

MEKELLE UNIVERSITY



COLLAGE OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIC AND ETHICAL STUDIES

**SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
RAYA ALAMATA WOREDA: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS**

**BY;
NIGUS BEYENE**

**JUNE 2025G.C
MEKELLE; ETHIOPIA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIC AND ETHICAL
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MEKELLE UNIVERSITY
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Advisor's Approval Sheet

As thesis Research advisors, we here by certify that we have read and evaluated this thesis entitled: "Governance of schools in selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda, challenges and prospects" prepared under our guidance by Nigus Beyene. We recommend that it could be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Education in Civic and Ethical Education.

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As members of the Board of Examiners of the M.Sc. thesis Open Defense Examination, we certify that we have read and evaluated the thesis work prepared by Nigus Beyene and examine the candidate. We recommended that the thesis be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for the Degree of Master of Education in Civic and Ethical Education.

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DEDICATION

I dedicated this thesis manuscript to parents and all other members of my family for their dedication in the success of my life. Without their tolerance, understanding, support and most of all love, the completion of the work would have been impossible.

STATEMENT OF THE AUTHOR

First, I declare that this thesis is my genuine work and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced M.Sc. degree at Mekelle University and is deposited at the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library. I solemnly declare that this thesis is not submitted to any other institution anywhere for the award of any academic degree, diploma, or certificate.

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Abbreviations

FODEP- Foundation for Democratic Process

HoDs - Heads of Departments

M.o.E- Ministry of Education

PTA- ParentTeacherAssociation

SGB-School Governing Boards

UNDP- UnitedNationsDevelopmentProgram

SRC-Students representative council

ABSTRACT

This study explores the practices, challenges, and effectiveness of democratic governance in government secondary schools, with a particular focus on the Ethiopian context. Grounded in the principles of good governance—transparency, accountability, participation, and shared leadership—

the research investigates how various stakeholders, including principals, teachers, students, and parents, perceive and engage in the governance of their schools.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the study draws on both primary and secondary data collected from two government secondary schools. Data collection techniques included questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. A total sample of key stakeholders was selected using purposive and stratified sampling methods.

The findings reveal that while democratic governance structures exist in principle, their practical application remains inconsistent. Participation from stakeholders—especially students and parents—is often limited due to lack of awareness, inadequate communication, and structural barriers. Moreover, school leaders acknowledge the potential of shared leadership, yet challenges such as centralized decision-making, lack of capacity, and insufficient resources hinder full implementation.

The study concludes that effective democratic governance in schools can significantly enhance educational outcomes and institutional accountability. It recommends targeted policy interventions, leadership training, and the creation of inclusive platforms to promote meaningful stakeholder participation in school governance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACK GROUND OF THE STUDY

Governance is as old as humanity. Good governance is the essential framework within which divergent views can be tolerated and citizens enjoy full human rights and freedoms. Good governance leads to transparency and accountability and fair application of the law. Key features of good governance are inclusive participation. An example is that, schools should put in place measures and ensure that various avenues exist through which learners contribute in the decision-making process as schools are like a self-governing society where learners are part of the decision-making process. Both Dewey and Nyirere hoped education would enable individuals to understand and relate to the world in which they live with the sole purpose of contributing to the transformation of governance in schools.

Education is a fundamental pillar for any country's development, and its quality is closely tied to how schools are governed. School governance refers to the structures, processes, and practices through which decisions are made, authority is exercised, and accountability is maintained within the school system. Effective school governance is essential for promoting transparency, ensuring the efficient use of resources, enhancing teaching and learning outcomes, and fostering the active participation of all stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the wider community.

In many countries, particularly in developing contexts such as Ethiopia, education sector reforms have emphasized decentralization and community participation as key strategies to improve school governance. The Ethiopian government has introduced various policies and programs to strengthen school management and accountability, including the establishment of school improvement programs (SIP), capacity building for school leaders, and the involvement of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Governing Boards (SGBs). These initiatives are intended to create a more inclusive, responsive, and transparent governance system in schools.

However, despite these efforts, significant governance-related challenges remain in many secondary schools across the country. These challenges include weak leadership capacity,

inadequate community participation, poor coordination between schools and local education authorities, lack of accountability mechanisms, and limited autonomy in decision-making. Such issues often result in inefficient resource management, low teacher motivation, reduced student performance, and a general decline in educational quality.

At the same time, there are also promising prospects for improving school governance in Ethiopia. The increasing awareness among stakeholders, growing emphasis on school-based management, and advances in policy frameworks and leadership development offer opportunities for positive change. Understanding these challenges and identifying viable prospects is crucial for strengthening the governance of schools and ensuring that secondary education contributes meaningfully to national development goals.

It is within this context that this study seeks to examine the governance of schools in selected secondary schools, with a particular focus on identifying key challenges and exploring possible prospects for improvement. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, education officials, school leaders, and communities working toward more effective and accountable school governance.

In recent decades, the concept of good governance has gained attention globally and is increasingly applied to the education sector. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), good governance is characterized by participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness, rule of law, responsiveness, equity, and inclusiveness. In the context of schools, good governance ensures that decision-making is transparent and participatory, that leadership is accountable, and that resources are managed efficiently to improve teaching and learning outcomes (Bruns, Filmer, & Patrinos, 2011).

According to Bevir, (2013), the concept of governance is seen as a set of values, policies and institutions through which the society manages social processes at different levels, on the basis of interaction and is probably as old as human civilization. It broadly means the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. According to Mukwena (2001), the educational decentralization reform appears to have been driven by political expediency than by the need to improve the administrative performance of schools.

The Ministry of Education has made concerted efforts since the inception of School Boards and Parent- Teachers Association to assist in the management of schools (M.o.E,1977). The

reasons for an increased emphasis on good governance in schools lie in a number of issues confronting the contemporary schools among them growing awareness of human rights. Compared with the situation in traditional schools, the contemporary school is becoming ever more complex. Lebessis and Patterson (1997) point out that many contemporary problems such as exclusion and abuse of power and disrespect of human rights seem to be common in schools resulting in high levels of discipline in schools. As a result, schools seem to find it difficult to meet stakeholder expectations in the governance of schools. The emergence of democratic governance systems could be interpreted as a consequence of this change.

Good governance demands equal participation and voice of all citizens with respect for individual rights based on the notion that civic action is participation and public action is collective action.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Effective governance in secondary schools plays a critical role in ensuring academic excellence, efficient resource management, and stakeholder satisfaction. However, many secondary schools face significant governance challenges that hinder the realization of their educational goals. These challenges may include weak leadership structures, lack of transparency, inadequate stakeholder involvement, policy implementation gaps, and insufficient training for school managers.

Despite ongoing reforms and policy frameworks aimed at improving school governance, there remains a wide disparity in the performance and administrative efficiency of secondary schools. In selected secondary schools, the lack of clear governance practices often leads to issues such as poor decision-making, mismanagement of funds, teacher dissatisfaction, student underachievement, and limited community participation.

In Ethiopia, the governance of secondary schools is a crucial factor influencing the quality of education, resource allocation, policy implementation, and stakeholder engagement. Despite the government's efforts to decentralize education management and empower local institutions through various reforms and policies, school governance still faces numerous challenges that undermine the effective functioning of secondary schools. This case is also true in Raya Alamata worda secondary schools. There are various governance challenges that, have been

observed in this institution. Among the major challenges of governance which is practically observable in these school are; weak leadership capacity, lack of transparency and accountability, limited participation of parents and communities, inadequate training of school principals, and poor coordination between school administrators and local education offices continue to affect the governance structures in Ethiopian secondary schools. Furthermore, bureaucratic inefficiencies, political interference, and inconsistent policy implementation often result in a governance system that struggles to meet the diverse needs of students and teachers.

While there are clear prospects for improving school governance—such as increased community involvement, leadership development programs, and digital management tools—these opportunities are often underutilized or poorly implemented.

The aims and objectives of governance which are related to the processes of interaction and decision-making tend to be influenced by an understanding of civic engagement in the governance of schools. This calls for optimum management and planning in schools where new ideas and changes can be addressed very quickly and efficiently at School level (Mawele 1993 cited in Mphale, 2000). For this to happen, schools are encouraged to have effective forums where stakeholders engage each other on matters of concern. This is designed to have schools with reduced levels of unrest from learners and dissatisfaction from teachers and other stakeholders. Besides numerous efforts from the Ministry of Education to ensure good governance practices, there are still cases of unrest and discontent from stakeholders regarding their involvement in the decision-making processes in schools (Sikayile, 2011). If this situation is allowed to continue, schools will become ungovernable institutions where there be no rule of law. Therefore, incidences of student unrest, and low levels of moral among teachers and other stakeholders will be the order of the day in schools.

