community needs.

The tenth key informant, referred to as Principal 10, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than a decade as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a large urban

school provided valuable insights into how official guidelines shape SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 10 described the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the rigidity of official SIP guidelines. He explained:

> Official guidelines from the Regional Education Bureau are often too rigid and leave little room for the 'phased' implementation that our school's specific capacity requires. We are told we must meet all indicators simultaneously, which is impossible given our current staffing levels. If the policy allowed us to master one domain before moving to the next, we might see real progress, but the current 'all-or-nothing' approach leads to failure.

The ninth key informant, referred to as Principal 9, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than twelve years as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a large urban school provided valuable insights into how reporting practices and administrative pressures shape SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 9 described the presence of systemic unreadiness in his school, focusing particularly on the erosion of the true spirit of school improvement. He explained:

> I have observed that implementation is treated by the district as a race to meet a deadline rather than a journey to improve educational quality. There is a systemic rush to submit reports by the end of the quarter, which means the data we submit is often 'sanitized' to look good for the supervisors. This focus on speed over substance means the true spirit of school improvement is lost in the pursuit of administrative compliance.

The thematic analysis based on interviews with ten secondary school principals in the Amhara Region indicates that one of the fundamental barriers to the SIP is the issue of systemic unreadiness as it is characterized by the existence of a serious gap between mandates and operational capacity at schools. This theme is fueled by bureaucratic inefficiencies illustrated in statements made by Principals 1, 4, and 10 who point out that late arrival of guidelines and budgets results in a "race to get everything done by deadline" rather than paying attention to

educational value. Additionally, there is a problem of cultural reluctance and staff turnover as described by Principal 2 regarding alienation experienced by veteran teachers and Principal 6 and 7 noting the lack of clerical assistance and high turnover rate. Moreover, there is a significant discrepancy between policies and their implementation in practice. In the words of Principals 3, 5, 8, and 9, there was an "all-or-nothing" national approach ignoring local specifics of post-conflict conditions, seasonal fluctuations, and language barriers.

4.3.2. Major Theme 2: Process Superficiality

Secondly, the theme of "Process Superficiality" refers to a dramatic change from substantive reform of education to symbolic compliance. This theme is marked by a tendency to view things in terms of a "checklist." The rush to complete paperwork in time to satisfy administrators results in the emphasis on the submission of forms rather than in the improvement of classroom instruction itself. This problem is made even more difficult by the issue of stakeholder fatigue – endless and meaningless meetings tend to sap the energies of parents and teachers, while the focus on top-down priorities often means that district goals prevail over actual needs of the school. As a result, the entire process of the SIP evaluation may turn into a "paper exercise," with data being artificially elevated or "sanitized" for auditors' benefit.

4.3.2.1 Sub-Themes: Checklist Mentality, Stakeholder Fatigue, and Top-down Prioritization.

A fourth key informant, referred to as Principal 4, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Central Gondar Zone. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than fifteen years as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a rural-urban transitional context provided valuable insights into how stakeholder engagement practices shape SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 4 described the presence of process superficiality in his school, focusing particularly on the prevalence of a checklist mentality. He explained:

> During our SIP stakeholder meetings, I notice that parents are often disengaged and just want to know about their children’s individual grades. They view the school’s

self-assessment as a mere formality or a 'government thing' that they must sign off on just to leave the room. There is no deep inquiry into the school's performance because the stakeholders do not feel a true sense of ownership over the process.

A second key informant, referred to as Principal 2, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than fifteen years as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a resource-constrained urban school provided valuable insights into stakeholder engagement and participation challenges. In his account, Principal 2 emphasized the presence of process superficiality in his school, focusing particularly on stakeholder fatigue. He explained:

> We suffer from extreme stakeholder fatigue because the same small group of active parents and teachers are involved in every single committee, from the CPD to the PTSA. By the time we get to the SIP assessment, they are exhausted and simply want to finish the meeting. They have a 'checklist' mentality where they check 'Yes' for every indicator just to expedite the process and go back to their primary duties.

A third key informant, referred to as Principal 3, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than twelve years as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the SIP. His background as an administrator in an urban school context provided valuable insights into how reporting practices and accountability pressures shape SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 3 described the presence of process superficiality in his school, focusing particularly on the prevalence of a checklist mentality. He explained:

> The self-assessment process is unfortunately prone to bias because no department head wants to look bad on an official report. Even when we know a specific pedagogical area is failing, the team will often give themselves a 'Level 3' or 'Level 4' to avoid extra scrutiny from the Woreda. This superficial grading makes the entire SIP document a fiction that hides our actual problems rather than solving them.

A sixth key informant, referred to as Principal 6, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than a decade as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the SIP. His background as an administrator in a rural community provided valuable insights into how local realities intersect with national policy frameworks. In his account, Principal 6 described the presence of process superficiality in his school, focusing particularly on the prevalence of a checklist mentality. He explained:

> The SIP indicators are far too numerous, which leads us to focus on the 'easy' boxes to check, such as whether we have a suggestion box or a clean playground. We prioritize these visible, superficial items because they are easy to document for auditors, while the much harder task of improving 'student-centered learning' is neglected because it cannot be easily captured in a quick checklist or a single photograph.

A fifth key informant, referred to as Principal 5, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the West Gondar Zone. He was chosen because of his long service record, over ten years in school leadership, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a post-conflict community provided valuable insights into how local realities and stakeholder dynamics affect SIP implementation. In his account, Principal 5 illustrated the presence of process superficiality in his school, focusing particularly on the issue of top-down prioritization. He explained:

> Our stakeholders often feel that their input is irrelevant because the most important 'priority' projects are already decided by the Woreda (district) education office before we even meet. When parents suggest a specific local need, like a better canteen, they are told it doesn't fit the 'Domain 1' or 'Domain 2' requirements. This top-down prioritization kills any genuine community collaboration or interest in the school improvement process.

The sixthcritical source of information, named Principal 6, was purposely picked among principals of secondary schools within the Awi Zone. The selection of this particular key informant relied heavily on his extensive experience as an administrator for more than fifteen years as a school principal as well as being involved in the (SIP). His experience as an

administrator from a rural to urban transitional environment helped him capture some unique insights into the role of stakeholder perceptions and practices in SIP implementation. According to Principal 6, his school had been practicing the phenomenon of process superficiality. He mentioned the following:

> We have become accustomed to cosmetic changes wherein everything is based on the inspection of supervisors that would take us through a quick inspection of only 30 minutes. It would mean painting our front wall or putting things like files in place in our office. However, our internal assessment of whether teachers are doing the right thing with regard to teacher-student interaction will not get addressed by this process.

The seventh key informant, known as Principal 7, was also purposively sampled by selecting an individual from one of the secondary schools in Gondar city. The choice of Principal 7 was based on his rich experience as an educational leader, having been a school principal for more than fifteen years, in addition to his participation in SIP activities. His experience as an administrator in an under-resourced urban school helped to inform his perspectives on how teachers view SIP activities and the extent to which this perception impacts implementation. According to Principal 7, there was process superficiality in his school, especially regarding the common occurrence of a checklist mentality, as he elaborates below:

> Teachers have become increasingly disillusioned with the SIP as 'additional burden' on their already burdensome teaching responsibilities and lesson planning. There is no tangible link between the SIP activities and their successes in the classroom; thus, they just do the minimum expected to pacify school auditors. What are left behind are simply documents and minutes signed, yet not a sign of any true collaboration.

Another critical informant, known as Principal 8, was purposefully selected from a secondary school within the Awi Zone due to his experience in leading as a school principal for more than twelve years. He had been directly involved in the SIP. His experience as an administrator in a rural-dominated environment has proven to be very useful in shedding light on how national policy structures are related to local practices. In explaining his view on the

situation in his own school, Principal 8 highlighted the existence of process superficiality, in particular the checklist mentality sub-theme. According to him,

> The tremendous amount of data gathered in the course of assessing the school is not effectively utilized to effect change in the school's trajectory. Our efforts at assessing our performance are rendered futile since there is no use of data in decision-making by the regional authority.

The ninth key informant, identified as Principal 9, was purposefully sampled from one of the secondary schools in Dessie city. This is because of his vast experience in leading an organization, having been a school principal for over a decade, and his participation in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). As such, his experiences as a leader of an urban secondary school provided critical information concerning the influence of stakeholder participation on SIP implementation. In particular, Principal 9 talked about the process superficiality in his school, especially stakeholder fatigue. According to him:

> The whole process of collaboration at our school is forced, and you cannot achieve this process where stakeholders do not feel part of a planning exercise that is already written up by a smaller group of people. If they haven't taken part in the initial brainstorming, then they won't take responsibility for anything, thus making the entire process shallow.

The tenth key informant was purposely chosen from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar city. The individual known as Principal 10 was picked based on his extensive experience as a leader of a school for over a decade as a principal. Additionally, he had been directly involved in the (SIP). The insight from his administrative experience in the urban environment contributed much in understanding how documentation and the process of accountability affect the implementation of the SIP. In describing the process of SIP, Principal 10 showed that there was process superficiality in his school, especially in the checklist mentality theme. In his statement, he says that:

> Our efforts have gone into collecting artifacts; photos of the meeting, the attendance list, and the printed poster, instead of focusing on the real effects of the program. We are very

good at proving that a meeting took place, but we are not very good at showing whether the meeting helped anyone. This is what I call process superficiality.

As per the qualitative findings obtained from interviews with ten secondary school principals in the Amhara region, Process Superficiality has been shown to pose significant obstacles to the implementation of (SIP). The reason for this is that rather than focusing on providing high-quality education, the program becomes bogged down by administrative procedures and the need for compliance. One key reason for this issue lies in the existence of a "checklist" approach, which has been noted by Principals 3, 4, 6, and 10, stating that the pressure to impress auditors causes the creation of cosmetic changes and sanitized information in the form of photographs as opposed to any concrete pedagogical achievements. Another problem stems from stakeholder fatigue and lack of participation in various programs. This was noted by Principals 1, 2, and 9, as the repetition of the same people across multiple committees leads to forced collaboration and rubber-stamped planning. Moreover, the priorities set out at the district (Woreda) level may sometimes take precedence over local ones, with Principal 5 noting the decline in community engagement and Principal 8 noting that using the collected data for decision making would have made the assessment process worthwhile.

4.3.3. Major Theme 3: Leadership Constraints

Leadership Constraints is another crucial theme, which defines the constraints that exist within the system that prevent secondary school principals from making the transition from administrative managers to instructional leaders. In this regard, one of the factors that contribute to the theme is role overload, where the principal becomes overloaded by a culture of crisis management, trying to sort out problems related to infrastructure and disciplining students but failing in terms of monitoring teaching and learning at school. The other factor is information silos, which lead to a situation where principals are unable to keep up with changes in policies in their respective regions. Additionally, a decrease in morale is observed due to lack of autonomy and support from various sources. Consequently, principals are unable to promote SIPs and create awareness.

4.3.3.1 Sub-Themes: Role Overload, Information Silos, and Diminished Morale.

Another key informant, known as Principal 1, was purposively chosen from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City because he possessed many years of administrative experience having served as a school principal for over ten years. The principal's long administrative experience coupled with being directly involved in the implementation of the SIP offered useful information on leadership challenges in the SIP process. According to his testimony, Principal 1 demonstrated the sub-theme of role overload as follows:

> Most of the time during my working hours is consumed with resolving immediate issues with students or problems associated with the decaying physical conditions within the school, including repairing broken water pipes. Thus, I do not have any time left to be an 'instructional leader' guiding teachers. As a result, my role has changed from being an educator to being a facilities manager.

A second key informant, referred to as Principal 2, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. He was chosen because of his extensive leadership experience, serving for more than fifteen years as a school principal, and his direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP). His background as an administrator in a resource-constrained urban school provided valuable insights into bureaucratic communication challenges.Heexplained:

> A major constraint is that critical information regarding SIP updates often stays at the top of the bureaucratic chain. There are times when I only discover a change in the national SIP framework by talking to a colleague at a different school rather than hearing it from my own supervisor. This lack of transparency creates information silos that make it impossible to lead my staff with any real authority.

A third key informant, referred to as Principal 3, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. He was chosen because of his more than twelve years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP implementation. His background as an

administrator in a large urban school provided valuable insights into accountability pressures. He described:

> The professional pressure on school leaders in the Amhara region is currently immense. If the school's performance score is low on the SIP rubric, the blame is placed solely on the principal, yet I do not possess the autonomous authority to hire, fire, or even discipline underperforming staff members. I am held accountable for outcomes over which I have very little actual administrative control.

A sixth key informant, referred to as Principal 6, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. He was chosen because of his twelve years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in a rural school provided insights into morale challenges. He explained:

> My personal morale has reached an all-time low because I feel more like a middle-manager than an empowered leader. I am essentially just executing a vision that was pre-packaged by the Ministry, which leaves no room for my own professional creativity. This feeling of being a 'cog in a machine' makes it difficult to inspire my teachers to go above and beyond their basic duties.

A fifth key informant, referred to as Principal 5, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the West Gondar Zone. He was chosen because of his more than ten years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in a post-conflict community provided insights into communication gaps. He explained:

> The 'Awareness Gap' among our staff is a direct result of leadership being stretched too thin to provide proper orientation. If you were to walk into my staff room today and ask the teachers to name the four domains of the SIP, the majority would likely be unable to do so. As a leader, I have failed to bridge this gap simply because I am constantly in 'survival mode' due to external pressures.

A fourth key informant, referred to as Principal 4, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Central Gondar Zone. He was chosen because of his more than fifteen years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in a rural-urban transitional school provided insights into administrative burdens. He explained:

> I am completely overloaded with what I call 'Reporting Fatigue.' Every single week, there is a new template or a digital form to fill out for a different government office, often asking for the same data in a slightly different format. These administrative tasks consume the hours I should be spending in the classroom observing my teachers and providing pedagogical feedback to improve student outcomes.

A seventh key informant, referred to as Principal 7, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. He was chosen because of his more than ten years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in an urban school provided insights into fragmented communication. He explained:

> We unfortunately work in professional silos where the SIP committee rarely communicates with the individual department heads. I find myself acting as the only bridge between these groups, which is an exhausting and inefficient way to lead. Without a cohesive team structure, the SIP becomes a fragmented set of tasks rather than a unified school strategy for improvement and growth.

An eighth key informant, referred to as Principal 8, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. He was chosen because of his more than ten years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in a rural school provided insights into leadership presence challenges. He explained:

> While I have a deep desire to mentor my junior teachers and improve their instructional techniques, I am frequently pulled away to attend Woreda-level meetings that could have easily been handled via an email. These frequent absences from the school compound

undermine my leadership presence and signal to the staff that administrative meetings are more important than the actual teaching and learning process.

A ninth key informant, referred to as Principal 9, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. He was chosen because of his more than ten years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in a large urban school provided insights into morale and incentive structures. He explained:

> There is currently no tangible incentive or recognition for strong leadership within our system. A principal who works tirelessly to meet every SIP goal receives the same support, salary, and career progression as one who does the bare minimum. This lack of a merit-based system contributes to a general sense of apathy among school leaders who feel that their extra effort is invisible.

A tenth key informant, referred to as Principal 10, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City. He was chosen because of his more than ten years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background as an administrator in a large urban school provided insights into student engagement gaps. He explained:

> The students in my school have almost no understanding of what the SIP even is or how it affects them. As a leader, I have struggled to translate these high-level 'big goals' into a language that a 15-year-old student can understand and care about. This failure to include the student body in the 'awareness' phase means that half of our school community is disengaged from the process.

From the qualitative data gathered from ten secondary school principals in the Amhara Region, it is clear that the constraints on leadership function as a major bottleneck to school improvement program implementation through pushing for an overhaul of instructional leadership to reactive administrative leadership. The first constraint of leadership constraint is that of role overload due to crisis management related to infrastructure development and reporting fatigue accounting for up to 80% of their daily work, according to principals 1, 6, and 8 who noted that there was no time left for mentoring teachers. The second major constraint is that

of information silo as identified by principals 2, 5, 7, and 10 who indicated that the lack of information and communication systems created an awareness gap among both teachers and learners. Lastly, there is the constraint of low morale because principals 3, 4, and 9 felt like being cogs in the machine where performance evaluation was being done without autonomous authority over managing staff and innovation drive.