Given the importance of governance in shaping educational outcomes, it becomes crucial to examine the specific challenges facing governance structures in these schools. At the same time, identifying prospects for improvement can offer a pathway toward building stronger, more accountable, and responsive school governance systems.

This study seeks to investigate the current state of governance in selected secondary schools, analyze the challenges encountered, and explore viable prospects for enhancing governance effectiveness.

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

To assess school governance in selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda: challenges and prospects.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The following were the objectives of the study.

- (i) To find out how democratic practices in schools can promote stakeholder participation in the governance of schools.
- (ii) To determine how shared leadership in schools can enhance good governance and curb student unrest and teachers' discontent in schools.
- (iii) To identify challenges in schools and how they affect school governance and reduce unrest and discontent among pupils and teachers in Raya Alamata woreda respectively.

1.4. Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How do democratic practices in schools promote stakeholder participation in school governance?
2. How does shared leadership in schools enhance good governance and help curb student unrest and teachers' discontent?
3. What challenges exist in schools, and how do they affect school governance, student unrest, and teacher discontent in Raya Alamata Woreda?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study might be serving as input for community, the Wereda administration, future researchers and policy makers. The finding of the study might benefit the society in the study area in that it may give them knowledge to easily set the best possible solutions to deal with the issue.

It may provide empirical information to the concerning body on the good governance application and practices, and identify the main challenges to take corrective measures. The study may also be used as a literature for researchers interested in the same issue and provide

a good knowledge. The finding of the study can be used as an input for policy makers.

1.6. Delimitation of the study

The study was conducted in two public Secondary Schools in Raya Alamata Woreda. The scope of this study was confined to describing governance of schools and mainly focuses on explaining the schools' practice to promote good governance and disclose the challenges the stakeholder face during operation. The study mainly focused on assessing governance of school in selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata Woreda, challenges and prospects.

1.7. Limitation

This study involved only two public Secondary Schools therefore; its results may not be generalized to all schools in Raya Alamata Woreda. The limitation, therefore, is that the sample of two schools is small. Nevertheless, the findings from this study can still be of great use in the management and planning in schools.

1.8. Operational definition of Key Terms

The following operational terms have been explained as used in the study:

Civic Engagement/Participation- This is the notion that embraces the concept of working to gather to wards the common good.

Democracy-Engagement of stakeholders in school governance.

Governance-Refers to the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented.

Human Rights-Rights which belong to any individual as a consequence of being a human being.

Management-Processes of decision-making in school governance to achieve goals.

Stakeholders-Controlling bodies in school governance.

1.9. Organization of the Study

This first chapter gives the introduction to the study. It also presented the background to

the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the research study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study and theoretical framework. Chapter two is the literature review while chapter three presents the research methodology and explains the research design, study population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection instruments, data analysis, data presentation, validity and reliability of data collected, research limitations and ethical considerations. Chapter four presents findings from the study. Chapter five discusses the findings of the study. The discussion is based on the objectives of the study. Finally, chapter six gives the conclusion of the study and makes recommendations based on the research findings.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

introduction

This chapter discussed various pieces of literature focusing on historical background of good governance and leadership as a better form of management of today's schools. Governance from all stakeholders is one that encourages active participation and achievement of desired goals and promotion of team work in schools.

2.1. Historical Overview of the study:

Governance in a general sense refers to the 'patterns of rule' which are concerned with regulation, direction and procedure. Schools are important places in society and a large number of varied groups have a considerable interest in them. So, in practice, present-day governance of the school system involves a highly complex and very broad set of inter-relationships between inter-dependent groups and individuals. This broad range of interest and involvement complicates school governance and the pattern of rule. In the last 60 years the school system and the way it is governed have changed substantially. During the pre-colonial period, schools were in the hands of traditional rulers (Kelly, 1996). During the colonial period from 1924 to 1964 the control of schools was in the hands of the British, thus the (Local Education Authority).

By the mid-1970s and late 1990s, concern was growing about the level, quality and governance procedures in public schools. Various education reforms were founded on the idea that stakeholders could among other reasons be given a choice of school where to send their children and take part in decision-making of such schools (M.o.E, 1977). This would strive to make schools be the best in their areas of location. These changes were intended to separate 'government' from the provision, reduce bureaucratic involvement and expose schools to the pressure of the market. Schools were given increased autonomy and opened up to competition, and a wider number of agencies and groups began to get involved in the education system.

2.2 Understanding the concept of Governance and Good Governance

Governance

The concept of “governance” is not new. It has been around in both political and academic discourse for a long time referring to the task of running a government or any other entity such as a school. Governance has been defined to refer to structures and accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment and broad based participation (Hufty,2011).Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive (UNDP, 1997). Thus, governance is subtle and may not be easily observable. In a broad sense, governance is about the culture and institutional environment in which stakeholders interact among themselves and participate in public affairs. It relates to the processes of interaction and decision- making among various factors involved in a collective problem that lead to the creation, reinforcement of social norms and institutions (Hufty,2011). It looks at governance as a platform on which stakeholders share in the decisions made in the school. This is in line with this study which took interest to investigate how traits from civic education promote good governance in schools through the interaction among the head teachers, teachers, parents and the students in order to achieve desired goals.

Often there is a tendency to equate governance with management, the latter primarily referring to the planning, implementing and monitoring functions in order to achieve pre-defined results (Laura,2006). Management encompasses processes, structures and arrangements that are designed to mobilize and transform the available physical, human and financial resources to achieve concrete outcomes. Management refers to individuals or groups of people who are given the authority to achieve the desired results. Governance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate. Governance is also about how power is distributed and shared, how policies are formulated, priorities set and stakeholders made accountable.

“Governance is a big word that includes human rights, freedom of speech, economic transactions on a worldwide basis”. As rightly put by Kaufman et al (2007), governance is the traditions and institutions by which authority is exercised. In this sense, it would be

argued that governance is about procedures and decision making in organizations.

2.3 Good Governance?

Good governance in education systems promotes effective delivery of education services. This therefore, entails that good governance is about the processes for making and implementing decisions or (not implementing decisions). Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2004), “good governance is the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised for the common good”. Good governance in education requires enabling conditions, arguably most importantly, accountability. This position is supported by Ackerman (2005) who describes accountability as “a pro-active process by which public officials inform about and justify their plans of action, their behavior and results and are sanctioned accordingly. Accountability requires that public servants have clear responsibilities and are held answerable in exercising those responsibilities, and if they do not, face predetermined sanctions. Without sanctions, there cannot be real accountability. Despite its importance to effective delivery of education services, real accountability is rare in most public education systems worldwide. It is not about making “correct” decisions, but about the best possible process for making those decisions. Good decision-making process, and therefore good governance, share several characteristics. All have apposite effect including consultation policies and practices, meeting procedures, service equality protocols, role clarification and good working relationships.

2.4 Historical Overview of School Governance in Ethiopia

The historical background of school governance would be discoursed fully without examining the concept of democracy in Ethiopia. Democracy is very much linked to the emergence of good school governance and this study would not be correct to ignore this aspect as we try to establish the history and other perspectives underpinning school governance. School governance in Ethiopia has evolved significantly over the years, shaped by a mix of traditional practices, political changes, and educational reforms. Here’s a historical overview of how school governance has developed in the country:..2

2.5 Pre-20th Century: Traditional Education Systems

Before the 20th century, education in Ethiopia was primarily religious and community-based. Religious institutions, particularly the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, played a central role in

education. Schools were often run by religious leaders, with governance and curricula determined by the church. These institutions taught literacy in Ge'ez (an ancient Ethiopian language) and focused on religious studies, moral education, and some knowledge of history and law.

2.6. Early 20th Century: Introduction of Modern Education

During the early 1900s, Ethiopia began introducing modern, secular education. Emperor Menelik II and later Emperor Haile Selassie I took steps to establish a more formalized education system. Menelik's government established the first modern school in Addis Ababa in 1908, which was initially a military school, followed by the founding of other secular schools. School governance during this period was highly centralized. The state took control of the education system, but with a heavy influence from the monarchy. The curriculum was modeled after European systems, with an emphasis on foreign languages (especially Italian and French), science, and mathematics. Governance remained top-down, with the central government in charge of school management, teacher recruitment, and curriculum development.

2.7. Mid-20th Century (1940s - 1974): Expansion and Reform

The mid-20th century saw the expansion of the education system in Ethiopia. Under Emperor Haile Selassie, the government made efforts to build schools in urban and rural areas, although access to education remained limited. The Ethiopian government introduced reforms, including the establishment of the Ministry of Education in the 1950s to oversee national educational planning and curriculum development.

School governance during this period was still heavily centralized, with the Ministry of Education as the key authority. However, some regional differences emerged in terms of how schools were managed and operated, particularly in the context of Ethiopia's diverse ethnic groups and languages.

2.8 . The Derg Era (1974–1991): Revolutionary Changes and Centralization

After the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974, the Marxist-Leninist Derg regime took power and significantly transformed Ethiopia's educational system. The Derg government viewed education as a tool for socialist transformation and sought to centralize school governance even further. The regime emphasized literacy campaigns and tried to standardize education across the country. A new, nationalized curriculum was introduced, with a focus on socialist ideology, and local languages were introduced as languages of instruction.

However, the Derg's educational reforms were hampered by the country's civil war, economic

hardship, and limited infrastructure. The quality of education suffered, and governance was tightly controlled by the central government, with little room for local autonomy in school management.

2.9. Post-Derg Era (1991–Present): Decentralization and Federalism

After the fall of the Derg in 1991, the new Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government introduced a series of reforms that decentralized the governance of education in line with the country's federal system. The 1995 Constitution of Ethiopia established the framework for federalism, which granted more autonomy to regional states, each of which was responsible for its own educational system.

This period saw significant changes in school governance:

Decentralization:- Regional governments gained authority over local education policies, curriculum, teacher hiring, and school administration. This was intended to make education more responsive to local needs and cultures, given Ethiopia's diverse ethnic and linguistic groups.

Curriculum Reforms:- The government introduced a new curriculum aimed at accommodating Ethiopia's linguistic and cultural diversity, with local languages becoming the medium of instruction in many regions.

School Management:- Schools began to adopt a more participatory approach to governance, with involvement from parents, local communities, and education officials at the regional and woreda levels.

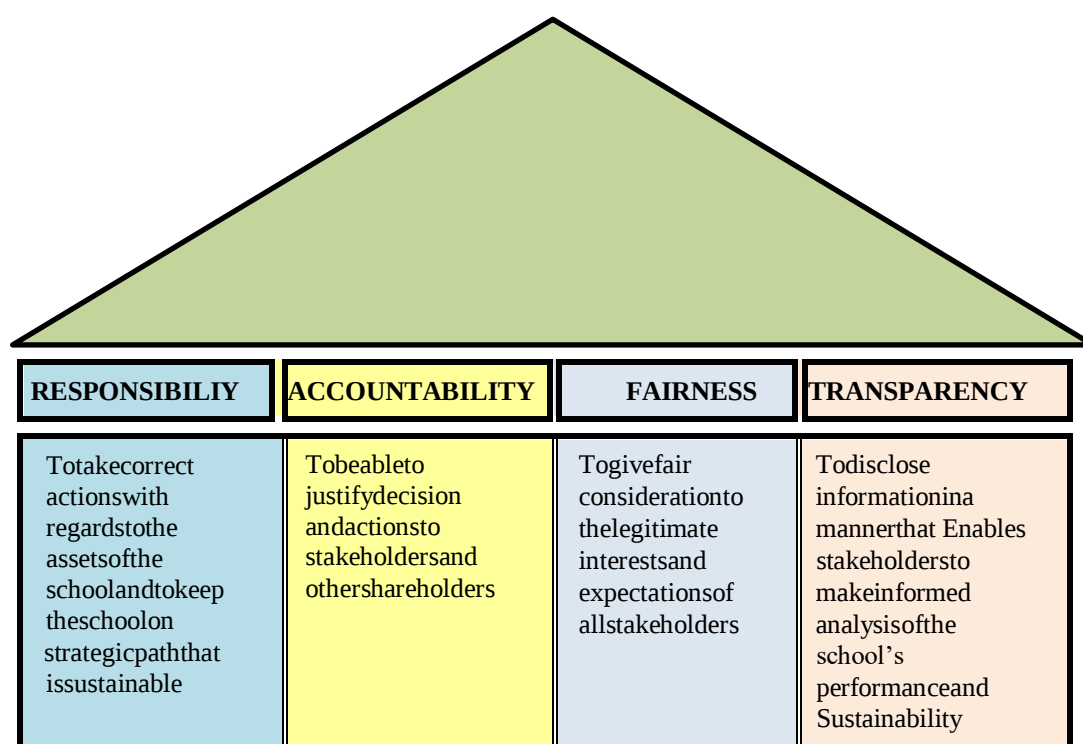
2. 10 Governance of Schools across the Globe

School Governance

The success of every school depends on the way it is managed. The need for the effective management of schools has placed much more emphasis on the nature and quality of the work of the head teacher as the head of a team of professionals and non-professionals and as manager of the supply and effective use of resources (human, financial and material). According to Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1997) regard school governance as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organized and controlled. Governance is widely agreed to be concerned with the formulation and adoption of policy and management for the day-to-day delivery of education. This is an important argument that needs careful and serious consideration if

we are to understand and appreciate school governance. Generally, stakeholders should be involved in the day-to-day decisions about the administration and organization and activities in the school. In the view of McLenman (1965), governance is perceived as a combination of political and institutional power to ensure the effective management of resources for development. Institutional power is embedded in the structures and practices of social institutions, the rules and norms which guide them, and the language and symbols which mediate social interactions. These definitions, both of accountability and school governance are indicative of a conflict that may emerge at operational level due to clashes in policy interpretation or ambiguity of roles.

Figure1:SchoolGovernance



Source: Institute of Directors Southern Africa 2013

2.11. Effective Participation enhances Good Governance

Good governance is a meaningful and viable form of democracy in education. It is essentially about effective leadership which should be used as a mechanism to create applicable processes, systems and controls as well as the appropriate behavior to ensure sustainability in an organization (such as a school). With this study, one hopes to get the actual position of governance in helping to ensure that decisions are made in the best

interests of the school and its stakeholders. According to the Institute school Governance (2015), the benefits of effective school governance can include, among other things the following, “ improved leadership, decision-making and strategic vision, confidence of internal and external stakeholders in ensuring that the organization /school is being run in an appropriate and responsible manner”. Governance if well applied could encourage participatory governance which promotes and encourages students and other stakeholders in school governance. Encourage students’ participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures in schools. Therefore, the quest for good leadership is a sine-qua-non for governance and sustainable development.

Additionally, Dewey (1916) has made similar observations in regard to participatory democracy to mean that people can be involved in a meaningful way in the decisions which affect them. The concept of school leadership has been transformed from the traditional style to one that involves other stakeholders. The traditional school leadership adopted the top- down approach where a leader is expected to be master of everything. Perhaps by virtue of his/her position, the school head teacher was expected to lead his/her subordinates, make key decisions, motivate and inspire his followers (Mac Neiland Mc Clanahan, 2005). As the world around us changes, so is the governance style in our schools. Schools have become more complex and difficult for the “know all” school managers. Having seen all this, it is cumbersome for a single person to provide for all situations in a school, it was then found fit for both leaders and subordinates to work together for effective school governance. Pearce (2007) affirms that organizations (such as schools) “can no longer rely on simple notions of the top-down command and control leadership based on the idea that workers are merely interchangeable drone”. This is a clear indication that if school governance is to be effective, schools should have shared leadership should aim at encouraging individuals to achieve the set objectives and goals of the school. Baker, 2011, and Harris, 2008) contend that schools where there is active participation by all stakeholders, school governance is sustained. This is the aim of this study.

2. 12 Challenges of Governance in Schools

Besides the various positive attributes given to good governance of schools, it is not without some challenges. Looking at some challenges in the governance of schools is

important because it shows us how governance in schools should be approached. Furthermore, it will provide guidelines to head teachers to be able to apply appropriate leadership practices that lead to productivity.