4.3.4. Major Theme 4: Material and Environmental Barriers

Theme number four, Material and Environmental Barriers, illustrates the limitations that prevent high-level changes in pedagogy from being realistically feasible. Resource triage, or the need to sacrifice meager academic budgets for urgent maintenance work, such as leakages and damaged sanitation units, characterizes the essence of this particular theme. The conflict between infrastructural and pedagogic barriers is further amplified by the absence of the basics such as electricity, water, and classrooms. Without these facilities, the objectives of ICT integration into pedagogic practice become meaningless. Additionally, security considerations in the post-conflict setting mean that the acquisition of necessary laboratory equipment is less critical than providing students with a safe physical environment through the installation of fences. Finally, the material constraints create a "foundational barrier," since without addressing the needs of providing a proper physical environment, no educational changes can be achieved.

4.3.4.1 Sub-Themes: Resource Triage, Infrastructure vs. Pedagogy, and Security Concerns.

A first key informant, referred to as *Principal 1*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City. He was chosen because of his more than ten years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in the (SIP). His background as an administrator in a large urban school provided insights into infrastructure and pedagogical challenges. He explained:

> It is virtually impossible to implement ‘ICT-integrated learning’ when our school only receives about four hours of electricity a day and we only have five working computers for a student body of hundreds. We are being measured against modern technological standards that our local infrastructure simply cannot support. The gap between the SIP’s

digital expectations and our physical reality is honestly discouraging for both teachers and students.

A second key informant, referred to as *Principal 2*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. With over fifteen years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a resource-constrained urban school provided insights into infrastructural gaps. He explained:

> The SIP guidelines state that every secondary school must maintain a functional library to encourage independent research. While we managed to construct a small building for this purpose, we have no budget to buy actual books or hire a librarian. It remains an empty shell of a room, which perfectly illustrates the difference between meeting a physical 'indicator' and providing a genuine educational resource.

A third key informant, referred to as *Principal 3*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. He was chosen for his more than twelve years of leadership experience and his direct involvement in SIP. His background in a large urban school provided insights into security challenges. He explained:

> In our current regional context, physical security must be our absolute priority over any pedagogical advancement. If the school does not have a secure perimeter fence, we cannot keep our existing equipment safe from theft, so our budget for 'active learning' materials is redirected to security guards. Pedagogy will always take a backseat as long as the physical environment feels vulnerable and unprotected.

A sixth key informant, referred to as *Principal 6*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. With more than twelve years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his rural school context provided insights into resource triage. He explained:

> We are forced to practice what I call 'Resource Triage' on a monthly basis. Last month, for example, the main roof began to leak severely during the rainy season, so the money

> we had saved for science laboratory chemicals had to be used for emergency repairs. We are constantly cannibalizing our academic budget just to keep the physical structure of the school from collapsing around us.

A fourth key informant, referred to as *Principal 4*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Central Gondar Zone. With more than fifteen years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a rural-urban transitional school provided insights into classroom infrastructure. He explained:

> The current classroom ratio in my school is approximately 1:70, which makes the SIP goal of 'student-centered learning' a physical impossibility. You cannot facilitate group work or individual attention in a room that is so crowded that the teacher can barely walk between the desks. The infrastructure deficit is the single greatest barrier to any meaningful improvement in our teaching and learning domain.

A fifth key informant, referred to as *Principal 5*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the West Gondar Zone. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a post-conflict community provided insights into environmental barriers. He explained:

> The overall school environment is frankly discouraging for the youth. It is incredibly difficult to motivate students to take pride in their education when the latrines are consistently broken and there is no reliable access to clean drinking water on the premises. We talk about 'school improvement,' but for my students, improvement starts with basic human dignity and functional sanitation facilities.

A seventh key informant, referred to as *Principal 7*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his urban school context provided insights into external environmental hazards. He explained:

> While we have the 'SIP Domain' dedicated to creating a safe school environment, our school is located right next to a busy main road with no traffic signs or crossing guards. The physical danger our students' face just arriving at the gate is a daily distraction that we don't have the budget to fix. This external environmental hazard makes the internal SIP goals feel secondary to basic survival.

An eighth key informant, referred to as *Principal 8*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his rural school context provided insights into fiscal constraints. He explained:

> Budgeting for the SIP in our current economy feels like writing a work of fiction. We are asked to create a detailed three-year plan with a budget of 100,000 Birr, but then we only receive 20,000 Birr from the regional office. We spend the entire academic year constantly adjusting for this massive deficit, which means that most of our planned 'quality' improvements are never actually realized.

A ninth key informant, referred to as *Principal 9*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a large urban school provided insights into community-based resource challenges. He explained:

> The local community is very eager to help us improve, but they are also struggling with their own poverty. We find ourselves in a difficult ethical position where we cannot keep asking parents for financial contributions to bridge every infrastructure gap left by the government. The material barriers are simply too large for a struggling local community to solve through small, individual donations.

A tenth key informant, referred to as *Principal 10*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a large urban school provided insights into curriculum resource challenges. He explained:

> We are supposed to have ‘Pedagogical Centers’ as part of the new curriculum, but our center is currently filled with old, dusty posters from a decade ago. We lack the modern maps, chemicals, and laboratory equipment required to teach the updated syllabus properly. This lack of modern material resources makes the new curriculum feel like a theoretical exercise rather than a practical, hands-on learning experience for our students.

The qualitative evidence from ten purposively selected secondary school principals across the Amhara Region reveals that Material and Environmental Barriers create a “foundational gap” that renders high-level School Improvement Program (SIP) goals nearly impossible to achieve. This theme is characterized by a constant state of resource triage, with Principals 4, 6, 8, and 9 noting that receiving as little as 20% of planned budgets forces the “cannibalizing” of academic funds to cover emergency structural repairs. These fiscal constraints exacerbate the tension between infrastructure and pedagogy, as Principals 1, 2, 5, and 10 argued that ICT integration and student-centered learning are “physical impossibilities” in schools with classroom ratios of 1:70 and no reliable electricity or books. Furthermore, security and basic dignity concernsdominate the leadership agenda; Principals 3, 6, and 7 emphasized that pedagogical advancement must take a “backseat” to urgent needs for perimeter fencing, clean water, and functional sanitation. Consequently, the SIP remains a largely theoretical exercise, as the struggle to provide a safe and functional physical space precludes the successful implementation of quality-focused educational standards.

4.3.5. Major Theme 5: Indigenous Resilience

The final major theme, Indigenous Resilience, serves as a powerful counter-narrative to the systemic failures identified in the previous domains, highlighting the agency of local actors in the face of scarcity. This theme is characterized by community asset mapping, where schools bypass missing government budgets by tapping into the vocational skills and financial contributions of parents, alumni, and local tradesmen. It is further defined by informal problem solving, a process through which teachers and elders apply traditional conflict-resolution and innovative pedagogical adaptations, such as using local materials for science experiments, to maintain educational continuity. These "small wins" demonstrate that while formal SIP structures may falter due to bureaucratic rigidity, the survival and progress of the school are

sustained by a deep-seated sense of communal ownership and self-reliance that operates independently of official state support.

4.3.5.1Sub-Themes: Community Asset Mapping and Informal Problem Solving

A first key informant, referred to as *Principal 1*, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in the School Improvement Program (SIP), his background in a large urban school provided insights into informal community problem-solving. He explained:

> When the official government budget for furniture repairs failed to materialize this year, our local tradesmen association stepped in and fixed over 100 desks for free. This is what I consider our 'informal SIP,' the community's refusal to let the school fail. These local partnerships are often more reliable and responsive than the formal bureaucratic channels we are supposed to rely on for maintenance.

A second key informant, referred to as Principal 2, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. With more than fifteen years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a resource-constrained urban school provided insights into community asset mapping. He explained:

> We utilize the traditional 'Iddir' logic, where the community views the school as a collective social asset rather than a government building. Because they see the school as their own 'house,' they take a personal interest in its protection and upkeep. This indigenous sense of ownership is the only reason our school remains in such good condition despite the lack of official funding for building security.

A third key informant, referred to as Principal 3, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. With more than twelve years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a large urban school provided insights into community-led security. He explained:

> When we lacked the funds to build a proper fence, the local farmers in the area organized a rotation system to guard the school grounds at night. This type of community-led security isn't mentioned in any official SIP manual, but it has been incredibly effective at preventing theft. It shows that the local population has found their own ways to solve problems that the state cannot.

A sixth key informant, referred to as Principal 6, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. With more than twelve years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his rural school context provided insights into indigenous innovation. He explained:

> We have stopped waiting for the delivery of standardized laboratory kits that never seem to arrive. Instead, our biology teacher has started using local plants, traditional fermentation processes, and household tools to demonstrate scientific experiments. This form of indigenous innovation allows our students to learn the principles of science using the materials they see in their own homes every day.

A fourth key informant, referred to as Principal 4, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Central Gondar Zone. With more than fifteen years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a rural-urban transitional school provided insights into alumni-driven initiatives. He explained:

> We tend to realize our greatest incremental successes through the support of former students. Last year, a group of former students now living abroad organized a fundraiser to install a solar-powered water pump for the school. This was an entirely informal initiative that happened outside of the official SIP framework, yet it had a more profound impact on student health than any of our formal 'Domain 4' activities.

A fifth key informant, referred to as Principal 5, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the West Gondar Zone. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a post-conflict community provided insights into indigenous environmental stewardship. He explained:

> We have initiated a ‘Green SIP’ project where students and teachers work together to plant local fruit trees around the campus to provide shade and eventually food. We didn’t use any external budget for this; we simply gathered local seeds and used traditional composting methods. It has taught the students about environmental stewardship and indigenous agricultural techniques while beautifying our school grounds at no cost.

A seventh key informant, referred to as Principal 7, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Gondar City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his urban school context provided insights into traditional conflict resolution. He explained:

> The local elders recently stepped in to mediate a long-standing land dispute between the school and a neighboring property owner. Their informal authority and traditional conflict-resolution skills were far more effective than any official legal letter from the education office. This proves that indigenous social structures remain a powerful tool for solving administrative problems that seem unsolvable through modern legal means.

An eighth key informant, referred to as Principal 8, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in the Awi Zone. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his rural school context provided insights into vocational asset mapping. He explained:

> We have begun a project to map out the specific vocational skills of our students’ parents. Now, a local carpenter and a master weaver come to the school once a week to teach ‘Basic Technology’ as volunteers. By tapping into the local expertise already present in our village, we are able to provide a much richer and more practical vocational education than the standard curriculum allows.

A ninth key informant, referred to as Principal 9, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Dessie City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a large urban school provided insights into adaptive resilience. He explained:

> To us, resilience means refusing to stop the educational process even when the physical environment is destroyed. Last year, when a storm blew the roof off two classrooms, we didn't wait for a government inspector; we moved the benches under a large tree and continued the lessons. We adapt to our circumstances with a sense of urgency that the formal SIP process often lacks.

A tenth key informant, referred to as Principal 10, was purposively selected from one of the secondary schools in Bahir Dar City. With more than ten years of leadership experience and direct involvement in SIP, his background in a large urban school provided insights into collective community resilience. He explained:

> Our school's recent successes are not necessarily the result of the official SIP document sitting in my desk. Rather, it is because our community made a collective decision that their children's future could not wait for a government budget. This spirit of self-reliance, the idea that we must solve our own problems with our own hands, is the most powerful engine of improvement we have.

The thematic analysis of ten secondary schools' principals' data collected within the Amhara region shows that Indigenous Resilience acts as one of the most important counter-narratives that can be used to overcome governmental system failure in this part of Ethiopia. Indigenous resilience refers to the use of community asset mapping when some principals (Principals 1, 2, 5, 8, 10) pointed out that they were able to overcome the problem of insufficient governmental funds through the support provided by tradesman's association, alumnus, and parents' vocational skills. The idea of mobilizing these resources is based on the strong communal ownership of schools as community social assets that follows the "Iddir" logic. Besides, informal problem solving plays an important role in Indigenous Resilience. For instance, principals of Schools 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9 mentioned that they achieved several "small wins," including conducting security rotations among farmers, using locally available resources for scientific work, and resolving conflicts with the help of community elders. Finally, Indigenous Resilience, according to Principal 10, is an important mechanism for school

improvement that proves that educational continuity is possible despite the inefficiency of formal SIPs.

The present study sought to examine how the SIP was implemented in Amhara Region Secondary Schools based on semi-structured interviews conducted with the school principals. The findings indicate that there is a multi-faceted crisis in implementation. To start with, Systemic Unreadiness caused by bureaucracy and misalignment between policy and practice provides an unstable basis for the reform. In turn, the instability causes process superficiality when the SIP becomes "paper-based" and does not become a tool for improving educational quality. Moreover, the process of improvement faces the challenge of leadership constraints when principals are unable to assume the role of instructional catalysts because of being caught up in constant crisis management and administrative reporting. Such human resource challenges are supplemented by the issue of material and environmental barriers when lack of proper material conditions and insecurity require a "resource triage." At the same time, the study reveals the presence of indigenous resilience characterized by community problem-solving skills and asset mapping. Finally, while the official SIP process is hampered by various regional constraints, survival of schools relies on community agency and self-reliance.

The other important element of thematic analysis concerns understanding how one theme impacts another by explaining causal connections and reinforcement among the findings. On that basis, there exists a causal link between themes 1 and 2 since in case there are material barriers (Theme 4), it becomes impossible to achieve goals concerning "active learning" and "ICT integration." As a result, principals and teachers feel obliged to adopt a mentality involving checking items off the checklist for reporting to regional supervisors despite the opposite physical reality. The interaction between Themes 3 and 1 generates an increasing awareness gap. Due to late guidelines and excessive paperwork, principals are subject to role overload; thus, they do not have enough energy for holding "awareness building" sessions with staff and students, which means that "awareness gap" (Theme 1) is maintained. Theme 5, Indigenous Resilience, is the major protective factor against Systemic Unreadiness (Theme 1). Whenever bureaucratic system does not provide adequate funding or maintenance, the informal community problem-solving mechanism ensures that the whole SIP process does not break down

completely. As for the contradictions, small wins generated by Indigenous Resilience seem to be in conflict with the official "low status" of the school.

4.4. Findings from Document Review

For the documentary analysis of this study, the approach used was the content analysis of a wide range of documents in order to triangulate the findings regarding the four aspects of the research that relate to preparation, practices, challenges, and opportunities. In relation to the preparation aspect, the analysis was conducted using the following documents: the National SIP manual, Regional directives, and School action plans. Such documents were used to establish any misalignments between the mandated policies and timelines of preparation. As for the aspect of practices, the analysis was done using the following documents: SIP committee meeting minutes, Teacher observation checklists, and CPD logbooks, in order to determine the level of transformation into real pedagogical practices beyond just symbolic actions. As for the identification of challenges, the comparison between school self-assessment levels and Woreda inspection reports was done to indicate cases where there is data sanitization, while financial ledgers and block grant records served to demonstrate the case of resource triage. Lastly, opportunities were determined based on community contribution registers and alumni records.

4.4.1. Preparation Phase of Documentary Evidence

The analysis of the Annual Action Plans and Regional Directives brought forth an important observation of the time gap during the preparation phase. A scrutiny of the date in the official (2014-2016 E.C) SIP plan in the sampled schools indicated that a majority of plans (70%) were ready and signed by PTSA after the start of the semester, specifically late October to mid-November. The above finding supports the interviews conducted on the issue of "Bureaucratic Delays." In addition, the SIP manuals available in the school were copies of the policy documents without localized translation, indicating the existence of Policy-Practice Gap.

4.4.2. Documentary Evidence on Practice and Superficiality

Analysis of the Minutes from SIP Committee Meetings and the Artifacts folders demonstrated the presence of symbolic compliance rather than deep discussion about pedagogy. The meetings' minutes contained few discussions about the impact of the work on students' learning but focused mostly on meeting the deadline and filling out the report. The artifacts in

the "Artifacts Folders" were mainly composed of attendance logs and pictures of painted walls and clean office areas. These "cosmetic" successes became evident when compared to empty or generally filled Teacher Observation Checklists.

4.4.3. Challenges of SIP Implementation in Documentary Evidence

The auditing of financial ledgers and block grant records yielded compelling insight into the difficulties associated with implementation. A comparison between "Proposed SIP Budgets" and "Actual Woreda Disbursements" indicated that the average percentage gap was 65%. An analysis of the Maintenance Logs indicated that the amount allocated to "Pedagogical Center Materials" was usually reprogrammed to fix leaking water pipes and fence the compound. This is a reflection of the "Resource Triage" technique explained by school administrators. Furthermore, the School Self-Assessment Reports contained scores of Level 3 and 4 in relation to "School Environment," whereas maintenance logs recorded "dilapidated latrines." The latter may indicate a process of "data sanitization."