While this study makes some attempts in trying to discuss various definitions of governance, it is equally important to discuss challenges that come with challenges surrounding school governance. Basic among the school governance challenges, is the capacity to govern. School Governing Boards (SGBs) (such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) are usually not trained before taking their office. Among other training constraints, Mabasa and Themane (2002) report that School Governing Boards (SGBs) are not trained before they start their work and this manifests in problem such as unfamiliarity with meeting procedures, not knowing how to make a contribution, feeling intimidated by presence of other members who seem knowledgeable and perceiving their roles as simply endorsing what others have already decided upon. From a situation of this nature, this could be attributed to schools having governors who do not really address the core functions of school governance. Mestry (2006) points out that another challenge in school governance is lack of collaboration between school head teachers and other stakeholders where head teachers being unwilling to share responsibility for school governance for fear of losing power. This study argues that this challenge has come about because of the traditional style of leadership that some head teachers of schools still practice. Head teachers feel they are the only source of wisdom in making decisions in the school. This type of leadership is retrogressive and should not be applied in modern school governance. Another challenge, articulated by Van Wyk (2004) relates to some members in school governing boards feeling that some of them (reference to parents) lack confidence and are not sure of their duties. This situation could come about particularly during school meetings where some parents are vocal yet are illiterate and may face the above challenges when called to serve the school. Democracy and educational decentralization builds confidence, empowers stakeholders to become good managers of schools where all stakeholders collectively are involved in the decision-making processes of schools which eventually promotes school governance.

CHAPTER THREE

3.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. 1.Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative and quantitative research approach. Quantitative was focused on the numerical data and statistical analysis in tables and percentages. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aimed to explore and understand the governance practices in selected secondary schools, with a focus on democratic practices, shared leadership, and the challenges affecting effective governance. The study sought to gather in-depth information from key stakeholders—such as principals, vice principals, heads of departments, teachers, PTA and pupils—regarding their experiences, perceptions, and involvement in school governance. A qualitative research design provided an advantage of comparing findings for the purpose of convergence. This allowed the study to prospect for stronger meta-inferences, which involves a combination of clarification of findings into a coherent whole (Onwuegbuzie et al. 2010). A qualitative research approach through semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis were used in order to satisfactorily answer the research questions posed in this study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), to answer research questions:

3.2. Research Design

A research design is a plan of how to conduct a study. It articulates what data is required, what methods are going to be used to collect and analyse data and how the research questions were answered. The study used a qualitative method and employed a descriptive research design.

3.4. Description of the Study Area

This research was conducted at Raya Alamata Woreda, South Zone of Tigray region and 180 km from Mekelle and 600km from Addis Ababa. Its weather condition is hot and the society were used a sort of diet which are mostly prepared from teff, sorghum, maize as well as dairy products. The study was purposively selected as case sites because the schools were among the first five secondary schools where governance of school was piloted in the province. These schools are Kilisha and Dayu Secondary school.

3.5. Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

Study Population

The study was targeted principal, parents, teachers and Pupils in the selected secondary schools of Raya Alamata Woreda. Best and Khan (2006) have defined population in research as “a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement”. It refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. Population also refers to the larger group from which the sample is taken (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Bless and Achola (1998), also agree that a population is the entire set of objects and events or group of people the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. From this perspective, it was important that 02 principals, 02 v/ principals, 04 department heads, 14 teachers, 10 parents and 30 pupils from the two schools.

3.6 Sample Size

As aptly put by Borg and Gall (1979) sampling is the selection of some units to represent the whole set from which the units are drawn. The sample consisted of two public secondary schools with total of 62 respondents from Raya Alamata Woreda secondary schools. 02 principals, 02 v/ principals, 14 teachers, 4 Head teachers, 30 pupils and 10 parents were sampled for interviews and questionnaire. This sample size and grouping were chosen using purposive sampling, targeting individuals who have direct roles, responsibilities, or experiences related to school governance. The selection ensures a balanced representation from leadership (principals and VPs), middle management (HoDs), operational staff (teachers), and beneficiaries (pupils) as well as parents. The total number was also manageable for conducting in-depth qualitative

data collection such as interviews and questioners, allowing the researcher to gather rich, detailed data within the time and resource constraints of the study.

Table1:SampleSize

Respondents	principals	V/ principals	Department Heads	Teachers	Parents/PTA	Pupils	Total
Sample size	02	02	04	14	10	30	62

3.7 Two government secondary schools

School name	principals	Vice principals	Heads of depts.	Teachers	Parents/PTA	Pupils
Kilsha	1	1	2	7	5	15
Dayu	1	1	2	7	5	15

3.8 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the procedure a researcher uses to gather people or things to study. It is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Orodho and Kombo, 2002) in Kombo and Tromp, (2006). Webster, (1985) in Kombo and Tromp (2006) defines sample as finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. When dealing with people, a sample is defined as a set of respondents selected from larger population for the purpose of a survey. Bless and Achola (1988) define a sample as the subset of the whole population which actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalized to the entire population.

3.9. Method of data collection

For this in this study both quantitative and qualitative data from both primary and secondary sources were applied. The primary data were questionnaire for sample survey and key informants' interview". Secondary sources like data and factual information from various published materials, official documents such as the constitution and legal instruments,

3.9.1 Primary Data

The researcher was used questionnaire on the principals, V/ principals, Department heads,

teachers and pupils and interview with parental /PTA as data collection strategies. Interviews were used to give more detailed insights in to interpreting the situation so that the researcher sees things as they really are and provide the most needed information about the topic under investigation.

3.9.2 Secondary Data Sources

The secondary data more or less were collected from published and unpublished documents, and magazines that were made available. Other books, reports and internet source are also used in the process of data gathering.

3.10 . Method of data analysis and interpretation

After data collect it was analysis by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods of data describes in tables percentages and in number. The qualitative methods data describes in words and narrative words. The interpretation of data on gather through questionnaires and interviews that interprets by words.

Lewis and Michael(1995), state that data analysis takes different ways depending on the instruments used to collect data and how the researcher presented the information. Additionally, LeCompte and Schensul (1999), indicate that data analysis is the process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and its presentation. Therefore, data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organizing data to produce findings that require interpretation. Data from questionnaire and interviews was transcribed having read text files thoroughly for general understanding. Common themes were then identified after being recorded.

3.10.1 Data Validity and Reliability

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001), validity refers to whether the findings of a study are true and certain. Thus the research findings accurately reflect the situation and ‘certain’ in the sense that research findings are supported by the evidence. Denzin (2000) identified four types of triangulation; triangulation which involves time, space, and persons, investigating triangulation involving multiple researchers in an investigation, theory triangulation which involves using more than one theoretical scheme in the interpretation of the phenomenon, and methodological triangulation, which involves using more than one method to gather data, such as questionnaire and interviews to enhance confidence of the data collected. To ensure internal validation of this study, the researcher was used methodological triangulation, which enables the researcher to collect data through questionnaire and interviews. Triangulation of data sources employed in this study ensured the accuracy of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FINDINGS

introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study from selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda which aimed at investigating governance of schools in selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda: challenges and prospects.

The findings are presented based on the research questions below:

- I. How do democratic practices in schools promote stakeholder participation in school governance?
- II. How does shared leadership in schools enhance good governance and help curb student unrest and teachers' discontent?
- III. What challenges exist in schools, and how do they affect school governance, student unrest, and teacher discontent in Raya Alamata Woreda?

The main question being addressed in this study is: To investigate governance of schools in selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda, challenges and prospects. Essentially, this chapter is exclusively devoted to the presentation and analysis of data collected through interviews, questioners and document analysis. Sub-titles will be used to discuss the findings.

Table4. 1: Categories of Respondents and their rates of Responses

Respondents	principals	Vice principals	Heads of depts.	Teachers	Parents	Pupils
SampleSize	2	2	4	14	10	30
ActualReponses	2	2	4	14	10	30
ResponseRate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

4.1.Practices of Democratic Governance in Schools.

The first objective in this study was to find out how democratic practices were applied in governance of schools. All respondents in the questioners and interviews acknowledge that democratic governance principles when well applied in schools can enhance good school governance.

4.2.Principals and Vice principals

All principals were answered the questionnaires. They expressed the following views:

Table4. 2- The principals' views on the question

What democratic practices does your administration follow?

Democratic Practices Mentioned	Frequency (out of 2)	%
Participatory decision-making	2	100%
Transparency in planning/budgeting	2	100%
Delegation of responsibilities	1	50%
Election of class representatives	1	50%

All respondents emphasized 100% participatory decision-making, showing a strong commitment to including staff and stakeholders in school decisions. And all respondents said that transparency was also widely practiced, especially in financial matters. However, only a few mentioned delegation and democratic student participation (e.g., elections), suggesting uneven implementation of broader democratic governance principles.