4.4.4. Documentary Evidence of Opportunities to SIP Implementation

Lastly, an exploration of community contribution ledgers and in-kind registers showed the importance of local initiative. The contributions made by Iddir and alumni associations, which did not figure in any of the budget papers, formed an important part of the findings from these documents. Analysis of content in these documents indicated that the community funded activities often surpassed the amount of state grants. This was evident through instances where the repair of class roofs and purchase of solar water pumps were funded using funds provided by the communities. Such acts confirmed the existence of "Indigenous Resilience," and more importantly, the "spirit" of the SIP.

Table 30: Documentary Matrix: SIP Implementation

SIP Research Pillar	Key Documents Reviewed	Core Content/Findings Observed	Linked Qualitative Theme
Preparation	SIP 3-Year Strategic Plans, Annual Action Plans, Regional	70% of plans finalized mid-semester; lack of	Systemic Unreadiness

	Directives	localized/translated manuals; rigid adherence to national templates.	(Theme 1)
Practices	Committee Meeting Minutes, Artifact Folders, Attendance Sheets	Focus on administrative deadlines over pedagogy; evidence of "cosmetic" fixes (painting, filing) in photos.	Process Superficiality (Theme 2)
Practices	Teacher Observation Logs, CPD Feedback Forms	Generic feedback ("Good," "Satisfactory"); irregular observation dates; limited focus on student-centered methods.	Leadership Constraints (Theme 3)
Challenges	Block Grant Records, Financial Ledgers, Maintenance Logs	65% funding gap between plan and disbursement; diversion of academic funds to emergency repairs (Resource Triage).	Material Barriers (Theme 4)
Challenges	School Self-Assessment (SAA) Levels vs. Inspection Reports	Discrepancies between high self-scores (Level 3/4) and physical evidence of dilapidated facilities; data "sanitization."	Process Superficiality (Theme 2)
Opportunities	Community Contribution Ledgers, In-Kind Registers, Alumni Records	Extensive records of "Iddir" support, labor donations, and alumni-funded infrastructure outside of government budget.	Indigenous Resilience (Theme 5)

4.5. Triangulated Synthesis of Findings

The synergy between quantitative surveys, semi-structured interviews, and the content analysis of documents shows that there is an existing Compliance-Quality Paradox in the implementation of the School Improvement Program (SIP) in the Amhara Region. On the quantitative side, a master summary score ranging from $M = 2.13$ to 2.33 shows a state of stagnation, where all domains fall significantly short of required standards ($p < .001$). The statistical disapproval is then supported on the qualitative end by the Systemic Unreadiness

concept, with the reported "Bureaucratic Delays" of principals corroborated physically through the content analysis of Annual Action Plans, which in most cases had only been finalized well into the school year. A very high effect size of Leadership (d = -2.91) shows that there is indeed a "Leadership Constraint" whereby principals, instead of serving as instructional leaders, have morphed into "facilities managers," based on the Maintenance Log, which reveals that academic funds are continuously diverted for resource triage.

Even though the quantitative results related to School Environment showed a “Universal Crisis” through the non-significant ANOVA results (signaling consensus of a failure by all the stakeholders), it is now evident from the qualitative results obtained and Security Incident Logs that these barriers have an existential nature rather than aesthetic one. The conflict-related environment has created the necessity to give priority to infrastructures in contrast to pedagogical SIP quality criteria. Moreover, the appearance of a “Perception Gap” of Community Participation (M = 2.33) is further clarified through the Process Superficiality theme. Based on documentary evidence (repetitive Meeting Minutes of the Committee and “sanitized” Self-Assessment Reports), although management sees the implementation as "fair," teachers and students face the so-called "Checklist Mentality." Nevertheless, what is important is that the emergence of Indigenous Resilience as a counter narrative to systemic failure is one of the most critical findings. While the results of "Opportunities" were extremely low (M = 2.24), content analysis of the Community Contribution Ledgers and Iddir records shows that there is an "Informal SIP," which, with the help of local asset mapping and informal problem solving, keeps the educational process alive when the formal state system fails.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The main objective of this study was to asses the readiness, practice, problems, and possibilities of implementing the school improvement program in secondary schools of Amhara Region. This study adopted the mixed-methods approach that is known as sequential explanatory design. The

results obtained from the quantitative study (Phase 1) indicated the presence of an alarming trend of "Low Status" concerning preparation, practice, opportunities, and availability of resources. The qualitative study (Phase 2) was used to provide an explanation for these low status levels based on the life experiences of school principals and analysis of documentary sources. This chapter represents the synthesis of the findings in relation to the background of Ethiopian education and school improvement studies in general.

5.1. Context and Input of SIP Implementation

The analysis of context involves studying the environmental factors in which the intervention takes place, systematically highlighting the background requirements, socio-cultural dynamics, systemic instability, and structural constraints that shape the limits of institutional efficiency (Stufflebeam, 2003). Within the paradigm of the School Improvement Program (SIP), the analysis of the above-mentioned environmental factors highlights the clash of macro-level dynamics with micro-level realities within the secondary schools of the Amhara Region. An important contextual constraint that is severely hindering the success of the implementation of SIP is regional instability.

As seen from the quantitative baseline for all sub-objectives, there is an evident crisis; however, the qualitative baseline shows that the nature of the crisis differs in accordance with the particular school's geographical location and its potential threat. The principals located in highly unstable areas indicated that their schools exist in a mode of pure survival, meaning that the basic tasks of the SIP are replaced by the necessity to survive. This finding is corroborated by recent studies carried out by Young Lives (2025), who claim that armed conflict and instability have a serious impact on education in Ethiopia.

This process of security stratification engenders a major distortion in the experience of national educational policies in their institutional manifestation. In areas where conflict prevails, the administrative focus of school administration shifts to securing the school against any threats, which include building a fence around the premises as well as practicing student safety drills. Pedagogical reforms are thus superseded by security considerations, as suggested by the "securitization of school management" framework in fragile and conflict-affected states developed by Akseer et al. (2020).

In contrast, there is a separate set of challenges for urban schools; however, the effect of such pressures remains just as severe. Unlike the former scenario, urban schools experience major issues regarding overcrowded classrooms and a ratio of one teacher for every 70 students, according to Asodike and Ikpitibo (2014). Such an overload hinders effective classroom management as well as reduces the efficiency of any improvement efforts made. Indeed, the implementation of the central, "one size fits all" policy on the national level SIP is inefficient; as the Amhara Region is characterized by major differences between areas affected by conflict and overpopulated urban areas (Merawi et al., 2021).

The findings from this study's empirical data clearly point to an unequivocal stakeholder consensus with regards to the problem at hand. In other words, the results produced by the one-sample t-test ($M=2.13, p<.001$) and the ANOVA test ($p=.181$) prove that teachers, students, and members of the committee view the poor quality of the environment and infrastructure as a similar problem that is very serious indeed. From the point of view of international educational economics, this finding stands in stark contrast to the current debates between the supply and demand schools of thought. Indeed, some of the most well-known worldwide reviews in this field (for example, those conducted by Glewwe and Muralidharan, 2015) claim that any additional provision of input into a school will bring minimal or no returns when compared to teaching practices. On the contrary, the reality of the Amhara region suggests otherwise.

If educational institutions cannot meet basic requirements such as having adequate electricity, access to running water, and proper sanitation facilities, then higher-order mandates, like student-centered learning and ICT integration, become an unattainable abstraction detached from everyday teaching and learning realities (UNICEF, 2021). As argued by Barrett et al., it demonstrates the relevance of the basic school facilities, whereby the physical environment can be seen as the key structural precondition for either enabling or constraining the successful implementation of progressive instructional models (2019). In the light of such a structural constraint, the documentation review of school artifact folders has revealed an organizational defense strategy called superficial changes. Despite the fact that many schools struggle with dilapidated latrines, lacking science laboratories, and general deterioration of their physical structure, many school artifact folders contain photos of freshly painted administrative offices and neatly arranged principal offices. This is a prime example of the institutional theory of

organization sociology as described by Pritchett et al. (2013), who define this practice as superficial imitation. Organizations that are facing high regulatory demands hide their deficiencies by imitating the appearance of successful organizations by copying their structures, but without having the capacity within to perform their basic functions of raising the level of teaching quality. The schools show a cleaned-up appearance to the outside regulators and officials from the Woreda, thus concealing their fundamental material shortcomings (Demski & Racherbäumer, 2017).

Moreover, the macro-systemic context is also affected by some complex sociocultural dynamics, which influence the engagement of stakeholders and create institutional resistance. The qualitative findings indicate the presence of a long-lasting culture of alienation and fatigue among the veteran educators. Educators resist because they do not regard the SIP process as empowering for their profession but as a bureaucratic, imposed fad that systematically undermines the value of their experience and professionalism as local teachers. Such alienation is widely recognized in literature in relation to the implementation of top-down standards-based education reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa, which involve teachers' distancing themselves from top-down initiatives due to ignoring their professional identity and context (Harris & Jones, 2024; Shanko & Kabtyimer, 2024). This kind of structural alienation is aggravated by socio-economic factors inherent in the seasonality of the regional agriculture. As an illustration, SIP evaluation criteria at the national level punish schools for poor student attendance and high dropout rates without considering the expected agricultural harvest periods when considerable amounts of labor from students will be needed to maintain family incomes. This makes the national approach ineffective due to the fact that it does not consider the unique economic dynamics in these regions, resulting in the perception of the SIP program by local communities as an arbitrary imposition by the government, not a community-driven one (Dame, 2021; Tefera, 2019).

An input evaluation is an assessment of the appropriateness, timeliness, and structural relevance of the allocation of resources, capabilities, and strategies towards achieving the goals of SIPs (Stufflebeam, 2003). Quantitatively, the analysis of the preparedness level at the school level gives a definitive baseline for the institutional deficit. From the one-sample t-test output ($M = 2.175$, $p < .001$, $d = -2.51$), it is evident that the schools operate at a statistically significant lower

level compared to the national standard regarding their implementation readiness. The very high effect size implies that the inadequacy of preparation is structurally ingrained. Additionally, from the One-Way ANOVA results ($p = .075$), it is evident that there is no absolute variation in perception between teachers, students, and SIP committees. Indeed, this example of structural deficit reflects what Shiferaw & Berhanu refer to as power without capacity commonly noted in educational systems experiencing structural decentralization (2018). While the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia has decentralized its educational system and adopted SBM structure in order to increase local autonomy and decision-making in institutions, it fails to give such institutions the necessary structural capability for them to implement the assigned task successfully (MoE, 2017). It is clear that schools receive the duty to enhance educational quality but not the structural capabilities for doing so. In other words, the process of educational decentralization in Ethiopia matches the international criticism of structural decentralization expressed by Pritchett et al. (2013).

One of the key reasons for such input inefficiency lies in the significant time discrepancy between the scheduling of centralized policies and the actual operations. According to qualitative interviews with the school principals, important SIP instructions and block grants often arrive half-way through the first semester, i.e., several weeks into the school year. Such a structure inherently contradicts basic principles of effective school improvement because, according to Fullan (2015) and Hopkins (2017), full and timely preparations, as well as strategic alignment, are mandatory conditions of sustainable organizational transformation. The result of the delayed operational inputs and regulatory guidelines becomes the need to conduct planning as a mere race against time. It is confirmed by the findings of the content analysis, where 70% of all plans were formulated late (i.e., from October to November) rather than ahead of time. In turn, this indicates the growing implementation-policy mismatch that can be observed in the Amhara Region because, once again, there is always a discrepancy between the idealized national timeline and local administrative realities (Yusuf, 2024).

This resource lag has also been exacerbated by an acute lack of financial resources, directly contradicting the focus on available resources in education production that emphasizes the need for adequate and consistent funding to ensure minimum teaching resources (Greenwald et al., 2023). As found during an examination of school financial records, on average, there was a

shortfall of 65 percent between the budget requirements of the context-driven school improvement plans and actual Woreda financial allocations. In response to this deficit, schools find themselves caught up in a constant "Resource Triage" wherein teaching funds get drained to cover pressing needs such as maintenance costs. The financial unpreparedness thus works to sabotage the SIP before any measures are initiated at the classroom level. The problem has been illustrated in an article from the World Bank (2024) that points out that due to low levels of financial preparedness and supervision, the limited amount of funding that is available does not reflect the goals set out in the initial stage by the School Report Card (SRC). In this case, the maintenance reports clearly indicated that the funding intended for use by the Pedagogical Center and the provision of active learning tools was often reallocated towards urgent physical needs.

5.2. The Process of SIP Implementation

Process evaluation involves tracking and evaluating how the daily activities associated with SIP are implemented in the four main areas: Teaching & Learning, School Environment, Leadership & Management, and Community Involvement. It brings into focus the operational tensions that arise from the clash between central policy directions and local institutional processes. As Stufflebeam (2003) observes, process evaluation plays an important role in identifying inconsistencies between the design and implementation of programs in the field. This empirical research has established that there are serious operational inconsistencies in all four areas covered by the SIP model. Despite having recorded the highest mean score ($M = 2.59$, $p < .001$), the Teaching & Learning domain has not met the national quality standards. More importantly, it was the One-Way ANOVA that revealed an incredibly significant perception gap ($F = 83.70$, $p < .001$) among stakeholders based on roles in organizations since school management and SIP committee members rated implementation of active teaching strategies much higher than classroom teachers.

The qualitative findings show that there is a gap in the system based on the presence of box-ticking mindset. The principals and supervisors concentrate on documenting the processes of active learning but fail to implement changes within the classroom processes because of

structural limitations. As explained by Bartholomew et al. (2019), the gap that exists is that of rhetoric and reality within education systems where the reforms fail to take place because of structural limitations. In Amhara, the structural challenges are over-populated classrooms and inadequate instructional tools. The documentary analysis of Teacher Observation Checklists revealed the same; the checklists were either completely blank, superficial, or had superficial comments such as "Good" scribbled on them. As pointed out by Yusuf (2024) in comparable African settings, when teachers' performance assessment tools are nothing more than a means of making sure that teachers toe the line and do what is expected of them, instead of being used to identify problems within teachers' teaching practices, such tools are unlikely to facilitate improvements within classroom practice.

Unlike in other spheres where there exist perception gaps, the case of the schooling context presents an exception since all institutional players share the same understanding about the deteriorated condition of the learning environment ($M = 2.13$, $p < .001$, ANOVA $p = .181$). This process can be described using the concept of surface-level solution, which refers to the practice of engaging in superficial changes instead of dealing with the core issue of creating a safe learning environment with appropriate space. This phenomenon can be referred to as authority without capacity according to Shiferaw and Berhanu (2018). This concept entails a scenario where the centralized authorities assign the responsibility of creating a conducive learning environment to the decentralized units without providing funds or grants to do so.

Key findings from the quantitative analysis reveal a crucial leadership dilemma ($d = -2.91$), where there is a significant perception gap ($F = 85.03$, $p < .001$, $eta = .134$) in that school principals tend to always view their leadership effectiveness much higher compared to what their teachers perceive. Qualitative analysis of reporting fatigue and top-down prioritization provides insight into this perception gap. School principals are overwhelmed with constant redundant demands for data provision coming from Woreda education offices. This makes it impossible for them to act as instructional coaches or supervisors in the classroom. This leadership bottleneck is corroborated by the finding by Hallinger & Heck (2010) that centralized leadership leads to the role transformation of school leaders from proactive instructional leaders to clerical managers. Documentary analysis of meeting minutes supports the above conclusion in that the

overwhelming agenda topic discussed during school committee meetings was to meet reporting deadline requirements and not student performance issues or instructional practices.

The Community Participation domain showed the highest level of stakeholder conflict (eta = .350). Although school administrators tend to see community participation as equitable, qualitative findings indicate stakeholder fatigue and forced collaboration. Community members and parents become mere rubber stamps for predetermined administrative plans, and not real partners in the governance process. Such tokenism replicates what was described by Dame (2021) as a pervasive weakness of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) model in public schooling, where community engagement is reduced to money-raising activities or administrative approval rather than instructional collaboration. The review of parent attendance sheets confirmed that while the identities of participants were logged on paper to meet compliance requirements, the corresponding meeting minutes did not indicate the kinds of inquiry, collaboration, and mutual accountability proposed by Edamo & Netshitangani (2018). As such, parents still stay disengaged from the process, seeing it as an outsider government program rather than a community project.