The responses from the principals on what governance processes exist in schools showed that there were consultations under taken in schools before decisions were implemented. Schools authorities managed and planned together with other stakeholders in schools to achieve common goals. When asked how this was done, the following were the responses from the respondents:

“The respondents’ pioneers of governance enjoyed the fruits of the policy of decentralization in schools. Schools are empowered to make their own decisions in order to achieve common goals. Principals work through other stakeholders, through

consultations in staff meetings, PTA meetings and students representative council (SRC) forums.”

From the respondent suggest that there is free participation in matters of governance in schools. Teachers are not only in schools to teach but also to actively take part in all issues concerning the management and planning in schools. Teachers are vital players in school governance through appointments to serve on various school committees. This shows sound democratic structures existing in schools.

Table4. 3 The vice principals’ views on the question

"What democratic practice does your administration follow?"

Democratic Practice	Mentioned By	Description
Collaborative decision-making	2	Involving teachers and other staff in important decisions.
Staff consultation	2	Staff are given a voice and consulted on changes or plans.
Transparency	1	Open sharing of administrative decisions and information.
Student representation	1	Involvement of student leaders in addressing student concerns.
Fairness and shared responsibility	1	Leadership is shared among staff; responsibilities are distributed.

The vice principals (n=2) reported that their schools follow democratic practices such as staff consultation, collaborative decision-making, and transparency in administrative processes. One vice principal also highlighted the role of student leadership in school governance. These responses suggest that democratic values such as inclusion, fairness, and shared responsibility are embedded in the leadership practices at the school level.

Table4. 4 The principals’ views on the question

How do School Representative Councils and the Parent Teachers Association work with you in promoting good governance?

Collaboration Practice	Frequency(N=2)	%
PTA involved in school planning	2	100%
SRC supports student discipline	1	50%
PTA helps mobilize resources	1	50%

Limited student council role	1	50%
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The respondents indicate that PTAs are more actively engaged than Student Representative Councils (SRCs). Most respondents noted collaboration with PTAs in school planning and discipline issues. SRCs play a more limited role, mostly centered on discipline, which suggests that student participation in governance is underdeveloped.

Table4. 5 The vice principals' views on the question

"How do the School Representative Council (SRC) and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) work with you in promoting good governance?"

Role/Function	SRC (Students)	PTA (Parents)
Representation & Communication	Conveys student concerns and feedback	Brings community/parental concerns to the school
Discipline & Student Welfare	Helps in resolving student issues	Supports discipline strategies
Participation in Meetings	Involved in rule discussions and student matters	Participates in planning and development meetings
Resource & Development Support	-	Assists with resources and school improvements

The vice principals reported that both the School Representative Council (SRC) and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) play meaningful roles in school governance. The SRC acts as the communication channel between students and the administration, raising issues related to discipline, welfare, and school policies. Mean while, the PTA supports governance through participation in meetings, offering community feedback, and contributing to student discipline and school development. These collaborative efforts promote transparency, inclusiveness, and shared responsibility in school leadership.

4.3.Head of Department views on democratic governance in schools

Table4. 6 Views of HoDs on the question

How do school governance structures empower parents and pupils as participants in school governance?

Empowerment Practice	Frequency (N=4)	%	Description
Involvement of PTA in planning and discipline	3	90%	Parents take part in setting school rules and responding to

			student issues.
Student Council participates in meetings	2	50%	Student reps are involved in discussions (e.g., discipline, events).
Limited empowerment due to lack of capacity	2	50%	Some noted that parents and pupils are not fully trained or informed.
Use of suggestion boxes or student feedback	1	25%	One school has a feedback mechanism in place.

As the 75% respondents indicate that parents (via PTA) are more empowered than pupils, involvement is still moderate and uneven across schools. It seems that Parents take part in setting school rules and responding to student issues. 50% of respondents' sets students have some representation, but often lack influence. And Schools that provide training or structures (like student councils) enable better governance, but these practices are not institutionalized in all settings.

Table4. 7- Views of HoDs on the question

what democratic practices does your school use to promote governance?

Democratic Practice	Frequency	%	Description
Inclusive staff meetings for planning	4/4	100%	Teachers and HoDs involved in discussions.
Election of student representatives	3/4	75%	Students elect class leaders or council representatives
Open communication and consultation	2/4	50%	Information shared transparently.
Participatory budgeting/resource planning	1/4	25%	One HoD reported involvement in financial discussions.

The respondents emphasize democratic practices such as inclusive meetings and student elections are well-practiced. However, financial transparency and broader consultation are limited. This indicates a partial implementation of democratic governance, with room for improvement in institutional participation structures.

Table4. 8- Views of HoDs on the question

when and how are parents and pupils involved in decision-making in the school?

Timing/Method of Involvement	Frequency (N=)	%	Description
During PTA meetings and annual planning sessions	4/4	100%	Parents contribute ideas and feedback.
Through student council forums	3/4	75%	Student input gathered before term activities or event planning.
Rare or limited involvement outside formal meetings	2/4	50%	Participation is symbolic or occasional
In disciplinary hearings or case reviews	2/4	50%	Parents involved when their child faces disciplinary action.

The respondents seem that parents and pupils are mainly involved at scheduled events or meetings, such as annual planning sessions or PTA discussions. Student councils are active in some schools, but their role varies. The involvement is periodic, not continuous, which limits their real influence on day-to-day governance.

4.4. Teachers view on democratic practices

Table4. 9 Views of teachers on question

what democratic practices are applied in your school, and how do they promote good governance?

Democratic Practice Identified	Teachers (n = 14)	%
Regular staff meetings	11	78.5%
Election of committee members	9	64.2%
Student council involvement	12	85.7%
Participatory decision-making	7	50%
Open discussion forums	6	42.8%

Most respondent teachers identified regular staff meetings, elections of committee members, student council participation, and collaborative decision-making as democratic practices. These were seen to enhance transparency, accountability, and stakeholder involvement, which are key indicators of good governance. Teachers acknowledge multiple democratic practices, though participation levels may vary by school.

Table4. 10- Views of teachers on question

How are teachers involved in the governance of the school?

Type of Involvement	Teachers Involved(n = 30)	%
Committee membership (discipline, curriculum, etc.)	24	80%
Involvement in PTA discussions	15	50%
School development planning	18	60%
Strategic decision-making	12	40%
Leadership roles (e.g., department head)	10	30%

The respondents reported being involved through membership in school committees, curriculum planning, disciplinary boards, and participation in PTA coordination. Some also noted contributing to school development and improvement plans.

4.5. Parents in school governance.

In line with how democratic practices promote participation, the study indicated that parents and pupils are key players in school governance. The study revealed that parents are key stakeholders in school governance as their children are in those schools which exist for them.

Table4. 11 Views of parents (PTA) on question

How are parents involved in the governance of schools?

Involvement Type	Frequency (N= 10)	%	Description
Participating in PTA meetings	9	90%	Parents attend scheduled meetings to discuss school issues.
Involvement in planning school activities	6	60%	Parents help in decision-making for events or school improvements.
Monitoring student discipline and attendance	2	20%	Two Parents contribute to maintaining order by following up with their children.
Involvement in budget and resource discussions	3	30%	A few are involved in financial planning with the school administration.

The respondents said that most parents are involved through PTA meetings, but only a minority participates in strategic or financial governance. This suggests that while schools are involving parents, the depth of involvement is limited, mostly to consultative roles rather than

decision-making ones. The descriptions of the table show that parents who are contributes on monitoring students discipline and attendance is less.

Most parents had the following views:

“We as parents have various avenues through which we are engaged in school governance. During Parents and Teachers Association meetings, we are allowed to express our views on matters that concern the school.”

Parents’ respondent that collective participation is key to the governance of schools. School authorities should be made aware that when stakeholders are actively involved, there role is key in the decision-making process. These respondents observed that their mandate in school governance require their full participation if school governance is to be enhanced. However, some respondents argued that their involvement in school governance has limits. Three parents (PTA) observed that:

“Even if we are key players in school governance, our involvement has limits. We are not fully involved as certain decisions are made behindus”. We are considered inferior, with less experience and lack knowledge.

Table4. 12 :- Views of parents (PTA) on question

What benefits does the school get from good governance practices?

Benefit Mentioned	Frequency (N= 10)	%	Description
Improved academic performance	6	60%	Governance helps focus on student achievement.
Stronger school-community relationship	5	50%	More cooperation between parents and staff.
Increased accountability and transparency	4	40%	School leaders are more open and responsible.
Better discipline and student behavior	3	30%	Governance structures help manages student conduct.

Parents recognize tangible outcomes from good governance, particularly in academic results and transparency. The link between governance and community trust is strong, suggesting that

promoting participatory governance practices could have a direct impact on performance and discipline.

4.6. Pupils in school governance

Table 4. 13- Views of pupils on question

what roles do you play as a pupil in school governance?

Role Mentioned	Pupils (N=30)	% of Involved
Voting in student elections	26	86.6%
Feedback during class meetings	18	60%
Organizing school events	14	46.6%
Leadership roles (monitor, rep)	12	40%

Pupils reported playing roles such as participating in elections, giving feedback, and helping organize events. A notable number serve as class monitors or club leaders. This reflects moderate student involvement in governance, mostly at the implementation level.

The second objective of this study was to examine how school managers are implementing shared leadership that promotes school governance.

From the findings on how school managers exercise flexibility in implementing shared leadership in schools, the following were the responses from the stakeholders:

4.7. Views from principals and vice principals on Shared Leadership in Schools

Table 4. 14- Views of principals on question

what are your views on shared leadership and what are its benefits?

View/Benefit Mentioned	Frequency(N=2)	%Respondents
Encourages teamwork/collaboration	2	100%
Builds trust and transparency	2	100%
Improves decision quality	1	50%
Reduces workload of administrators	1	50%

All principals agreed that shared leadership fosters teamwork, while some highlighted increased trust and better decision-making. However, only half acknowledged it as a means to reduce workload. This shows a general consensus that shared leadership is positive, but it is not fully exploited as a practical administrative tool in all schools.

The above findings from the 2(100%) leaders revealed that there were concerted efforts in

bringing all stakeholders on board to support shared leadership in schools that embrace participation. However, the same leaders indicated that shared leadership in schools has some challenges from parents some of whom lack experience, have no confidence and knowledge of school governance.

With regard to all the leaders' views on shared leadership schools, the respondents indicated the school leaders are in support of shared leadership. Shared leadership in schools creates a conducive atmosphere for all the stakeholders.

Table4. 15- The vice principals' views on the question

"What are your views on shared leadership and what are its benefits?"

Theme	Mentioned By	Explanation
Distribution of responsibilities	1	Leadership tasks are shared across the team, improving efficiency.
Teacher empowerment	2	Involvement in leadership boosts morale and confidence among staff.
Better decision-making	1	Decisions benefit from multiple viewpoints and shared ownership.
Improved school culture	1	Promotes unity and reduces administrative tensions or conflicts.
Encouragement of initiative	1	Teachers become more proactive and innovative when they share in leadership.

The vice principals interviewed highlighted the value of shared leadership in creating an effective and inclusive school environment. They noted that distributing leadership responsibilities helps in improving administrative efficiency and staff morale. Shared leadership was also seen as a tool for teacher empowerment, better decision-making, and fostering a more united school culture. These responses suggest that shared leadership is viewed as both a practical necessity and a strategy for strengthening participatory governance in schools.

4.8.Views from Heads of Departments on Shared Leadership in Schools

Table4. 16. Views of Heads of Departments on question

How are Heads of Departments engaged in shared leadership in the school?

Type of Engagement in Shared Leadership	Frequency (N= 4)	%	Description
Participating in decision-making committees	4	100%	Involvement in planning and academic policy discussions.
Leading subject-based planning	3	75%	HoDs coordinate lesson planning

and staff coordination			and assessment.
Involved in budgeting/resource allocation decisions	2	50%	Some have input on department needs.
Mentoring and guiding junior teachers	2	50%	Shared leadership through capacity-building.

All respondents acknowledged that HoDs actively participate in decision-making, especially within their departments. While they have limited financial control, they do contribute to curriculum and personnel decisions. This reflects a moderate level of shared leadership, mainly within academic rather than administrative domains.

4.9. Views from Teachers on Shared Leadership in Schools

Table4. 17 Views of Teachers on question

what are your views on shared leadership in the school? Is it effective?

View on Shared Leadership	Teachers(N=14)	% of Teachers
Effective and important	12	85.7%
Partially effective due to top-down habits	7	50%
Ineffective due to poor communication	5	35.7%

The majority of teachers expressed positive views on shared leadership, stating that it fosters inclusivity, innovation, and accountability. However, a portion expressed concerns over inconsistent implementation or hierarchical tendencies in actual practice. Some respondents view that

“Shared leadership is essential, but sometimes decisions are still top-down despite what’s claimed.”

While the concept is valued, its practice is sometimes hindered by institutional culture or lack of clarity in role-sharing.

4.10. Views from Parents on Shared Leadership in Schools

Table4. 18 Views of Parents on question

what are your views on shared leadership and how does it benefit parents?

View/Benefit	Frequency (N=10)	%	Description
It increases transparency	6	60%	Parents feel more informed and involved.
It promotes joint responsibility	5	50%	Shared roles between parents and school staff.
It helps improve student	4	40%	Shared leadership leads to closer

behavior/performance			monitoring of students.
It empowers the community	3	30%	Builds parents' confidence to take part in governance

.Parents see shared leadership positively, associating it with better communication, joint responsibility, and positive student outcomes. However, these benefits are more perceived than systematically realized, especially where leadership is still centralized.

The findings above revealed that besides the numerous benefits schools receive from shared leadership, the respondents indicated that share leadership in schools can be atool for the development of democratic practices in schools and could result in numerous benefits.

The third objective was to find out the challenges in schools that hinder good governance.

4.11. Views of principals and vice principals on the challenges in schools that hinder good governance

Table4. 19 Views of principals on question

what challenges do you encounter in governing the school?

Challenge Mentioned	Frequency(N=4)	% of Respondents
Lack of resources/funding	2	100%
Low parental involvement	2	100%
Shortage of qualified teachers	1	50%
Resistance to change among staff	1	50%
Poor infrastructure (e.g., classrooms)	2	100%
Political interference	2	100%

The respondents explain that resource constraints are the most commonly reported issue, affecting all schools. Parental involvement is another major concern, limiting external accountability and support. Some schools face teacher shortages and infrastructure problems. These challenges reflect systemic governance issues beyond the school level.

Two principals acknowledged that there are challenges that they face in schools that hinder good school governance from parents and teachers. This is how they expressed themselves: “One big challenge we face as administrators is that some stakeholders lack knowledge, skills and experience for them to effectively participate in decision-making processes.”

This suggests that principals in schools try as much as possible to work with as many people as possible.

Table4. 20.The vice principals’ views on the question:

"As a school, what challenges do you encounter from governing the school?"

Challenge	Mentioned By	Explanation
Poor parental cooperation	1	Parents not supporting school discipline or initiatives hinder governance.
Student indiscipline	1	Misbehavior among students disrupts the learning environment.
Shortage of resources/materials	1	Limited teaching tools affect academic delivery and student outcomes.
Staff disengagement	1	Lack of full participation in decision-making slows school progress.

The vice principals reported several governance challenges, including poor student discipline, lack of parental cooperation, shortage of teaching and learning resources, and limited involvement from some staff members. These challenges undermine efforts to maintain order, deliver quality education, and implement decisions effectively. The responses indicate that successful school governance depends on strong stakeholder support, adequate resources, and consistent staff participation.

4.12.Views of Head of Departments on the challenges in schools that hinder good governance

Table4. 21 Views of HoDs s on question

what challenges do you face from your principals when it comes to shared leadership in the school?

Type of Challenge	Frequenc y(N=4)	% of Res	Description
Centralized decision-making by head teacher	3	75	HoDs feel their input is often ignored.
Lack of transparency or communication	2	50	Heads make decisions without consulting departments.

Limited autonomy to implement departmental initiatives	2	50	HoDs feel restricted in managing their teams.
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As the Most respondent HoDs feel that shared leadership is hindered by top-down leadership styles from school heads. The perception of centralized authority and poor communication undermines their role in decision-making. This shows a disconnected between policy and practice regarding shared leadership at the school level.

4.13. Views of parents on the challenges in schools that hinder good governance

Table 4. 22 Views of parents on question

Are there any challenges you encounter as parents that hinder school governance?

Challenge	Frequency (N=10)	% of Res	Description
Lack of awareness/training	7	70%	Parents don't fully understand their governance roles.
Limited time/commitment from parents	6	60%	Workload and daily life limit involvement.
Poor communication with school leadership	4	40%	Parents feel excluded from decision-making.
Cultural attitudes discouraging involvement	3	30%	Some parents see governance as the school's job.

The respondents describe that the biggest challenge is low awareness or capacity among parents to contribute meaningfully to school governance. This is made worse by poor communication and cultural barriers, indicating a need for structured orientation, training, and inclusive communication strategies from school leaders.