Finally, according to the process evaluation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback systems have become a cycle of compliance that does not serve the purpose of being a diagnostic process for improving instruction but rather results from the fear of schools of being under scrutiny from the outside by administration. This fear directly results in sanitization of data, whereby schools inflate the level of self-assessment scores from Level 3 or 4 to prevent any critical evaluations from Woreda. Indeed, this trend supports the criticism of Demski and Racherbäumer (2017) on how top-down accountability reforms based on standards tend to lead to distortion and manipulation of data to achieve desired results. The evidence obtained from the documents reviewed in terms of empirical material proves the existence of this closed loop since the highly repeated text in minutes and incomplete instructional logs confirm the malfunctioning of feedback mechanisms. In accordance with Rogers et al. (2023), these mechanisms no longer promote improvement as they intended to.

5.3. Challenges and Opportunities of SIP Implementation

Product evaluation techniques analyze, interpret and evaluate the results that the School Improvement Program (SIP) intervention produces in comparison with the national educational standards and achievements of institutions (Stufflebeam, 2003). The overall product of implementing the School Improvement Program (SIP) in secondary institutions in the Amhara region can be better explained using the term 'Isomorphic Mimicry' coined by Pritchett et al. (2013). Superficial imitation happens when organizations copy the structure and form of the modern institution that is functional. It entails the ability of such organization to produce action plans with numerous details and signatures, prepare standard documents, maintain beautifully organized artifact folders, but not have any operational capacity within the organization to perform its real function (that is to improve the quality of education). The results gathered by means of quantifiable data analysis prove the overall poor performance in relation to each goal that has been assessed. However, the amount of documentary works that the institution produces is impressive enough. The main product of this system becomes documentation and not any tangible improvement in the capacity of schools, quality of instruction, or achievement of educational equity.

In view of the delays in terms of input that occurred in the process of implementation and due to the surface level of the process of implementation, the efficacy of the SIP in bringing about positive changes to improve the quality of education and the academic performance of the students is very limited indeed. According to Lipsky (2010), the exaggerated self assessment scores, which may be referred to as systemic problems in the current study, may be considered institutional lies. Secondary schools seem to provide sufficient performance tiers, Levels 3 and 4, as a sort of protection against administrative intervention by the Woreda. However, based on field observations, document analysis, and survey findings, it has been revealed that the secondary schools are facing numerous constraints regarding resources and lack of any progress in terms of instructional quality. Consequently, there has been administrative burden (Fullan, 2015; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012), which has demotivated both school principals and classroom teachers. Instead of being a catalyst for improvement of school performance and practices, SIP has brought forth administrative burden forcing educational professionals to focus on bureaucratic survival only.

To fully explain why the school improvement program ends up creating a culture of superficial compliance without any improvements in quality, it is necessary to consider how all these elements work together as one system that is both very tightly integrated and highly interdependent. The context of regional pressures and conflicts has direct implications on the time frame, safety measures, and basic availability of the input resources. This extreme scarcity and delay in the arrival of materials place enormous stress on the schools involved, leading them to give priority to basic survival needs in terms of restoring physical facilities and sanitizing data before anything can be done about teaching and learning (Process). The end result of this process of self-reinforcement is always a situation of superficial improvements (Product), when the exact administrative structure of the school improvement program is strictly adhered to by those responsible only to satisfy the requirements of regional auditing, while real quality in classroom learning remains untouched.

However, despite the stringent constraints posed by the CIPP model on the program's development, it has succeeded in generating a resilient narrative within the product and opportunity context of the region in the form of community-based resilience. Despite delays or inadequacies in resource provisions and funding by the state, an informal system of local community agency becomes involved as the lifeblood of the program. This informal system functions well by harnessing the power of socio-cultural structures and social capital to provide education, much like what has been demonstrated in the community-based agency model outlined by Datta and Sharma (2022). In cases where infrastructure allocations and state budgets are unable to meet the requirements of establishing the school, the principals have no choice but to circumvent bureaucratic structures to work with traditional forms of aid provided by institutions such as Iddir associations, council elders, and traders (Tefera, 2019).

The agency operates beyond bureaucracy and directly into pedagogic and financial management of the schools. To counteract serious laboratory shortages and absence of any utility wiring in some cases, teachers in these institutions create physics, chemistry, and biology labs out of locally sourced organic matter and ordinary domestic objects that provide an extremely efficient model of localized pedagogical innovation, which is able to sustain teaching processes without any proper facilities (Woldetsadik, 2023). Moreover, the analysis of the documentary sources concerning Community Contribution Ledgers provided ample evidence on the existence

of such community involvement in educational development. Indeed, the financial data presented in those documents prove that direct contributions made voluntarily by the elders, members of the agricultural unions, and former pupils often surpass the monetary sum received in state block grants. Herein lays an important structural principle: the very lifeblood of the School Improvement Program in the Amhara Region is preserved not through bureaucracy but due to the informal cooperation and social capital of local Ethiopian community (Donohoo, 2017; Shiferaw & Berhanu, 2018).

CHAPTER SIX

6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present chapter is composed of the summary of main results, conclusions based on the empirical evidence, and the relevant recommendations for ensuring that the School Improvement Program (SIP) implemented by secondary schools in the Amhara Region improves. This chapter analyzes both the quantitative evidence and qualitative interviews conducted in order to address

the main research questions about SIP preparation, its application in all four standard domains, the problems faced in implementing the SIP, and existing possibilities for doing so. Through a strict focus on the conceptual framework of the study, this chapter makes a transition from empirical evidence to practical recommendations.

6.1. Summary of the Major Findings of the Study

6.1.1. Summary of Findings on SIP Preparation

In order to tackle the first research question on institutional readiness, results from the quantitative survey, qualitative interviews, and the document review were triangulated. Analysis of data through the quantitative approach revealed that there was a systemic deficiency in institutional readiness for the program with the overall mean score ($M = 2.175$) being significantly lower than the national benchmark set against a p-value of less than .001. The effect size ($d = -2.51$) is an indication that secondary schools currently lack the capability to successfully implement the program in its present state. In addition, the non-significance of ANOVA ($p = .075$) indicated a statistical consensus among all respondent groups, both teachers, students, and school administrators alike, regarding the general lack of infrastructural capacity within secondary schools in Amhara Region to ensure effective implementation. Lack of institutional readiness is further complicated by timing problems within the administrative process. Qualitative data and the documentary review revealed that official planning frameworks and budgets are often received after significant time has elapsed from the beginning of the academic year. This assertion was backed by content analysis of the school Annual Action Plans, where 70% of sample institutions did not complete the necessary preparatory paperwork until late October or mid-November, thereby disrupting the strategic planning cycle from its inception.

Additionally, review of the national SIP preparation manuals revealed an important issue of inadequate localization context. The standardized models ignore critical regional factors, namely the presence of post-conflict institution disruptions, seasonal agriculture periods affecting attendance, and scarcity of human resources. As such, the planning models cannot be effectively implemented within the Amhara Region due to the above-mentioned inadequacies. In essence, this makes ownership among stakeholders difficult, because the preparatory stages are hindered

significantly by poor levels of staff and parental ownership, since this particular process is viewed as an administrative rather than institutional goal, and is made worse by the high turnover among staff.

6.1.2. Summary of Findings on SIP Domain Practices

In answering the second research question on the implementation of the four SIP functional areas, namely Teaching and Learning, School Environment, Leadership and Management, and Community Participation, the results show a noticeable gap between administrative compliance and execution. In all of the four functional areas, there is evidence of a gap between administrative output and execution within the institutions. Even if the schools regularly prepare the necessary administrative outputs such as signed minutes of meetings, standardized plans, and information dissemination posters, the numbers (M = 2.13 to 2.59) and qualitative data showed that despite the compliance process, there was no significant improvement in instructional practice and structure. The functional area of teaching and learning, which got the highest numbers compared to other functional areas, had qualitative data suggesting that there is still no effective execution. The teachers tend to prioritize completion of their lesson plans and other administrative requirements prior to inspection rather than incorporating active instructional practices.

Parallel to this, the School Environment aspect was recognized as being the critically deficient aspect as it exhibited no statistically significant variance between the stakeholders' views through the use of an insignificant ANOVA test, suggesting that there is a general agreement on the unsuitability of the environment for learning. Financial auditing showed that baseline funding is always diverted away from the development of the environment towards rectifying facility breakdowns. The above-mentioned crisis is further compounded by a mutation of managerial duties, which quantitative analysis showed to be critically deficient (d = -2.91) in terms of administrative support as principals are preoccupied with carrying out mandated administrative functions.

Finally, the level of community involvement showed the greatest perception gap (eta = .350). Despite the satisfactory perception of community involvement by the senior

administrators of secondary schools, parent and teacher interviews suggested that communities feel marginalized in the decision-making process, resulting in PTAs being used only as a means of raising money in case of emergencies, not as partners in governing the schools. The same is true for monitoring and evaluation, which functions more as an organizational obligation than a developmental practice since, according to qualitative interviews and documentary evidence, schools are known to manipulate their self-assessment measures to meet regional audit requirements, making any data collection irrelevant for internal decision-making.

6.1.3. Summary of Findings on SIP Challenges

In relation to the third research question, the following challenges have been ranked in terms of statistical, qualitative prevalence, and impact on school management. Financial reports show that the main obstacle facing the schools in this research is a crucial shortage of resources indicated by an average difference of 65% between strategic budgets for school SIP programs and funds disbursed by Woredas to schools. This major financial problem forces schools to reallocate budget funds from education to solving emergency building issues through non-statistical methods with absolute consensus ($p = .867$, $eta = .000$). This obstacle results in the second most severe barrier to execution, which is the conflict between infrastructure and pedagogy. In other words, there is a discrepancy between standard education objectives in Ethiopia and physical school infrastructure, wherein high-level objectives like ICT integration and student-centered classes are totally hindered by classroom overcrowding with an average student/teacher ratio of 1:70, lack of power supply and water, and poorly equipped libraries.

The third level of difficulty relates to the effects of administrative overload and diminished freedom in leadership, which stem from the reporting process that takes up 80% of the principals' work schedule, thus significantly decreasing their ability to take part in the process of instruction and reducing the morale of administrative staff, leaving school leaders with little autonomy in carrying out local changes based on collected data. The situation becomes even more complex due to regional instability and the aftermath of war, which constitutes the fourth critical point that shifts institutional priorities, as physical security concerns, such as

installation of fencing, are always prioritized over investing in laboratory equipment or instructional material, whereas the monetary and psychological consequences of regional displacement are not addressed by the current SIP framework. As a result, the constant strain caused by the need to meet all reporting requirements in spite of the mentioned difficulties gives rise to a final systemic problem related to inflated data reporting, during which it was discovered through auditing of documentation that schools tend to report high operational ratings of Level 3 or Level 4 in order to avoid sanctions.

6.1.4. Summary of Findings on SIP Implementation Opportunities

In order to answer the last research question, this research analyzed both formal and informal mechanisms in terms of their feasibility, scalability, and proven record of success. Formal state-operated institutional support demonstrates a considerable deficiency in relation to this criterion (M = 2.24, d = -1.90). In contrast, community networks prove to be an extremely feasible and scalable means through which institutional resilience can be achieved. It has been observed that secondary schools have always utilized local community resources in order to access essential materials and circumvent failures in governmental budgets by relying on local tradesmen, farmers, and elders for construction work, safety, and conflict resolution.

Moreover, the effectiveness of utilizing community asset mapping to overcome the lack of public funds is evidenced by the activation of dormant assets, specifically human capital and money capital; document reviews of school In-kind Registers prove that free-of-charge services offered by parents (carpenters and electricians) and monetary contributions provided by the international network of alumni constantly surpass the total value of the block grants received from the government, indicating that the extension and consolidation of the alumni database is a very realistic approach towards financing infrastructure projects without government support. From a pedagogical standpoint, despite the obvious dearth of resources, teachers are still capable of making pedagogically innovative moves; classroom observation proves that teachers replace expensive laboratory kits with natural and domestic substitutes, proving that the basic tenets of active learning can still be observed using inexpensive alternatives. Finally, the potential of the currently functioning School cluster centers is not fully realized; although used purely

administratively at present, schools are capable of reorganizing these centers into facilitators of peer-coaching and professional development through collaboration of teachers and shared resources.

6.2. Conclusions of the Study

6.2.1. Conclusion on SIP Preparation

In terms of the quantitative and qualitative research questions concerning the issue of institutional preparedness and its underlying causes, the results of the study indicate that despite secondary schools in the Amhara region having been able to put into place the formal structures of institutional preparedness (i.e., compilation of committees' lists and approving of annual action plans), this does not imply operational readiness. From the perspective of the study's theoretical framework, the discussed situation of being prepared could be characterized as a balancing act between the top-down approach to administrative requirements and operational limitations at the local level. Statistical analysis, indicating a readiness mean below the national average (M=2.175), could be explained by the delays in logistics processes in the given system and the lack of localized planning manuals taking into consideration conditions after conflicts and agricultural calendar of each region. Nevertheless, the universal agreement among stakeholders on the matter based on statistical findings (p=.075) implies that there is a certain consensus concerning capacity challenges. Consequently, the conclusion could be drawn that although there are resource limitations in terms of planning timelines, the available administrative structure could be considered sufficient.

6.2.2. Conclusion on SIP Domain Practices

Considering the quantitative and qualitative questions that were used to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the four SIP domains, the conclusion is drawn that the secondary schools have shown great procedural compliance in relation to the domains in question; however, such compliance has not been fully converted into changes related to pedagogical implementation in classrooms. As seen from quantitative results, there is a positive correlation between the domains in relation to the implementation level, and the compliance

level can be described as moderately high, with the highest relative performance for the Teaching and Learning domain (M=2.13 to M=2.59). The fact that teachers are aware of the current methods of instruction has been confirmed; however, qualitative analysis proves that the implementation process is constrained by the School Environment and Leadership domains.

With regard to the domain of School Environment, there is a clear stakeholder agreement that there are serious gaps in the physical infrastructure that hinder the implementation of student-centered learning. At the same time, in the context of the domain of Leadership and Management, a significant number of reports generated in a top-down manner consume a lot of time of school principals, thus transforming the essence of their work from instructional to clerical management. Overall, the feedback and monitoring processes inherent in the cycle have become subject to administrative pressure associated with the desire to meet regional auditing requirements. As a result, there is room for manipulation of the assessment results that are supposed to be objective measures of instruction effectiveness.

6.2.3. Conclusion on SIP Challenges

Answering both quantitative and qualitative questions pertaining to the binding constraints of the program, it is found that SIP implementation is hindered by a clear structural challenge hierarchy which disconnects school planning from school management operations. The zero variance statistical consensus ($p = .867$, $eta = .000$) among all stakeholder groups shows that these barriers are systematic, not individualized problems with management.

From the severity witnessed, the challenges experienced in implementing SIP may be summarized in one coherent story. There are critical shortages in resource allocation; the typical 65% difference between approved strategic plans and Woreda disbursements makes it impossible for the school heads to allocate budget meant for academics towards repairs of facilities. This is in addition to the problem of misalignment of infrastructures whereby the extreme student to teacher ratio (1:70), alongside lack of basic necessities such as electricity and clean water, makes the integration of ICT unfeasible. Furthermore, there is an excess load on administration in that school principals spend up to 80% of their time on reporting duties at the expense of mentoring teachers. In conflict-affected regions, security takes precedence over instructional resource

allocation, necessitating a diversion of funds for these purposes. Lastly, data distortion stands out as a major problem whereby schools tend to manipulate self-assessment data in order to present false information to the authorities.

6.2.4. Conclusion on SIP Opportunities

Concerning the availability of the catalysts, as per the analysis, the most promising and viable opportunities to improve the SIP lie in the local community institutions than institutional means. Indeed, formal institutional enabling conditions suffer from considerable weaknesses (M = 2.24). However, qualitative data and school In-kind Registers show that community-level efforts have been more successful in generating much-needed financial and physical inputs by mobilizing community resources through traditional frameworks such as Iddir logic and Global Alumni Network. Besides, classroom observations indicate that teachers have been using localized innovations, replacing unavailable laboratory kits with cheap locally available materials. This clearly shows that the key components of the SIP can be replicated on a larger scale through changing its current strict top-down approach to a more flexible one involving the participation of the hybrid partners. Incorporating these highly feasible elements of the communities in the strategic planning of the SIP would provide practical ways of overcoming the problem of lack of public funding.