The study revealed that parents from the two schools indicated that most school authorities show low levels of accountability and transparency in their operations. Generally, parents observed that schools lack transparency and accountability in the manner they operate.

The responses from most parents indicated that principals incorporated them in school projects when they felt that nothing was to benefit them. This was an indication of poor

leadership on the part of school authorities.

• Discussion Of Research Findings

The main findings of the study which sought to investigate the governance of schools in selected public secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda: challenges and prospects. The following were the research objectives of the study:

- (1) To investigate how democratic principles were applied in schools so as to promote effective participation in school governance in selected public secondary schools.
- (2) To establish how shared leadership in public secondary schools can curb student unrest and teacher discontent to promote good school governance.
- (3) To ascertain if there are challenges that promote unrest and discontent in schools and do not promote effective school governance.

The findings were discussed in accordance with the research objectives of the study. The main findings of the study were that democratic practices and other civic dispositions in school governance have resulted in most stakeholders to participate in school governance thereby reducing levels of indiscipline among students and promote teamwork. In effective school governance where all the stakeholders are fully involved, there is equality and objectives and goals are highly achieved for the benefit of the institution. This is as a result of effective teamwork and collaborations among the various stakeholders in school governance.

• Democratic Governance Practices in schools.

Good governance as expressed through factors like reliability, predictability and accountability are increasingly seen as key factors in ensuring more open and democratic schools. However, many aspects of the relationship between good governance and prosperity are still poorly understood particularly in our schools.

• Stakeholders' Participation in school governance

This study was intended to investigate the role of good governance in the governance of schools to promote effective participation in the decision-making process of schools. Most

respondents indicated that they were engaged in the process of decision-making in schools such as planning, management and control of various program in schools. The Respondents acknowledged that they took part in making decisions in their schools through Students Representative Councils, Parents Teachers Associations, Board meetings and other meetings in the school. It was held that parents, teachers, pupils and other community members have a critical role to play in the governance of schools. It is clear that participation is one of the fundamental principles of democracy that promotes good governance.

It was learnt that teachers are not only in schools to teach, their duties go beyond this. For instance, they are key stakeholders in school governance where decisions are made for the betterment of every one. Parents are the owners of the children found in schools. It is therefore, exclude the in the operations of the schools. As major Stakeholders, they should know and be part of everything taking place involving their children. For pupils, they are the main reason why schools exist. Their participation in the governance of schools is the life line of schools and not involving those means an end to democratic governance in schools. This is supported by Ball (2013) who has ably stated that, ‘true democratic governance in schools could only be achieved through collaborated efforts from all stakeholders including pupils. Therefore, in resolving to engage all stakeholders in school governance, this study found out that principals, vice principals, head of departments, teachers, parents, pupils and other community members should interact among themselves for effective democratic practices to be promoted in schools. Furthermore, the findings of the study has established that stakeholders’ participation requires some form of knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that appeal to their consciousness.

- **Platforms for Stakeholder Participation in school Governance**

This study revealed that stakeholder involvement in decision-making in schools through educational decentralization has led to accountability and transparency in schools. Participation in the governance of schools is through forums such as Parents Teachers Association meetings, management meetings in schools, Students Representative Councils and Staff meetings. Through these forums, it can be said that schools have transformed in to democratic institutions where democratic practices are found. Conducive environments exist in schools as aresult of democratic governance practices. However, if the

stakeholders are not engaged in school governance and decisions made by a single person using the top-down approach, good school governance practices are impeded.

Participants in this study suggested that there was need to improve governance in schools. The study argued that there was need for effective participation and not mere participation by stakeholders in all aspects of governance in schools.

On the other hand, the study revealed that teachers' involvement in the governance of schools is also through Heads of Departments meetings and the other committees established in schools to effectively offer opportunities to all stakeholders to take part in the governance process found in schools. To days' school authorities have an open door policy where they can be met at any time by anyone to discuss matters affecting the school.

As ably put by Muleya(2015),“an interaction with good governance empowers stakeholders with knowledge, skills, and values, develop critical and creative minds and collaboration. Democratic tenets promote active participation in the governance of schools. For stakeholders to participate actively in school governance, capacity building becomes a requirement as well as sensitization.

•Teachers and Pupils as stakeholders in school governance

The study found out that teachers and pupils contribute the majority as shareholders in school governance. Bolt (2011) supports this assertion that teachers and pupils are partners in school governance who complement each other. In schools where pupils and teachers work together, set goals and objectives are easily achieved.

Student participation in decision making refers to the work of Student Representative bodies such the prefectural body, student parliaments and School Councils. The study revealed that students participate in school governance collectively at classroom level or school level between students and other decision-makers. However, student participation in decision-making is often viewed as problematic to school authorities, parents and society at large. This is so because students are viewed as immature, minors and lacking in the expertise and technical knowledge that is needed in the running of a school. Thus student participation in decision-making is confined to issues concerned with student welfare and not in core governance issues. In support of this view, Huddleston (2007)

suggests that there is a tendency among some teachers and school authorities to define the issues which affect students quite narrowly. Student consultation and decision-making is often limited to aspects of school life that affect students only and which have no immediate relevance to other stakeholders.

• **Shared Leadership in School Governance**

The objective of the study was to look at how shared leadership has promoted school governance through participation. Shared Leadership in schools has been shaped by the transformations happening thus from the old type of leadership which evolved around the top-down style of administration to a more one that involves on stakeholders participation.

Regarding parents' participation in school governance, the majority of respondents reported that parents had a role in share responsibilities where they helped formulate and ensure the implementation of school policies. These parents do in their general meetings. This was therefore consistent with what Lewis and Naidoo(2005) refer to as involving stakeholders in making decisions by consensus.

- **Principals views on shared Leadership in schools**

All the (100%) Principals' views on shared leadership practices in schools indicated that they were supportive of the concept. With a conducive environment in schools, teachers, pupils, parents and other community members will be committed to the school in all its governance processes. According to Pickerall et al (2009) positive school climate improves achievement and a sense of belonging. What this means is that a positive school climate empowers, engages and motivates all stakeholders to do what is expected of them. The respondents, HoDs(100%) revealed that principals delegate some of their duties to junior officers and share the decisions they make.

- **Parents and Teachers views on shared Leadership**

This study revealed that parents and teachers are very important stakeholders in school governance. Parents are the owners of the pupils who go to learn in schools whilst teachers wear two hearts, one as educators and the other as parents to all the pupils in their jurisdiction. The findings generally indicate that parents and teachers are aware of shared leadership in schools and its implications on school governance. In an increasingly

interconnected world, marked by an international movement towards widely shared information, and greater group and individual engagement and solidarity, citizen participation offers renewed opportunities to strengthen accountability and the rule of law. The study revealed that shared leadership enables schools to draw on a larger pool of talent, wisdom, expertise and experience beyond a single Principal or relatively small group of administrators. The study revealed that parents were of the view that by letting individuals focus their attention, energy, and skills on what they do best, the whole school and the students in particular will benefit.

Parents and teachers believe that by distributing leadership responsibilities in schools, teachers, parents and others feel more personally invested in the success of the school and more responsible for its performance. By sharing decision-making authority with others in the school, people will become more engaged in and committed to what they are good at.

- **Challenges of School Governance**

The study showed that governance in schools had challenges which are undeniable. These challenges are not good for better schools. These challenges in schools do not yield positive results in promoting teamwork, ownership of schools and participation in decision-making in schools.

- **Challenges from principals**

While shared leadership can benefit a school in many ways, it can also introduce a variety of complications and complexities that might be avoided in a top-down leadership style. The study found out that among the school governance challenges was the capacity to govern. The respondents, thus teachers indicated that another challenge that schools face in promoting school governance is the unwillingness by some principals to share responsibilities as they fear to lose power. What this implies is that principals will try by all means to perform all the duties in the school themselves. The end result is poor decisions made on certain matters which might impede good governance practices. This process might also lead to intimidation of some stakeholders in their delivery of service. This eventually leads to low levels of participation and alarm in grade of students' indiscipline, teachers misconduct and poor governance (Moeng, 2014). These escalating social ills make schools ungovernable. The respondents' parents indicated that head teachers should

develop a community of leaders by openly articulating the goal and relinquishing decision-making authority to other stakeholders in the schools. The study also revealed lack of collaborations between principals and other stakeholders. Mestry (2004) also points out the lack of collaboration between head teachers and other stakeholders where school heads are unwilling to share responsibilities. This is a clear indication that in some schools, head teachers who follow the top-down style of leadership still exist. In such schools, there are no democratic practices.

- **Challenges from Parents and Teachers**

This study further established that apart from the challenges from principals, there are those from teachers, pupils and parents. The principals showed most teachers and parents lacked experience, confidence and little knowledge and skills in governance. The implication this has is that the affected officers may not put in their best during meetings and even when they are assigned tasks to perform by the school authorities.

The study conducted by Coleman (1988) was very clear about the benefits and the need to engage parents in school governance. Coleman (1988) strongly believed that, the power of parents, teachers, learners and school authorities is very crucial because all practice responsibilities to support each other. This study established that parent's involvement in the school has a positive aspect. This included help in the classroom and visits to the school, attending meetings, parent's involvement with learners at home. Without parental support, schools may find it difficult to discipline learners. However, what matters is the level at which parents are engaged in the decision-making process of schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion of the study and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study. It must be emphasized that the aim of this study was to investigate governance of schools in selected secondary schools in Raya Alamata woreda: challenges and prospects.

5.1.Summary

The finding of the study as presented in this brings out issues that promote or impede democratic governance in schools. For vibrant schools to exist, schools should have democratic structures or forums which stakeholders use to interact among themselves and there by contribute to good school governance. Equal participation through shared responsibilities will strengthen school governance as members stand and work together to achieve set objectives and goals. Accounts from respondents paint a picture of school governance beset with challenges of executing their functions in schools. It is clear that democratic practices exist in schools. However, those in trusted with the instruments of power should have open hearts to accommodate everyone. Challenges in schools should not be allowed to detract the smooth operations of schools.

5.2.Conclusion

The general picture from the study was that good governance in school has a role to play towards the existence of democratic practices that promote school governance. The engagement of various stakeholders in the processes of governance in schools is a clear demonstration that schools embrace various democratic tenets which promote effective participation among various stakeholders. Even though schools still experience the top-down style of leadership, leaner unrest and discontent among teachers and other stakeholders the application of democratic practices in schools is bearing the desired fruits. There are clear efforts put in place by school authorities to show that stakeholders engage each other and that positive results are seen from such interactions. Besides recording numerous achievements from the use of democratic practices, schools have not been fully utilized to achieve the common good. Parents and pupils are still the major culprits whose

contributions towards effective decision-making in schools have not been appreciated by other stakeholders.

Our schools have forums through which various stakeholders make their contributions aimed at creating enabling environments in schools for everyone to coexist. These democratic structures dotted in schools include: the Parents Teachers Association, School Representative Councils and Head of Departments. Through these structures, stakeholders are offered opportunities to make their suggestions towards improved schools.

School authorities have embraced the concept of shared leadership in schools. Principals have allowed criticisms from all stakeholders. This is a great sign of inclusive governance which supports shared leadership. Shared leadership truly when put to good use has seemed a good a sit has promoted teamwork, trust and achievement of set objectives and goals. Arising from these findings, it can be concluded that knowledge, skills and other democratic tenets stakeholders acquire from engaging with good governance can influence the use of democratic practices in school governance. Schools need effective partnerships where all those involved should contribute effectively towards the creation of a positive atmosphere in their schools. Co-operative and participatory governance should be encouraged if effective leadership in schools is to be beneficial to all.

The two sampled schools in this study therefore, meet the expectations of the study where it was revealed that indeed good governance has a role in school governance where all stakeholders work as partners. However, there is still much work that should be done to ensure that schools become more democratic institutions where all those with responsibilities perform them freely and to the best of their abilities. School authorities should engage all the stakeholders in the school system and tap from their skills and knowledge as they seek to have better schools. This is in support of Dewey (1916), whose view was that schools should become platforms to create a positive atmosphere of freedom, respect of rights and participation encouraged. It is from premise that good governance of schools should be anchored on the democratic principles acquired from an active interaction with by all those involved in school governance.

5.3.Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations to

both the Governments as well as other stakeholders. These were the following recommendations:

1. Train PTA members, pupils, and teachers on school governance roles and rights.
2. Institutionalize regular participation structures (e.g., monthly joint forums involving students, parents, and staff).
3. Decentralize decision-making to empower departments, student councils, and parent bodies.
4. Create monitoring tools to track inclusiveness and effectiveness of governance processes. School Managers should be inclusive to everyone in the schools as they work towards the creation of a conducive environment for all stakeholders to work in. The positions of school principals and their deputies should be elective ones.
5. Make governance education more competitive and comprehensive and government should put in place measures to address the low levels of participation from some stakeholders in school governance.
6. Ensure that school principals take a leading role in practicing shared leadership.
7. Ensuring all schools free from politically, religious and others interference.

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Appendix 1

Permission Letter

Permission to conduct and collect data from selected schools in Raya Alamata Woreda

Refer to the above subject matter. I am a student at the University of Mekelle pursuing a Master's Degree in Civic Education focusing on the governance of schools in selected secondary school in Raya Alamata Woreda, challenges and prospects. The target populations for my proposed study are teachers, principals, v/principals, and head of depts., pupils and parents from the selected Secondary Schools in Raya Alamata Woreda. I am preparing for data collection for my study and therefore seek permission through your office to enable me collect Data from the selected schools of your woreda.

Thanking you in advanced

Yours sincerely

Nigus Beyene

Appendix 2
Questionnaires guides for Pupils.
The University of Mekelle, Collage of Law and Governance
Department of Civic and Ethical studies

Topic: Governance of Schools in Selected Secondary Schools in Raya Alamata Wereda, Challenges and Prospects’

Research Questions.

1. What is governance

2. What do you know about the governance processes in the school?

3. What roles do you play as pupils involved in school governance?

4. What challenges do you face in decision-making school governance?

4. What advantages do you enjoy as pupils in schools with democratic practices?

5. Are you involved in the choosing of prefects in your school?

6. What forums do you use to be engaged in school governance?

7. Any other comment you would like to share?

Appendix 3
Questionnairesguide forTeachers.

The University of Mekelle, Collage of Law and Governance

Department of Civic and Ethical studies

Topic:Governance of Schools in Selected Secondary Schools in RayaAlamataWereda,
Challenges and Prospects

ResearchQuestions.

- 1 Whatdemocraticpracticesareappliedinyourschoolanddotheypromotegoodgovernanceo
f theschool?

- 2 Asteachers,howareyouinvolvedinthegovernanceoftheschool?

- 3 Whatareyou viewsonshared leadershipintheschoolandis itworking?

- 4 Pupilsandparents arekeyplayersinschoolgovernance.Comment.

6. Whatchallengesdoyou faced fromsharedleadershipinyourschool?

7. Write anyothercommentyouwould like?

Appendix 4
Questionnaires guide for principals and v/principal
The University of Mekelle, Collage of Law and Governance
Department of Civic and Ethical studies

Topic: Governance of Schools in Selected Secondary Schools in Raya Alamata Wereda,
Challenges and Prosepects

Research questions.

1. What democratic practices does your administration follow?

2. As management how are the various forums in your school promote engagement?

3. What are your views on shared leadership and what are its benefits?

4. Briefly explain how the School Representative Councils and the Parent Teachers Association work with you in promoting good governance practices?

5. As a school, what challenges do you encounter from governing the school?

6. Write any other comment you would like?

Appendix 5
Interview guide for the Parents.
The University of Mekelle, Collage of Law and Governance
Department of Civic and Ethical studies

Topic: Governance of Schools in Selected Secondary Schools in Raya Alamata Wereda,
Challenges and Prospects

Research questions.

1. How are parents involved in the governance of schools?
2. What forums are available for them to participate in school governance?
3. What are your views on shared leadership and how does it benefit parents?
4. Are there any challenges you encounter as parents that hinder school governance?
5. What benefits does the school get from good governance practices?
6. How is your partnership with pupils in promoting good school governance?

Appendix 6
Questionnaires guide for Heads of Departments.
The University of Mekelle, Collage of Law and Governance
Department of Civic and Ethical studies

Topic: Governance of Schools in Selected Secondary Schools in Raya Alamata Wereda,
Challenges and Prospects

Research Questions

1. Briefly explain how the governance process works in the school.

How are Heads of Departments engaged in shared leadership in the school?

2. What challenges do you face from your head teacher when it comes to shared leadership in the school?

3. How do school governance structures empower parents and pupils as participants in school governance?

4. What democratic practices does your school practice in promoting school governance?

5. When and how parents and pupils are involved decision-making of the school?