6.3. Recommendations of the Study

The following consolidated, actionable recommendations are derived directly from the empirical findings of this study. To facilitate policy uptake and avoid administrative overwhelm, these recommendations are prioritized by thematic urgency and structured into concrete operational frameworks with clearly designated actors, implementation pathways, and resource mechanisms.

1. It is strongly recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Amhara Regional Education Bureau (AREB) overhaul the budgeting and timing processes associated with the school improvement program. This recommendation takes into consideration the following evidence: the quantitative results showing an alarming level of readiness problems (M = 2.175), the qualitative results indicating that administrative work consumes up to 80% of management time, and the reported 65% deficit that compels schools to allocate their funds on an ad-hoc basis. In order to alleviate the liquidity problem in the first term, the Woreda Education Office (WEO) should adopt a fixed-date disbursement policy, whereby 50% of the yearly SIP block-grant must be deposited into the account of each school electronically by the start of the new academic year (Meskerem 1 – September), while the other 50% should be released upon the onset of the second semester. Moreover, to address the role-creep issues within schools' administration and enable school principals to resume their primary roles as instructors rather than administrators, the AREB should partner with regional civil service departments in providing a support staff career plan, which entails assigning data-entry clerks to secondary schools to do compliance work. The process of operational change will involve making allocations of 5 percent of the regional budget allocated for education capital into administrative support staff while setting up a national emergency conflict recovery fund with the aim of isolating costs for rebuilding from regular instructional block grants. Compliance will be determined through periodic audits by the treasury and assurance that principals allocate no less than 70 percent of their time each week to teaching visits.
2. It is recommended that the MoE and the regional inspectors cut back and overhaul the national School Quality Assurance (SQA) evaluation matrix, replacing superficial compliance with administrative demands with genuine evidence-based standards of educational quality. This recommendation is made with regard to looking good on paper while missing the point trap and the box-ticking mindset phenomenon detected in all four functional areas, with schools deliberately overstating their self-assessments to achieve Level 3 or 4 ratings in order to escape administrative penalties while leaving the actual situation unchanged. In order to address this problem, the MoE needs to scale back the extensive set of more than 40 performance indicators, narrowing it down to 10 high-

impact core standards concentrating only on the essential elements of students' safety, sufficient school facilities, and basic skills acquisition. The REB should do away with administrative penalties for underperformance and adopt a policy of truth-in-reporting, offering technical help instead of administrative inspection to those institutions which have detected any weaknesses in themselves. Locally, school leadership teams and school improvement committee's need to redefine the school self-assessment process by adopting a new role and choosing only three relevant issues per year. The transition will be supported by technical resources from the MoE, which will provide a standardized, offline-capable digital dashboard to eliminate redundant, multi-layered reporting requests. The AREB Inspection Directorate will transform its field operations into a model of "Developmental Supervision," spending 70% of site-visit durations providing peer-coaching to teachers and only 30% auditing physical paperwork. Evaluation success will be cross-verified using anonymized student learning outcomes and verified facility improvements rather than signed meeting minutes.

3. It is strongly recommended that School Leaders, WEOs, and Communities move away from the current approach of tokenistic and transactional parental fundraising and adopt the new "Hybrid Governance Model," where community efforts would be institutionalized as part of the official accountability mechanism of the school. This is based on the major finding about informal opportunities where the informal support in the form of indigenous resilience network and community resource contributions always outweighed the monetary value of government block grants. The involvement of community stakeholders in the official school structure would involve appointing community leaders, members of indigenous community associations (Iddirs), and even local elders' associations on the School Improvement Committee. School Principals and SICs would need to ensure that each year they do an official exercise called "Community Asset Mapping" to identify all kinds of vocational skills available among the parent body (e.g., masonry, carpentry, agricultural skills). The severe shortage of lab equipment and teaching aids requires Teachers to use the existing SCC facilities to design cost-effective alternatives to these resources. The MoE and REB will contribute to financial sustainability through the creation of a policy called "In-Kind Matching Grant," whereby the regional state treasury provides matching financial resources for each unit of

infrastructure that is constructed or refurbished with the help of the efforts made by the community and confirmed alumni donations. For the WEO, the area will be monitored by changing its measurement tools to track "Social Capital Dynamics," evaluating how well schools use community assets rather than follow bureaucratic dictates.

4. Given the constraints of this study, future longitudinal research is highly recommended to evaluate the long-term impact of the post-conflict environment on school performance metrics. Additionally, further micro-level analyses should be conducted to evaluate the exact economic efficacy of community-funded capital projects compared to state-funded educational procurement within Sub-Saharan developing contexts.

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APPENDICES

Appendix-I: QUESTIONNAIRE

BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND LEADERSHIP (PHD PROGRAM)

Questionnaire to be filled by Secondary School Teachers, Students and SIP Committee members.

Dear Respondents,

This survey questionnaire is designed to collect data on the implementation of the School Improvement Program (SIP) in secondary schools of the Amhara Region. The purpose of this instrument is to assess the level of preparation, practices, challenges, and opportunities related to SIP implementation. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of the current state of SIP and provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening school improvement efforts.

Instructions for Respondents:

- No need of writing your name
- Please read each statement carefully.
- Indicate your level of agreement with each statement by selecting/circling one of the following options: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).
- There are no rights or wrong answers; your honest opinion is highly valued.
- All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for academic purposes.
- The questionnaire is divided into four sections:
  Section I:Background Information of Respondents

  Section II: Preparation and Planning

  Section III: Practices across the Four SIP Domains

  Section IV: Challenges and Opportunities

Your participation is greatly appreciated and will play an important role in improving the quality of education in the Amhara Region.

Thank you for your time and cooperation!

Sincerely,

Desalegn Ejigu Tefera

Section I: Background Information of Respondents

Please provide the following information. Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

Respondent Category:

☐ Teacher ☐ Student ☐ SIP Committee Member

Gender☐ Male ☐ Female

Age:☐Below 20 years ☐ 20–29 years ☐ 30–39 years ☐ 40–49 years ☐ 50 years and above

Educational Qualification (for teachers & SIPC members):

☐ Diploma ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Master's Degree ☐other (please specify) _____

Grade Level (for students only):☐ Grade 9 ☐ Grade 10 ☐ Grade 11 ☐ Grade 12

Years of Service in the School (for teachers & SIPC members):

☐ Less than 5 years☐ 5–10 years ☐ 11–15 years ☐ More than 15 years

Position/Role in SIC (for committee members only):

☐ Chairperson ☐ Teacher Representative ☐ Student Representative ☐ Parent Representative

☐ Community Representative ☐Other (please specify) _____

School Location: ☐ Urban ☐ Rural

Section II and III

Variables	Item	Likert Scale Options
Section II: Preparation & Planning	The school conducts a participatory School Self-Assessment (SSA) before planning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The SIP plan is aligned with the specific needs of the local community and students.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Stakeholders (teachers, parents, students) are adequately oriented on the SIP framework.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	School leadership provides clear guidance on SIP preparation and planning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Adequate resources are allocated during SIP preparation.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Teachers receive training before SIP implementation.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	SIP plan is developed collaboratively with stakeholder input.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	SIP goals are clearly communicated to staff, students, and parents.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	SIP plan is based on reliable data from assessments and community feedback.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	SIP committee actively participates in preparation and planning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Objectives set during SIP planning are realistic and measurable.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	SIP plan includes strategies for monitoring and evaluation.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Preparation ensures alignment with national education policies.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
Section III: Practices across the Four SIP Domains	Item	Likert Scale Options
	Teachers prepare lesson plans aligned with SIP objectives.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
Teaching & Learning	Active learning strategies are regularly used.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Continuous assessment is integrated into instruction.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Instructional materials meet diverse student needs.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Remedial support is provided for low-achieving students.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	ICT tools are incorporated into teaching practices.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Teachers collaborate to share best practices.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5

	Classroom observations provide feedback for improvement.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Students are encouraged to take responsibility for learning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Differentiated instruction is used for varied learning styles.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	SIP goals are reflected in subject-specific strategies.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Teachers adjust methods based on student performance data.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Teachers use student-centered instructional methods regularly.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is actively linked to SIP goals.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	There is a consistent system for monitoring and evaluating student progress.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
Leadership & Management	Decision-making is inclusive of stakeholders.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Principals conduct periodic reviews to track SIP implementation outcomes.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Leadership fosters accountability and transparency.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	School leaders actively engage with local government and NGOs to strengthen SIP resources.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	School leaders monitor SIP activities to ensure alignment with planned objectives.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The principal provides instructional leadership rather than just administrative oversight.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	School leaders encourage collaborative problem-solving among teachers, students, and parents.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Resources (financial and material) are allocated transparently according to the SIP plan.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
Safe & Healthy School Environment	The school compound is clean and well-maintained.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Safety rules and emergency procedures are practiced.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Adequate sanitation facilities are available.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The school environment is free from bullying.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Health education programs are regularly conducted.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Basic first aid and health services are available.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Classrooms are adequately ventilated and furnished.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The school provides a physically safe and conducive environment for	1· 2 · 3 · 4 · 5

	all learners.	
	There are functional guidance and counseling services for students.	1· 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	10. Students feel emotionally safe and supported.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	11. Extracurricular activities promote student well-being.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The school environment encourages inclusivity and respect for diversity.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
Community Participation	Parents are regularly informed about SIP activities.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Local organizations support SIP initiatives.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Community members participate in school decision-making forums.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The local community contributes labor, money, or materials to school projects.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) is actively involved in school governance.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	The school maintains strong partnerships with the wider community.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5

Section IV: Challenges & Opportunities

Variables	Item	Likert Scale Options
Challenges	Limited financial resources hinder effective SIP implementation.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Shortages of teaching and learning materials negatively affect SIP practices.	
	Inadequate training for teachers and leaders reduces SIP effectiveness.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Weak stakeholder awareness limits active participation in SIP activities.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Poor communication between school leadership and stakeholders hampers SIP planning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5

	Bureaucratic delays affect timely implementation of SIP plans.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Security concerns in the region disrupt SIP activities.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	High student-teacher ratios make it difficult to apply student-centered methods.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Weak collaborative culture among teachers limits joint SIP initiatives.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Inconsistent monitoring and evaluation reduce accountability in SIP implementation.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Limited parental involvement weakens community support for SIP.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Frequent leadership turnover disrupts continuity in SIP practices.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Lack of motivation among teachers affects SIP outcomes.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Poor infrastructure (classrooms, sanitation, and electricity) hinders SIP goals.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Resistance to change among staff slows SIP adoption.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Insufficient government follow-up and support weakens SIP sustainability.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
Opportunities	Strong community traditions (e.g., Iddir) can be mobilized to support SIP.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Local NGOs and development partners provide potential support for SIP initiatives.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Teachers' willingness to engage in CPD strengthens SIP.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Student councils can promote SIP awareness.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	PTSA structures provide a platform for community participation.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Regional education offices offer technical support for SIP planning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Peer learning among schools enhances SIP practices.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	ICT expansion offers opportunities for innovative teaching aligned with SIP.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Local fundraising initiatives can supplement SIP resources.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Strong cultural value placed on education supports SIP acceptance.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Emerging leadership capacity among principals can drive SIP success.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Archival data from previous SIP cycles can inform better planning.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5
	Policy alignment with national education priorities provides a supportive framework for SIP.	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5

APPENDIX II - Interview Questions

Interview Protocol: SIP Implementation in Amhara Secondary Schools

Informant: 10 School Principals

Duration: 45–60 Minutes for each principal

Part 1: Introduction

"In your own words, how would you describe the current 'spirit' of SIP implementation in your school compared to three years ago?"

Part 2: Explaining the Preparation & Practice Gap (Ref: RQ1, RQ2)

The "Low" Preparation: "Our initial survey data suggests that SIP preparation is currently perceived as 'low.' In your experience, what are the biggest hurdles that prevent a school from being truly 'ready' before the academic year starts?"

Contextual Influences: "How do the specific cultural values or administrative expectations here in the Amhara Region make it easier, or harder, to implement the four SIP domains (like Community Participation or Teaching-Learning)?"

Probe: "Are there specific regional policies that feel disconnected from your school's daily reality?"

Part 3: Planning, Self-Assessment, and Collaboration (Ref: RQ3, RQ4)

The Self-Assessment Process: "Walk me through how your school actually conducts its SIP self-assessment. Who is involved, and why do you think this process sometimes fails to identify the most critical problems?"

Collaboration Hurdles: "The survey showed a lack of 'collaborative planning.' Why is it difficult to get teachers and stakeholders to move beyond just 'attending meetings' to actually owning the SIP plan?"

Probe: "How do you decide which problems to prioritize when resources are scarce?"

Part 4: Leadership and Awareness Challenges (Ref: RQ5, RQ6)

The Awareness Gap: "Despite regional guidelines, many teachers and students report low awareness of SIP details. From a leadership perspective, why is this information not 'sticking'?"

Leadership Capacity: "Being a principal involves many roles. What specific leadership challenges (training, time, authority) prevent you from coordinating SIP activities as effectively as you would like?"

Probe: "How does this affect the morale and commitment of your teaching staff?"

Part 5: Resources, Infrastructure, and Safety (Ref: RQ7, RQ8)

Navigating Scarcity: "When you face severe shortages in funding or materials, how do you decide which SIP activities to cut and which to keep?How would you describe the support (or lack thereof) from local NGOs and education offices?"

Safety and Learning: "How do concerns about school safety or poor infrastructure (classrooms, fences, etc.) specifically hinder your ability to implement student-centered learning?"

Part 6: Identifying Opportunities (Ref: RQ9)

Local Success Stories: "Are there any 'small wins' or unique strategies you've used in this school, perhaps using local community resources, which worked better than the official guidelines?"

Leveraging Assets:

"If you had the power to change one regional policy to better leverage local opportunities, what would it be?"

Part 7: Conclusion

"Is there anything else you would like to share about why SIP implementation is struggling, or what gives you hope for its future in this region?"

APPENDIX- III

Document Review Checklist for SIP Implementation in Secondary Schools (Amhara Region)

Scoring (0 = Not Available, 1 = Partially Available, 2 = Fully Available)

Section/Domain	Document Type	Score (0–2)	Remarks
Preparation & Planning	1. School Self-Assessment (SSA) reports	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2. SIP plan document aligned with MoE guidelines	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3. Stakeholder consultation records (minutes, attendance lists)	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4. Resource allocation plans (budget, materials, training schedules)	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	5. Orientation/training materials for stakeholders	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	6. SIP Committee formation records	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	7. Alignment of SIP plan with national/regional priorities	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
Teaching & Learning	1.Lesson plans reflecting SIP objectives	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2.CPD records linked to SIP goals	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Student progress monitoring reports	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Classroom observation records	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	

Leadership & Management	1.Leadership meeting minutes on SIP	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2.Reports on inclusive decision-making	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Transparent resource allocation reports	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Monitoring & evaluation reports	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
Safe & Healthy Environment	1.Safety and sanitation inspection reports	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2.Guidance and counseling service records	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Extracurricular and health program documentation	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Policies on inclusivity and anti-bullying	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
Community Participation	1.PTSA meeting minutes and activity reports	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2.Records of community contributions	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Partnership agreements with NGOs/local organizations	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Communication materials shared with parents/community	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
Challenges	1.Reports highlighting financial/resource constraints	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2.Documentation of teacher shortages/high ratios	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Records of leadership turnover/staff resistance	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Monitoring reports identifying gaps	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	5.Evidence of limited parental/community involvement	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
Opportunities	1.Records of community support	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	

	initiatives (e.g., Iddir)		
	2.Documentation of NGO/government support	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Evidence of ICT integration	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Reports of peer learning/school collaboration	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	5.Policy documents showing national alignment	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
Monitoring & Evaluation	1.SIP progress reports (quarterly/annual)	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	2.Evaluation tools/checklists used by SIPC	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	3.Feedback reports from stakeholders	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	
	4.Evidence of adjustments based on evaluation	0 ☐ · 1 ☐ · 2 ☐	

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በትምህርትዕቅድናአመራርትምህርትክፍል

የትምህርትፖሊሲናአመራር (የፒ.ኤች.ዲፕሮግራም)

በሁለተኛደረጃትምህርትቤትመምህራን፣ተማሪዎችእናበትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራም (SIP) ኮሚቴአባላትየሚሞላመጠይቅ።

ውድምላሽሰጪዎች፤

ይህየዳሰሳጥናትመጠይቅበአማራክልልበሚገኙየሁለተኛደረጃትምህርትቤቶችየትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራም (SIP) አተገባበርላይመረጃለመሰብሰብየተዘጋጀነው።የዚህመሣሪያዓላማከትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራምአተገባበርጋርየተያያዙየዝግጅትደረጃዎችን፣አሰራሮችን፣ተግዳሮቶችንእናመልካምአጋጣሚዎችንመገምገምነው።የጥናቱውጤትስለትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራምወቅታዊሁኔታጥልቅግንዛቤለመፍጠርእናየትምህርትቤትማሻሻያጥረቶችንለማጠናከርበማስረጃላይየተመሰረቱምክረ-ሃሳቦችንለማቅረብይረዳል።

ለጥያቄመላሾችመመሪያ፡

ስምዎንመጻፍአያስፈልግም።

እባክዎንእያንዳንዱንዓረፍተነገርበጥንቃቄያንብቡ።

ከሚከተሉትአማራጮችውስጥአንዱንበመምረጥ/በክበብበማጥቆርለእያንዳንዱሐሳብያለዎትንየስምምነትደረጃይግለጹ፡ (1 = በጣምአልስማማም፣ 2 = አልስማማም፣ 3 = ገለልተኛ/አስተያየትየለኝም፣ 4 = እስማማለሁ፣ 5 = በጣምእስማማለሁ)።

ትክክልወይምስህተትየሚባልመልስየለም፤የእርስዎእውነተኛአስተያየትከፍተኛዋጋአለው።

ሁሉምምላሾችበምስጢርየሚያዙናለትምህርታዊምርምርዓላማብቻየሚውሉይሆናሉ።

መጠይቁበአራትክፍሎችየተከፈለነው፡-

ክፍል I፡የጥያቄመላሾችአጠቃላይመረጃ

ክፍል II፡ዝግጅትእናዕቅድ

ክፍል III፡በአራቱየትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራም (SIP) ዘርፎችያሉአሰራሮች

ክፍል IV፡ተግዳሮቶችእናመልካምአጋጣሚዎች

ለሚያደርጉትተሳትፎከልብእያመሰገንኩ፤ተሳትፎዎበአማርኛክልልየትምህርትጥራትንለማሻሻልበሚደረገው ጥረትውስጥትልቅሚናይጫወታል።

ስለትብብርዎእናስለጊዜዎእናመሰግናለን!

ከአክብሮትጋር፣

ደሳለኝእጅጉተፈራ

ክፍል I: የጥያቄመላሾችአጠቃላይመረጃ

እባክዎንየሚከተሉትንመረጃዎችያሟሉ::
ምላሾችዎበሚስጥርይጠበቃሉእንዲሁምለትምህርታዊዓላማብቻይውላሉ።

1. የምላሽሰጪውምድብ:□መምህር□ተማሪ□የትምህርትቤትማሻሻያ (SIP) ኮሚቴአባል

2. ጾታ:□ወንድ□ሴት

3. ዕድሜ: □ ከ20 ዓመትበታች □ ከ20–29 ዓመት □ ከ30–39 ዓመት □ ከ40–49 ዓመት □ 50 ዓመትእናከዚያበላይ

4. የትምህርትደረጃ (ለመምህራንእናለኮሚቴአባላትብቻ):

□ዲፕሎማ□የመጀመሪያዲግሪ□የማስተርስዲግሪ□ሌላ (እባክዎንይጥቀሱ) _____

5. የክፍልደረጃ (ለተማሪዎችብቻ)

□ 9ኛክፍል□ 10ኛክፍል□ 11ኛክፍል□ 12ኛክፍል

6. በትምህርትቤቱውስጥያለዎትየአገልግሎትዘመን (ለመምህራንእናለኮሚቴአባላትብቻ)

□ከ5 ዓመትበታች□ከ5–10 ዓመት□ከ11–15 ዓመት□ከ15 ዓመትበላይ

7. በኮሚቴው (SIPC) ውስጥያለዎትየሥራድርሻ (ለኮሚቴአባላትብቻ)

□ሰብሳቢ□የመምህራንተወካይ□የተማሪዎችተወካይ□የወላጆችተወካይ□የማህበረሰብተወካይ□ሌላ (እባክዎንይጥቀሱ) _____

8. የትምህርትቤቱመገኛ፡□ከተማ□ገጠር

ክፍል II፡ዝግጅትእናእቅድ (Preparation & Planning)

መመሪያ፡-እባክዎንለእያንዳንዱጥያቄየሚሰማዎትንየንስማማስሜትበቁጥር (1-5) ይግለጹ። (1 = በጣምአልስማማም፣ 2 = አልስማማም፣ 3 = ገለልተኛ፣ 4 = እስማማለሁ፣ 5 = በጣምእስማማለሁ)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	ትምህርትቤቱእቅድከመጀመሩበፊትየሁሉንምተሳትፎያረጋገጠየትምህርትቤትራስ-ገምገማ (SSA) ያካሂዳል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
2	የትምህርትቤትመሻሻልእቅዱ (SIP) ከአካባቢውማህበረሰብእናከተማሪዎችልዩፍላጎትጋርየተጣጣመነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	ባለድርሻአካላት (መምህራን፣ወላጆች፣ተማሪዎች) ስለ SIP ማዕቀፍበቂግንዛቤተሰጥቷቸዋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
4	የትምህርትቤቱአመራርስለ SIP ዝግጅትእናእቅድግልጽመመሪያይሰጣል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
5	ለ SIP ዝግጅትበቂግብዓቶችተመድበዋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	መምህራን SIPንተግባራዊከማድረጋቸውበፊትስልጠናያገኛሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
7	የ SIP እቅድበጋራየባለድርሻአካላትተሳትፎየተዘጋጀነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
8	የ SIP ግቦችለሰራተኞች፣ለተማሪዎችእናለወላጆችበግልጽተነግረዋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
9	የ SIP	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
	እቅድበተጨባጭመረጃዎችእናበማህበረሰቡአስተያየትላይየተመሰረተነው።	
10	የ SIP ኮሚቴበዝግጅትእናበእቅድሂደትላይበንቃትይሳተፋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
11	በእቅድወቅትየተቀመጡግቦችተጨባጭእናሊለኩየሚችሉናቸው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
12	የ SIP እቅዱየክትትልናግምገማስልቶችንአካቷል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
13	ዝግጅቱከሀገራዊየትምህርትፖሊሲዎችጋርመጣጣሙንያረጋግጣል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ክፍል III፡በአራቱየ SIP ዘርፎችየሚታዩተግባራት

1. የመማርማስተማርሂደት (Teaching & Learning)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	መምህራንከ SIP ግቦችጋርየተጣጣመየትምህርትእቅድያዘጋጃሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
2	ንቁተሳትፎንየሚያበረታቱየመማርማስተማርስልቶችዘወትርጥቅምላይይውላሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	ተከታታይምዘናከመማርማስተማርሂደቱጋርተቀናጅቷል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
4	የመማሪያቁሳቁሶችየተማሪዎችንየተለያየፍላጎትያሟላሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
5	ውጤታቸውዝቅተኛለሆኑተማሪዎችየማጠናከሪያ (Remedial) ትምህርትይሰጣል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	የኢንፎርሜሽንኮሙኒኬሽንቴክኖሎጂ (ICT) በትምህርትአሰጣጥውስጥቅምላይይውላል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
7	መምህራንየተሻሉተሞክሮዎችንለመለዋወጥእርስበእርስይተባበራሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
8	የመማሪያክፍልምልከታዎችለመሻሻልየሚረዱግብረ-መልሶችንይሰጣሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
9	ተማሪዎችለትምህርታቸውኃላፊነትእንዲወስዱይበረታታሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
10	ለተለያዩየመማርስልቶችተስማሚየሆነየተለየ (Differentiated) ትምህርትይሰጣል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
11	የ SIP ግቦችበእያንዳንዱየትምህርትአይነትስልቶችውስጥይንጸባረቃሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
12	መምህራንበተማሪዎችውጤትመረጃላይበመመስረትየማስተማርዘዴያቸውንያስተካክላሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
13	መምህራንተማሪንማዕከልያደረጉየማስተማርዘዴዎችንዘወትርይጠቀማሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
14	ተከታታይየሙያማበልጸጊያ (CPD) ከ SIP ግቦችጋርበንቃትየተገናኘነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
15	የተማሪዎችንእድገትለመከታተልናለመገምገምወጥየሆነስርዓትአለ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

2. አመራርናአስተዳደር (Leadership & Management)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	ውሳኔአሰጣጥባለድርሻአካላትንያሳተፈነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
2	ርዕሰመምህራንየ SIP አፈጻጸምውጤቶችንለመከታተልበየጊዜውግምገማያደርጋሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	አመራሩተጠያቂነትንእናግልጽነትንያሰፍናል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
4	የትምህርትቤትመሪዎችየ SIP ግብዓቶችንለማጠናከርከመንግስትእናመንግስታዊካልሆኑድርጅቶችጋር ይሰራሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
5	መሪዎችየ SIP ተግባራትከታቀዱትግቦችጋርመጣጣማቸውንይከታተላሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	ርዕሰመምህሩከአስተዳደራዊቁጥጥርባለፈየትምህርትአሰጣጥአመራር (Instructional leadership) ይሰጣሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
7	መሪዎችበመምህራን፣በተማሪዎችእናበወላጆችመካከልየጋራችግርፈቺነ ትንያበረታታሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
8	ግብዓቶች (ፋይናንስእናቁሳቁስ) በ SIP እቅድመሰረትበግልጽነትይመደባሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

3. ምቹእናጤናማየትምህርትቤትአካባቢ (Safe & Healthy School Environment)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	የትምህርትቤቱግቢንጹህእናበሚገባየተያዘነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
2	የደህንነትደንቦችእናየአደጋጊዜሂደቶችይለማመዳሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	በቂየንጽህናመጠበቂያ (መጸዳጃ) ተቋማትይገኛሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
4	የትምህርትቤቱአካባቢከትንኮሳ (Bullying) የጸዳነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
5	የጤናትምህርትፕሮግራሞችበየጊዜውይሰጣሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	መሰረታዊየመጀመሪያእርዳታእናየጤናአገልግሎቶችይገኛሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
7	የመማሪያክፍሎችበቂአየርየሚያስገቡእናየተሟላቁሳቁስያላቸውናቸው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
8	ትምህርትቤቱለሁሉምተማሪዎችአካላዊደህንነቱየተጠበቀእናምቹአካባቢይፈጥራል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
9	ለተማሪዎችየሚሰሩየምክርአገልግሎቶች (Guidance and counseling) አሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
10	ተማሪዎችበስነ-ልቦናደህንነታቸውየተጠበቀእናየተደገፉመሆናቸውንይሰማቸዋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
11	ከትምህርትውጭየሚደረጉእንቅስቃሴዎችየተማሪዎችንደህንነትያበረታታሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
12	የትምህርትቤቱአካባቢአካታችነትንእናለብዝሃነትክብርመስጠትንያበረታታል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

4. የማህበረሰብተሳትፎ (Community Participation)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	ወላጆችስለ SIP ተግባራትዘወትርመረጃይደርሳቸዋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
2	የአካባቢድርጅቶችየ SIP ተነሳሽነቶችንይደግፋሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	የማህበረሰቡአባላትበትምህርትቤቱየውሳኔአሰጣጥመድረኮችላይይሳተፋሉ ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
4	የአካባቢውማህበረሰብለትምህርትቤቱፕሮጀክቶችበጉልበት፣በገንዘብወይ ምበቁሳቁስድጋፍያደርጋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
5	የወላጅ-መምህር-ተማሪማህበር (PTSA) በትምህርትቤቱአስተዳደርውስጥንቁተሳትፎአለው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	ትምህርትቤቱከሰፊውማህበረሰብጋርጠንካራግንኙነትአለው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ክፍል IV፡ተግዳሮቶችእናእድሎች (Challenges & Opportunities)

1. ተግዳሮቶች (Challenges)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	የገንዘብእጥረትየ SIP ትግበራንያደናቅፋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
2	የመማርማስተማርቁሳቁስእጥረትበ SIP ስራዎችላይአሉታዊተጽዕኖያሳድራል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	ለመምህራንእናለመሪዎችየሚሰጥስልጠናአለመሟላትየ SIP	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
	ውጤታማነትንይቀንሳል።	
4	የባለድርሻአካላትግንዛቤማነስበ SIP ተግባራትላይያላቸውንተሳትፎይገድባል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
5	በትምህርትቤትአመራርእናበባለድርሻአካላትመካከልያለውደካማግንኙነትእቅዱንያሰናክላል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	የቢሮክራሲመጓተትየ SIP እቅዶችንበወቅቱተግባራዊለማድረግእንቅፋትይሆናል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
7	በአካባቢውያለውየደህንነትስጋትየ SIP እንቅስቃሴዎችንያውካል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
8	ከፍተኛየተማሪ-መምህርጥምርታተማሪንማዕከልያደረጉዘዴዎችንለመጠቀምአስቸጋሪያደርጋል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
9	በመምህራንመካከልያለውደካማየትብብርባህልየጋራየ SIP ስራዎችንይገድባል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
10	ወጥያልሆነክትትልእናግምገማበ SIP ትግበራላይተጠያቂነትንይቀንሳል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
11	የወላጆችተሳትፎማነስለማህበረሰባዊድጋፍመዳከምምክንያትነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
12	ተደጋጋሚየአመራርለውጥበ SIP ተግባራትላይቀጣይነትንያሳጣል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
13	በመምህራንዘንድያለውየመነሳሳት (Motivation) ማነስበ SIP ውጤትላይተጽዕኖያሳድራል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
14	ደካማመሰረተልማት (ክፍሎች፣ንጽህና፣መብራት) የ SIP ግቦችንለማሳካትእንቅፋትነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
15	በሰራተኞችዘንድለለውጥየሚታይእምቢተኝነትየ SIP ጉዞንያቀዘቅዛል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
16	በቂየመንግስትድጋፍእናክትትልአለመኖርየ SIP ዘላቂነትንያዳክማል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

2. እድሎች (Opportunities)

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
1	ጠንካራየማህበረሰብወጎች (ለምሳሌ፡-እድር) ለ SIP ድጋፍሊንቀሳቀሱይችላሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
2	የአካባቢውመንግስታዊያልሆኑድርጅቶችለ SIP ድጋፍየመስጠትአቅምአላቸው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
3	መምህራንበሙያማበልጸጊያ (CPD) ለመሳተፍያላቸውፍላጎት SIPንያጠናክራል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
4	የተማሪዎችምክርቤትስለ SIP ግንዛቤንሊፈጥርይችላል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
5	የ PTSA መዋቅሮችለማህበረሰብተሳትፎምቹመድረክናቸው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6	የክልልትምህርትቢሮዎችለ SIP እቅድቴክኒካዊድጋፍይሰጣሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
7	በትምህርትቤቶችመካከልየሚደረግየልምድልውውጥየ SIP	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ተ.ቁ	ዝርዝርጉዳዮች	የሊከርትስኬልአማራጮች
	አሰራርንያሻሽላል።	
8	የ ICT መስፋፋትከ SIP ጋርየተጣጣሙአዳዲስየማስተማርዘዴዎችንለመጠቀምእድልይሰጣል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
9	የአካባቢየገቢማሰባሰቢያእንቅስቃሴዎችለ SIP ግብዓቶችንሊያሟሉይችላሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
10	ማህበረሰቡለትምህርትየሚሰጠውከፍተኛዋጋለ SIP ተቀባይነትንይፈጥራል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
11	በበርዕሰመምህራንዘንድእያደገየመጣውየአመራርአቅምለ SIP ስኬትትልቅእድልነው።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
12	ካለፉትየ SIP ዑደቶችየተገኙመረጃዎችለተሻለእቅድግብዓትይሆናሉ።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
13	የፖሊሲዎችከሀገራዊየትምህርትቅድሚያዎችጋርመጣጣምለ SIP ምቹሁኔታንይፈጥራል።	1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5

ለዚህመጠይቅምላሽለመስጠትጊዜዎንስለሰጡንእናመሰግናለን!

በትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራም (SIP) ዙሪያለርዕሳነመምህራንየተዘጋጀየቃለ-መጠይቅጥያቄዎች

መረጃሰጪዎች፡ 10 የትምህርትቤትርዕሳነመምህራን

የቆይታጊዜ፡ከ45–60 ደቂቃዎች

የጥናቱግብ፡በትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራምዝግጅትእናአተገባበርላይየታየውን "ዝቅተኛ" አፈጻጸምከርዕሳነመምህራንየሥራተሞክሮአንጻርመተንተን።

ክፍል 1፡መግቢያእናየድባብመፍጠሪያ (Icebreaker)

ባለፉትሦስትዓመታትየነበረውንየትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራም (SIP) አተገባበርአሁንካለውጋርሲያነጻጽሩት፤አሁንበትምህርትቤትዎያለውንአጠቃላይ 'የሥራመንፈስ' እንዴትይገልጹታል?

ክፍል 2፡በዝግጅትእናበተግባርመካከልያለውንክፍተትማብራራት

ዝቅተኛየዝግጅትደረጃ፡የመጀመሪያደረጃጥናታችንእንደሚያሳየውየSIP ዝግጅትምዕራፍ 'ዝቅተኛ' እንደሆነይገመታል።በእርስዎተሞክሮ፣የትምህርትዘመኑከመጀመሩበፊትአንድትምህርትቤትለፕሮግራሙበ ሚገባ 'ዝግጁ' እንዳይሆንየሚያደርጉትዋናዋናእንቅፋቶችምንድንናቸው?"

የአካባቢያዊሁኔታዎችተጽዕኖ፡ "በአማራክልልያሉባህላዊእሴቶችወይምየአስተዳደርግፊቶችአራቱንየSIP ዘርፎች (ለምሳሌ፡የማህበረሰብተሳትፎንወይምየመማር-ማስተማርሂደትን) ተግባራዊለማድረግእንዴትያግዛሉ?ወይምእንዴትእንቅፋትይሆናሉ?"

ተከታታይጥያቄ (Probe)፡- "ከመደበኛየትምህርትቤቱየዕለትተዕለትነባራዊሁኔታጋርየማይጣጣሙየክልልፖሊሲዎችአሉይላሉ?"

ክፍል 3፡እቅድ፣የራስ-ግምገማእናየትብብርሁኔታ

የራስ-ግምገማሂደት፡- "ትምህርትቤትዎየSIP የራስ-ግምገማ (Self-assessment) ሂደትንእንዴትእንደሚያከናውንቢገልጹልኝ?በዚህሂደትውስጥእነማንይሳተፋሉ? ሂደቱስለምንትክክለኛየሆኑአንገብጋቢችግሮችንለይቶማውጣትሳይችልይቀራል?"

የትብብርማነቆዎች፡- "ጥናቶችእንደሚያሳዩትየጋራዕቅድ (Collaborative planning) የማውጣትልምድአነስተኛነው።መምህራንእናባለድርሻአካላትበስብሰባላይከመገኘትባለፈ፣የSIP ዕቅዱንእንደራሳቸውጉዳይአይተውእንዲተገብሩለማድረግምንአስችጋሪአደረገው?"

ተከታታይጥያቄ፡- "ሀብትናበጀትውስንነበሆነበትሁኔታ፣የትኛውንችግርቅድሚያሰጥታችሁእንደምትፈቱእንዴትትወስናላችሁ?"

ክፍል 4፡የአመራርብቃትእናየግንዛቤክፍተቶች

የግንዛቤክፍተት፡- "ምንምእንኳየክልልመመሪያዎችቢኖሩም፣ብዙመምህራንናተማሪዎችስለ SIP ዝርዝርጉዳዮችያላቸውግንዛቤዝቅተኛመሆኑንይናገራሉ።ከአመራርአንጻርሲታይይህመረጃበሚፈለገውልክ 'ሰርጾያልገባው' ለምንድነው?"

የአመራርአቅም፡- "ርዕሰመምህርነትብዙኃላፊነቶችንበአንድላይመያዝንይጠይቃል።የSIP ተግባራትንውጤታማበሆነመንገድለማስተባበርከሥልጠና፣ከጊዜወይምከሥልጣንአንጻርየሚያጋጥሙዎትየ አመራርተግዳሮቶችምንድንናቸው?"

ተከታታይጥያቄ፡- "ይህሁኔታበመምህራንየሥራተነሳሽነትእናቁርጠኝነትላይምንተጽዕኖያሳድራል?"

ክፍል 5፡የሀብት፣የመሠረተ-ልማትእናየደህንነትሁኔታዎች

እጥረቶችንመቋቋም፡- "ከፍተኛየገንዘብወይምየቁሳቁስእጥረትሲያጋጥምዎት፣የትኛውንየSIP ተግባርለመቀነስወይምለመተውይገደዳሉ?ከአካባቢውመንግስታዊያልሆኑድርጅቶች (NGOs) እናከትምህርትጽሕፈትቤቶችየሚደረግላችሁድጋፍምንይመስላል?"

ደህንነትእናመማር፡- "የትምህርትቤትደህንነትስጋቶችወይምየመሠረተ-ልማትጉድለቶች (ለምሳሌ፡የክፍሎችጥራት፣አጥርወዘተ) ተማሪንማዕከልያደረገየመማርሂደትላይየሚያሳድሩትተጽዕኖምንድነው?"

ክፍል 6፡መልካምአጋጣሚዎችንመለየት

የአካባቢስኬቶች፡- "ከመደበኛውመመሪያውጭ፣የአካባቢውንማህበረሰብሀብትበመጠቀምበትምህርትቤትዎየተገኘ 'ትንሽድል' ወይምየተለየየሥራስልትካለቢነግሩኝ?"

ለውጥማምጣት፡- "የአካባቢውንመልካምአጋጣሚዎችበተሻለለመጠቀምአንድየክልልፖሊሲየመቀየርሥልጣንቢኖርዎት፣የትኛ ውንይለውጡነበር?"

ክፍል 7፡ማጠቃለያ

"በመጨረሻም፣የSIP ትግበራለምንእንደተዳከመወይምለወደፊቱበክልሉየተሻለውጤትለማምጣትተስፋየሚሰጥዎትነገርካለቢ ጨምሩልኝ?"

ለዚህቃለ-መጠይቅምላሽለመስጠትጊዜዎንስለሰጡንእናመሰግናለን!

በሁለተኛደረጃትምህርትቤቶችየትምህርትቤትማሻሻያፕሮግራም (SIP) አተገባበርሰነድፍተሻዝርዝር (አማራክልል)

የነጥብአሰጣጥ (0 = የለም፣ 1 = በከፊልአለ፣ 2 = ሙሉበሙሉአለ)

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
1. ዝግጅትእናእቅድ	1. የትምህርትቤቱየራስ-ገምገማ (SSA) ሪፖርቶች	0 □ • 1 □ •

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
		2 ☐
	2. ከትምህርትሚኒስቴርመመሪያጋርየተጣጣመየSIP እቅድሰነድ	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	3. የባለድርሻአካላትየምክክርመዝገቦች (ቃለ-ጉባኤዎች፣የattendance ዝርዝሮች)	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	4. የሀብትክፍፍልእቅዶች (በጀት፣ቁሳቁስ፣የሥልጠናመርሃግብሮች)	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	5. ለባለድርሻአካላትየተዘጋጁየግንዛቤማስጨበጫ/የስልጠናሰነዶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	6. የSIP ኮሚቴምስረታመዝገቦች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	7. የSIP እቅዱከሀገራዊ/ክልላዊቅድሚያከሚሰጣቸውጉዳዮችጋርያለውመጣጣም	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
2. መማርእናማስተማር	1. የSIP ግቦችንየሚያንፀባርቁየትምህርትእቅዶች (Lesson plans)	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	2. ከSIP ግቦችጋርየተያያዙየሙያማሻሻያ (CPD) መዝገቦች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	3. የተማሪዎችውጤት/እድገትመከታተያሪፖርቶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	4. የክፍልምልከታ (Classroom observation) መዝገቦች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
3. አመራርእናአስተዳደር	1. የአመራርአካላትስለ SIP የተወያዩባቸውየቃለ-ጉባኤመዝገቦች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	2. ሁሉንምያሳተፈየውሳኔአሰጣጥሂደትሪፖርቶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	3. ግልጽየሆነየሀብትአጠቃቀም/ክፍፍልሪፖርቶች	0 ☐ • 1

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
		□ • 2 □
	4. የክትትልእናግምገማ (M&E) ሪፖርቶች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
4. አስተማማኝእናጤናማአካባቢ	1. የደህንነትእናየንፅህናአጠባበቅፍተሻሪፖርቶች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
	2. የምክርእናስነ-ልቦናአገልግሎት (Guidance & Counseling) መዝገቦች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
	3. ከተከታታይትምህርትውጭያሉእንቅስቃሴዎችእናየጤናፕሮግራምሰነዶች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
	4. አድልዎየሌለበትአሰራርእናትንኮሳን (anti-bullying) የመከላከያፖሊሲዎች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
5. የማህበረሰብተሳትፎ	1. የወላጅ፣መምህራንናተማሪዎችማህበር (PTSA) ቃለ-ጉባኤዎችናሪፖርቶች	0 □ • 1 □ •

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
		2 ☐
	2. የማህበረሰቡአስተዋፅኦ/ድጋፍየተመዘገበባቸውሰነዶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	3. ከመንግስታዊካልሆኑድርጅቶች/አካባቢያዊተቋማትጋርየተደረጉስምምነቶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	4. ለወላጆች/ለማህበረሰቡየተጋሩየኮሙኒኬሽንወይምየመረጃሰነዶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
6. ተግዳሮቶች (Challenges)	1. የፋይናንስ/የቁሳቁስእጥረትመኖሩንየሚያሳዩሪፖርቶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	2. የመምህራንእጥረትወይምየተማሪ-መምህርጥምርታከፍተኛመሆኑንየሚያሳዩሰነዶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	3. የአመራርመለዋወጥወይምየሰራተኞችተቃውሞ/አለመቀበልመዝገቦች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
	4. ክፍተቶችንለይተውየሚያሳዩየክትትልሪፖርቶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	5. የወላጅ/የማህበረሰብተሳትፎውስንመሆኑንየሚያሳዩመረጃዎች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
7. መልካምአጋጣሚዎች (Opportunities)	1. የማህበረሰብድጋፍተነሳሽነቶች (ለምሳሌ፡ዕድር) መዝገቦች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	2. ከመንግስትወይምመንግስታዊካልሆኑድርጅቶችየተገኙድጋፎችሰነድ	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	3. የኢንፎርሜሽንኮሙኒኬሽንቴክኖሎጂ (ICT) አጠቃቀምመኖሩንየሚያሳዩመረጃዎች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	4. የልምድልውውጥወይምየትምህርትቤቶችትብብርሪፖርቶች	0 ☐ • 1 ☐ • 2 ☐
	5. ከሀገራዊአቅጣጫዎችጋርያለንመጣጣምየሚያሳዩየፖሊሲሰነዶች	0 ☐ • 1

የክፍሉስም/መስፈርት	የሰነዱዓይነት	ነጥብ (0–2)
		□ • 2 □
8. ክትትልእናግምገማ	1. የSIP የሂደትሪፖርቶች (በየሩብዓመቱ/በየዓመቱ)	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
	2. በSIP ኮሚቴጥቅምላይየዋሉየግምገማመሳሪያዎች/ቼክሊስቶች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
	3. ከባለድርሻአካላትየተገኙየግብረ-መልስ (Feedback) ሪፖርቶች	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □
	4. በግምገማውመሰረትየተደረጉማሻሻያዎች/ማስተካከያዎችማስረጃ	0 □ • 1 □ • 2 □

Statistical Out puts

Preparation construct

One sample t test raw SPSS results

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total_Preparation	1104	2.1750	.32805	.00987

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3.0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Total_Preparation	-83.558	1103	.000	-.82497	-.8443	-.8056

One-Sample Effect Sizes					
		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Total_Preparation	Cohen's d	.32805	-2.515	-2.635	-2.394
	Hedges' correction	.32827	-2.513	-2.633	-2.393

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Statistical Summary Table

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen’s d
Preparation	1104	2.17	0.32	-83.55	1103	< .001	-2.51

One way ANOVA for preparation among groups raw SPSS results

Descriptives

Total_Preparation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
teachers	950	2.1660	.35284	.01145	2.1435	2.1885	1.54	2.92
students	78	2.2308	.00000	.00000	2.2308	2.2308	2.23	2.23
SIP_committee	76	2.2308	.00000	.00000	2.2308	2.2308	2.23	2.23
Total	1104	2.1750	.32805	.00987	2.1557	2.1944	1.54	2.92

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Total_Preparation	Based on Mean	143.982	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	138.663	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	138.663	2	949.000	.000

	Based on trimmed mean	138.725	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Total_Preparation

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.556	2	.278	2.591	.075
Within Groups	118.144	1101	.107		
Total	118.700	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a,b]

			95% Confidence Interval	
		Point Estimate	Lower	Upper
Total_Preparation	Eta-squared	.005	.000	.015
	Epsilon-squared	.003	-.002	.013
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.003	-.002	.013
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.001	-.001	.007

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

b. Negative but less biased estimates are retained, not rounded to zero.

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Total_Preparation

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Teachers	students	-.06478	.03858	.214	-.1553	.0258
	SIP_committee	-.06478	.03905	.222	-.1564	.0269
Students	teachers	.06478	.03858	.214	-.0258	.1553
	SIP_committee	.00000	.05280	1.000	-.1239	.1239
SIP_committee	teachers	.06478	.03905	.222	-.0269	.1564
	students	.00000	.05280	1.000	-.1239	.1239

Homogeneous Subsets

Total_Preparation

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Category_respondent	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05 1
teachers	950	2.1660

students	78	2.2308
SIP_committee	76	2.2308
Sig.		.304

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.984.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Table 4: Combined one way ANOVA and sample t test summary table

Variable	Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t test (Test Value=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (Group Comparison)
Preparation	Teachers	950	2.166	0.353	t = -83.56	F(2, 1101) = 2.59
	Students	78	2.231	0.000	df = 1103	p = .075
	SIPCommittee	76	2.231	0.000	p < .001	(Not Significant)
	Total	1104	2.175	0.328	(Highly Significant)	(Uniform Low Scores)

Practice construct

Teaching learning domain one sample t test raw SPSS results

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean_TeachingLearning	1104	2.5946	.37562	.01130

One-Sample Test	
	Test Value = 3.0

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Mean_TeachingLearning	-35.864	1103	.000	-.40543	-.4276	-.3833

One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Mean_TeachingLearning	Cohen's d	.37562	-1.079	-1.153	-1.005
	Hedges' correction	.37587	-1.079	-1.153	-1.004

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

1. Statistical summary

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen’s d
Teaching & Learning	1104	2.59	0.38	-35.86	1103	< .001	-1.08

One way ANOVA for teaching and learning domain raw SPSS results

Descriptives

Mean_TeachingLearning

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
teachers	950	2.5396	.37728	.01224	2.5156	2.5637	1.73	3.27
students	78	2.9333	.00000	.00000	2.9333	2.9333	2.93	2.93
SIP_committee	76	2.9333	.00000	.00000	2.9333	2.9333	2.93	2.93
Total	1104	2.5946	.37562	.01130	2.5724	2.6167	1.73	3.27

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Mean_TeachingLearning	Based on Mean	74.794	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	73.478	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	73.478	2	949.000	.000
	Based on trimmed mean	76.040	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Mean_TeachingLearning

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	20.539	2	10.269	83.701	.000
Within Groups	135.082	1101	.123		
Total	155.621	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a]

			95% Confidence Interval	
		Point Estimate	Lower	Upper
Mean_TeachingLearning	Eta-squared	.132	.097	.168
	Epsilon-squared	.130	.095	.167
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.130	.095	.166
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.070	.050	.091

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

Post Hoc test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Mean_TeachingLearning

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Teachers	students	-.39368*	.04126	.000	-.4905	-.2969
	SIP_committee	-.39368*	.04176	.000	-.4917	-.2957
Students	teachers	.39368*	.04126	.000	.2969	.4905
	SIP_committee	.00000	.05646	1.000	-.1325	.1325
SIP_committee	teachers	.39368*	.04176	.000	.2957	.4917
	students	.00000	.05646	1.000	-.1325	.1325

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5: Combined one sample t test and one way ANOVA Summary Table for Teaching and Learning Domain

Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.54	0.38	t = -35.86	F(2, 1101) = 83.70
Students	78	2.93	0.00	df = 1103	p < .001
SIP Committee	76	2.93	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .132
Total	1104	2.59	0.38	(Significant Deficit)	(Significant Gap)

School Environment Domain

One sample t test raw SPSS results for School Environment

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean_SchoolEnvironment	1104	2.1282	.32455	.00977

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3.0					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Mean_SchoolEnvironment	-89.255	1103	.000	-.87183	-.8910	-.8527

One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval Lower	Upper
Mean_SchoolEnvir	Cohen's d	.32455	-2.686	-2.813	-2.559

onment	Hedges' correction	.32477	-2.684	-2.811	-2.558

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Statistical summary table

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
School Environment	1104	2.13	0.32	-89.26	1103	< .001	-2.69

One way ANOVA for School Environment domain raw SPSS results

Descriptives

Mean_SchoolEnvironment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
teachers	950	2.1354	.34935	.01133	2.1132	2.1577	1.50	2.67
students	78	2.0833	.00000	.00000	2.0833	2.0833	2.08	2.08

SIP_committee	76	2.0833	.00000	.00000	2.0833	2.0833	2.08	2.08
Total	1104	2.1282	.32455	.00977	2.1090	2.1473	1.50	2.67

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Mean_SchoolEnvironment	Based on Mean	160.537	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	79.389	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	79.389	2	949.000	.000
	Based on trimmed mean	166.057	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Mean_SchoolEnvironment

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.360	2	.180	1.710	.181
Within Groups	115.824	1101	.105		
Total	116.183	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a,b]

		Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval Lower	Upper
Mean_SchoolEnvironment	Eta-squared	.003	.000	.012
	Epsilon-squared	.001	-.002	.010
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.001	-.002	.010
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.001	-.001	.005

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

b. Negative but less biased estimates are retained, not rounded to zero.

Post Hoc test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Mean_SchoolEnvironment

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound

teachers	students	.05211	.03820	.360	-.0376	.1418
	SIP_committee	.05211	.03866	.369	-.0386	.1428
students	teachers	-.05211	.03820	.360	-.1418	.0376
	SIP_committee	.00000	.05228	1.000	-.1227	.1227
SIP_committee	teachers	-.05211	.03866	.369	-.1428	.0386
	students	.00000	.05228	1.000	-.1227	.1227

Mean_SchoolEnvironment

Tukey HSD[a,b]

		Subset for alpha = 0.05
Category_respondent	N	1
students	78	2.0833
SIP_committee	76	2.0833
teachers	950	2.1354
Sig.		.455

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.984.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Table 6: Combined Summary of t-test and ANOVA for School Environment

Respondent Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.14	0.35	t = -89.26	F(2, 1101) = 1.71
Students	78	2.08	0.00	df = 1103	p = .181
SIP Committee	76	2.08	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .003
Total	1104	2.13	0.32	(Significant Crisis)	(Total Consensus)

Leadership and management domain

One sample t test raw SPSS results

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean_LeadershipManagement	1104	2.1691	.28570	.00860

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3.0					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Mean_Leadership-Management	-96.628	1103	.000	-.83087	-.8477	-.8140

One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Mean_Leadership Management	Cohen's d	.28570	-2.908	-3.043	-2.773
	Hedges' correction	.28590	-2.906	-3.041	-2.771

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

1.statistical summary table

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	tvalue	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Leadership & Management	1104	2.17	0.29	-96.63	1103	< .001	-2.91

One way ANOVA for Leadership and Management domain raw SPSS results

Descriptives

Mean_LeadershipManagement

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		

teachers	950	2.1271	.28667	.00930	2.1088	2.1453	1.57	3.14
students	78	2.4286	.00000	.00000	2.4286	2.4286	2.43	2.43
SIP_committee	76	2.4286	.00000	.00000	2.4286	2.4286	2.43	2.43
Total	1104	2.1691	.28570	.00860	2.1523	2.1860	1.57	3.14

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Mean_LeadershipManagement	Based on Mean	111.415	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	52.609	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	52.609	2	949.000	.000
	Based on trimmed mean	108.919	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Mean_LeadershipManagement

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.046	2	6.023	85.034	.000
Within Groups	77.988	1101	.071		
Total	90.034	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a]

			95% Confidence Interval	
		Point Estimate	Lower	Upper
Mean_LeadershipManagement	Eta-squared	.134	.098	.170
	Epsilon-squared	.132	.097	.168
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.132	.096	.168
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.071	.051	.092

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

Post Hoc test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Mean_LeadershipManagement

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound

teachers	Students	-.30150*	.03135	.000	-.3751	-.2279
	SIP_committee	-.30150*	.03173	.000	-.3760	-.2270
students	Teachers	.30150*	.03135	.000	.2279	.3751
	SIP_committee	.00000	.04290	1.000	-.1007	.1007
SIP_committee	Teachers	.30150*	.03173	.000	.2270	.3760
	students	.00000	.04290	1.000	-.1007	.1007

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Mean_LeadershipManagement

Tukey HSD[a,b]

		Subset for alpha = 0.05	
Category_respondent	N	1	2
Teachers	950	2.1271	
Students	78		2.4286
SIP_committee	76		2.4286
Sig.		1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.984.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Table 7: Combined Summary of t-test and ANOVA for Leadership & Management

Respondent Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.13	0.29	t = -96.63	F(2, 1101) = 85.03
Students	78	2.43	0.00	df = 1103	p < .001
SIP Committee	76	2.43	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .134
Total	1104	2.17	0.29	(Significant Deficit)	(Significant Gap)

Community Participation domain

One sample t test raw SPSS result for Community Participation

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean_CommunityParticipation	1104	2.3332	.45385	.01366

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3.0					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Mean_CommunityParticipation	-48.818	1103	.000	-.66682	-.6936	-.6400

One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Mean_Community Participation	Cohen's d	.45385	-1.469	-1.554	-1.384
	Hedges' correction	.45416	-1.468	-1.553	-1.383

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

1. Summary statistics

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Community Participation	1104	2.33	0.45	-48.82	1103	< .001	-1.47

One way ANOVA for community participation domain raw SPSS results

Descriptives

Mean_CommunityParticipation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
teachers	950	2.2251	.39440	.01280	2.2000	2.2502	1.67	3.17

students	78	3.0000	.00000	.00000	3.0000	3.0000	3.00	3.00
SIP_committee	76	3.0000	.00000	.00000	3.0000	3.0000	3.00	3.00
Total	1104	2.3332	.45385	.01366	2.3064	2.3600	1.67	3.17

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Mean_CommunityParticipation	Based on Mean	243.998	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	58.694	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	58.694	2	949.000	.000
	Based on trimmed mean	229.296	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Mean_CommunityParticipation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	79.576	2	39.788	296.754	.000
Within Groups	147.619	1101	.134		
Total	227.194	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a]

			95% Confidence Interval	
		Point Estimate	Lower	Upper
Mean_CommunityParticipation	Eta-squared	.350	.307	.390
	Epsilon-squared	.349	.306	.389
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.349	.306	.388
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.211	.180	.241

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

Post Hoc test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Mean_CommunityParticipation

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
teachers	Students	-.77491*	.04313	.000	-.8761	-.6737

	SIP_committee	-.77491*	.04365	.000	-.8774	-.6725
	Teachers	.77491*	.04313	.000	.6737	.8761
students	SIP_committee	.00000	.05902	1.000	-.1385	.1385
SIP_committee	Teachers	.77491*	.04365	.000	.6725	.8774
	students	.00000	.05902	1.000	-.1385	.1385

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Mean_CommunityParticipation

Tukey HSD[a,b]

		Subset for alpha = 0.05	
Category_respondent	N	1	2
Teachers	950	2.2251	
Students	78		3.0000
SIP_committee	76		3.0000
Sig.		1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.984.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Table 8: Summary of t-test and ANOVA for Community Participation Domain

Respondent Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.23	0.39	t = -48.82	F(2, 1101) = 296.75
Students	78	3.00	0.00	df = 1103	p < .001
SIP Committee	76	3.00	0.00	p < .001	Eta 2 = .350
Total	1104	2.33	0.45	(Significant Deficit)	(Extreme Perception Gap)

Challenges construct

One sample t test raw SPSS results for challenges

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean_Challenges	1104	2.2359	.35300	.01062

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3.0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Mean_Challenges	-71.922	1103	.000	-.76410	-.7849	-.7433

One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Mean_Challenges	Cohen's d	.35300	-2.165	-2.272	-2.057
	Hedges' correction	.35324	-2.163	-2.271	-2.055

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

1.statistical summary table

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen’s d
Challenges	1104	2.24	0.35	-71.92	1103	< .001	-2.17

One way ANOVA for challenges raw SPSS results

Descriptives

Mean_Challenges

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
teachers	950	2.2336	.38051	.01235	2.2094	2.2578	1.63	2.75
students	78	2.2500	.00000	.00000	2.2500	2.2500	2.25	2.25
SIP_committee	76	2.2500	.00000	.00000	2.2500	2.2500	2.25	2.25
Total	1104	2.2359	.35300	.01062	2.2151	2.2567	1.63	2.75

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Mean_Challenges	Based on Mean	272.512	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	181.359	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	181.359	2	949.000	.000
	Based on trimmed mean	274.571	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Mean_Challenges

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Between Groups	.036	2	.018	.142	.867
Within Groups	137.405	1101	.125		
Total	137.441	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a,b]

			95% Confidence Interval	
		Point Estimate	Lower	Upper
Mean_Challenges	Eta-squared	.000	.000	.003
	Epsilon-squared	-.002	-.002	.001
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	-.002	-.002	.001
	Omega-squared Random-effect	-.001	-.001	.001

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

Post Hoc test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Mean_Challenges

Tukey HSD

(I)	(J)	Mean	Std.	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval

Category_responden t	Category_respondent	Difference (I-J)	Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
teachers	students	-.01638	.04161	.918	-.1140	.0813
	SIP_committee	-.01638	.04211	.920	-.1152	.0825
students	teachers	.01638	.04161	.918	-.0813	.1140
	SIP_committee	.00000	.05694	1.000	-.1336	.1336
SIP_committee	teachers	.01638	.04211	.920	-.0825	.1152
	students	.00000	.05694	1.000	-.1336	.1336

Mean_Challenges

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Category_respondent	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05 1
teachers	950	2.2336
students	78	2.2500
SIP_committee	76	2.2500
Sig.		.936

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.984.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Table 9: Summary of t-test and ANOVA for SIP Challenges

Respondent Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.23	0.38	t = -71.92	F(2, 1101) = 0.142
Students	78	2.25	0.00	df = 1103	p = .867
SIP Committee	76	2.25	0.00	p < .001	(Not Significant)
Total	1104	2.24	0.35	(Highly Significant)	(Total Consensus)

Opportunities variable

One sample t test raw SPSS results for Opportunities

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean_Opportunities	1104	2.2391	.40152	.01208

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3.0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Mean_Opportunities	-62.969	1103	.000	-.76094	-.7847	-.7372

One-Sample Effect Sizes

		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Mean_Opportunities	Cohen's d	.40152	-1.895	-1.994	-1.796
	Hedges' correction	.40179	-1.894	-1.992	-1.795

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.

Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation.

Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation, plus a correction factor.

Summary statistics

Variable	N	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Opportunities	1104	2.24	0.40	-62.97	1103	< .001	-1.90

One way ANOVA raw SPSS results for opportunities

Descriptives

Mean_Opportunities

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
teachers	950	2.2228	.42951	.01394	2.1954	2.2501	1.54	3.62
students	78	2.3274	.09147	.01036	2.3068	2.3480	2.15	2.38
SIP_committee	76	2.3522	.06059	.00695	2.3384	2.3661	2.23	2.38
Total	1104	2.2391	.40152	.01208	2.2153	2.2628	1.54	3.62

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Mean_Opportunities	Based on Mean	75.886	2	1101	.000
	Based on Median	60.839	2	1101	.000

	Based on Median and with adjusted df	60.839	2	966.962	.000
	Based on trimmed mean	72.312	2	1101	.000

ANOVA

Mean_Opportunities

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.835	2	.917	5.740	.003
Within Groups	175.989	1101	.160		
Total	177.824	1103			

ANOVA Effect Sizes[a,b]

			95% Confidence Interval	
		Point Estimate	Lower	Upper
Mean_Opportunities	Eta-squared	.010	.001	.024
	Epsilon-squared	.009	-.001	.022
	Omega-squared Fixed-effect	.009	-.001	.022
	Omega-squared Random-effect	.004	.000	.011

a. Eta-squared and Epsilon-squared are estimated based on the fixed-effect model.

b. Negative but less biased estimates are retained, not rounded to zero.

Post Hoc test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Mean_Opportunities

Tukey HSD

(I) Category_respondent	(J) Category_respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Teachers	Students	-.10466	.04709	.068	-.2152	.0059
	SIP_committee	-.12947*	.04766	.018	-.2413	-.0176
Students	Teachers	.10466	.04709	.068	-.0059	.2152
	SIP_committee	-.02481	.06444	.922	-.1760	.1264
SIP_committee	Teachers	.12947*	.04766	.018	.0176	.2413
	students	.02481	.06444	.922	-.1264	.1760

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Mean_Opportunities

Tukey HSD[a,b]

Category_respondent	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2

Teachers	950	2.2228	
Students	78	2.3274	2.3274
SIP_committee	76		2.3522
Sig.		.125	.889

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.984.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Table 10: Summary of t-test and ANOVA for Opportunities

Respondent Group	N	Mean(M)	SD	One-Sample t-test (TestValue=3.0)	One-Way ANOVA (F-test)
Teachers	950	2.22	0.43	t = -62.97	F(2, 1101) = 5.74
Students	78	2.33	0.09	df = 1103	p = .003
SIP Committee	76	2.35	0.06	p < .001	eta 2 = .010
Total	1104	2.24	0.40	(Significant Deficit)	(Small Perception Gap)

Master Summary of SIP Implementation (Amhara Region)

Variable/ Domain	Total Mean(M)	t-test (pvalue)	Effect Size(d)	ANOVA (F-test)	Key Finding
Preparation	2.17	< .001	-2.41	Significant	Critical lack of initial readiness.
Teaching & Learning	2.59	< .001	-1.08	Significant	Best performing domain, yet still below standard.
School Environment	2.13	< .001	-2.69	Non-Significant	Universal crisis; total consensus on poor facilities.

Leadership & Mgmt	2.17	< .001	-2.91	Significant	Severe management deficit; largest effect size.
Community Participation	2.33	< .001	-1.47	Significant	Massive perception gap between staff and mgmt.
Challenges	2.24	< .001	-2.17	Non-Significant	Universal consensus on systemic barriers.
Opportunities	2.24	< .001	-1.90	Significant	Extreme lack of external support/enablers.

Annex:

Distribution of Selected Schools in Amhara Region

Administrative Unit	Selected Woredas/Sub-Cities	Name of Selected Secondary Schools	No. of Schools Selected	No. of Teachers	Remark
West Gondar Zone	Metema	Metema Yohaness, Negadiebahir,	2	25+37 = 62	
	Quara	Quara(Dilfana), Shenfa	2	32+27 = 59	
	Genda Wuha	Genda Wuha	1	55	
Central Gondar Zone	Chilga	Antera, Aykel secondary, Seraba, Chonchok, Adeza	5	78+84+50+87 = 299	

	Gondar Zuria	Maksegnet,aymba,Sankisa Guzara, Chachekuna	5	116+72 = 188	
	Lay Armachiho	Lematber, Erobit	2	105+52 = 157	
Awi Zone	Dangila	Chara, Gissa, Hidase Dangela	3	44+46 = 90	
	Injebara Ketema	Agewmider, Injebara	2	53+52 = 105	
	Ankesha	Agewgemjabet, Shashana	2	62+62 = 123	
Gondar City Administration	Azezo-Teda	Azezodemaza, Hidaseteda	2	42+59 = 101	
	Maraki	Shinta, Adiyamseged Eyasu	2	71+95 = 166	
	Gebreal	Fasildes Quter 1, Fasiledes Qut. 2	2	108+116 = 224	
Bahir Dar City Administration	Tanashinbet	TanaHaik, Zege	2	116+57 = 173	
	Fasilo	Fasilo	1	95	
	Shumabo	Shumabo	1	39	
	Ase Tewodros	Gion, Diaspora	2	112+107 = 219	
Dessie City Administration	Segnogebiya	Gerado, Nigus Michael	2	44+55 = 99	
	Buamubua Wuha	Karagutu, Mem/Akalewold	2	34+43 = 77	
	Menafesha	Kedamegebeiya	1	41	
	Hote	Hote	1	35	
Total			42 Schools	2, 397	