

Asheber Demie

Primary School Students in Bale Zone

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PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BALE ZONE

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY

**A Thesis Submit to the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, School of
Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Educational Leadership**

BY

Asheber Demie

May 2014

Haramaya, Ethiopia

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EFA	Education For All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
MoE	Ministry of Education
OEB	Oromia Education Bureau
PSR	Pupil Section Ratio
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
STR	Student Text Ratio
UNESCO	United Nation Educational Science and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education

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ASSESSMENT OF AUTOMATIC PROMOTION OF FIRST-CYCLE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BALE ZONE

By

ASHEBER DEMIE

Abstract

The effective Assessment of automatic promotion practice requires complementary and more systematic changes in the schools. This study was designed to assess automatic promotion in light of these requirements. The study conducted to answer some basic questions what are the statuses of automatic promotion policy practices? What are the views of stakeholders of education about automatic promotion? What are the problems related to automatic promotion practices? What remedial measures can be taken to overcome the challenges? Depending the above research questions The study was conducted in 25 schools as sources of information from the four Districts of Bale zone oromia Region, 230 teachers of the grades 1-3, 30 principals and 9 District Education experts and 5 CRC supervisors, 105 PTA members were taken as sources of information. The design of study used descriptive survey both quantitative and qualitative method the data was collected through questionnaires, interview, document, focus group discussion. The data obtained were analyzed mainly using percentage, chi-square and qualitative presentation in addition purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques used.

The results of the study reveals that the awareness of teachers about the reasons behind the introduction of automatic promotion in the schools, and about the different alternative strategies other than retention and automatic promotion in dealing with low-performing students. Teachers seem to know all the implications of automatic promotion in their teaching practices. But, in practice, teachers 'utilization of continuous assessment and implementing mechanisms of automatic promotion is poor. They are also poor in applying different corrective measures to help low-performing students individually. The main criterion that is used in the schools to make promotion-retention decisions is continuous Assessment. It is necessary to provide schools with relevant publications on the issue of retention versus automatic promotion, different mechanisms of continuous Assessment and encourage teachers to conduct action research in their respective schools. It is also important to provide teachers with continuous assessment and promotion guides, well-developed and observational techniques and alternative materials. The involvement of parents in their children's learning and further strengthening of the existing Automatic promotion of students set up are also recommended. Finally, it is advisable to improve teachers' awareness and skill about all the implications of automatic promotion through in-service courses, seminars, conferences, workshops and field-trips.

1. INTRODUCTION

This unit consists of background of the study, statement of the problem; research question of the study, objective of the study, significance of the study, delimitation and limitation of the study will be discussed in this unit.

1.1. Background of the Study

Education is the most powerful instruments to overcome poverty and associated problems. Indeed it is an essential and individual power to reflect, make choice, seek voice in a society and enjoy a better life (World Bank, 2002). Particularly, primary education develops the capacity to learn to read and use Mathematics to acquire information and to think critically about that information. EFA Global monitoring report indicates that improving the quality of primary education by decreasing the number of repeaters and dropouts for the universalizing of education for all (UNESCO, 2009). It is of crucial importance that all children and young people have access to education. However, it is equally important /that they are able to take full part in school life and achieve desired outcomes from their education experiences. While subject-based academic performance is often used as an indicator of learning outcomes, ‘learning achievement’ needs to be conceived more broadly as the acquisition of the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills required to meet the challenges of contemporary societies (UNESCO, 2008).

Many developing countries, including Ethiopia, grade repeaters and dropouts are becoming obstacles in the effort to universalize primary education as intended (UNESCO, 1998; Torres, 1995). Repeating a grade means utilizing more resources than allocated to a student and leaving a school before completing a particular cycle of education. This is also wastage of resources. In both cases, the meager resources allocated for education and time will be wasted and underutilized. A study by UNESCO (1998), report proved that 16% of the resources allocated to education each year in developing countries wasted due to repeaters and dropouts from grade 1 through grade 4. In addition to this, pupils who leave the system prematurely and regularly will become functionally illiterate and discourage others from entering school (UNESCO, 1986).

In Ethiopia, before 1994, about one third of students enrolled in the first grade each year repeat (MoE, 1994). One of the reforms made to address the issue of repeating and dropouts in Ethiopia primary schools is the introduction of automatic promotion policy from grade one to grade three (MoE, 1998). This done with the assumption, that the students are much more likely to complete primary school education. If they manage to complete the first few years, it was also believed that automatic promotion reduces the problem of repeating and dropout rates with little or no additional costs (MoE, 1996). The main goal of primary education is to offer basic and general education to pupils in order to prepare for further to understand their environment (UNESCO, 2001).

Schools practice grade repeating as a remedy to academic failure. Teachers, school principals and even parents believe that repeating the same (for one or more years) will ensure learning by providing more time with non-mastered skills to repeaters (Torres, 1995 and Smith and Shepard, 1987). However, most studies so far conducted have disapproved this assumption. Researchers indicated that, even though retained they did worse than similar students who did not repeat subsequent years (Holmes et al., 1994 and Willson and Ramsey 1999). In general early grade repetition affects the entry point of the school system, where essential foundation for future learning self-esteem and self-confidence are established (Torres, 1995).

Generally, repetition affects efficiency that it ties up school resources that allocated to reaching non-schools. This means that repetition causes educational wastage and becomes obstacle in the universalizing of primary education. Therefore, the solution to practice automatic promotion in primary first cycles schools. Automatic promotion implies that the schools and teachers must assess each pupil's learning abilities and take appropriate remedial measures on a continuous basis (Hussen, 2002). Teacher, parents and principals after the implementation of automatic promotion since 1997/98 raise many questions. In other way the view of this stakeholders regarding the performance of students after the implementation of automatic promotion was different, the challenges of automatic promotion and the practice of implementing the policies forces the researcher to asses automatic promotion in first cycle primary school of Bale Zone Oromia Regional State.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education sector development program is a long term plan initiated to help the government's long term human development and poverty eradication targets and to address the problem of fragment intervention. It is an extensive undertaking which derives its objectives in the context of Ethiopia according to MoE (2005). ESDPI is series of medium term programmatic action plan for the implementation in 1994. Education and Training Policy (ETP) and it is twenty-year in rural and underserved areas.

Education sector indicative plan design: to improve educational quality, relevance, efficiency, equity, expansion and access to education with special emphasis on the primary education. One of the objectives of ESDP-I was increasing the primary efficiency of students in schools by reducing the repeating and dropouts of the first five year. ESDPII goal was expanding access and coverage of primary education with equity and improved quality MOE (2002), whereas the goal of ESDPIII was increase access to educational opportunities at primary level to achieve UPE by the year 2015 MOE (2005). However, in practicing automatic promotion many challenges faced the repetition rates and dropout was some of the challenges. For instance since 2011/2012 in Bale Zone were 9.2%; similarly, the dropouts were 12.8% in 2011/2012

Even automatic promotion was introduced repeaters and dropouts with other problems reported. Grade one high number of students repeated and dropout as the report of region indicates. For example, the repetition rates in consecutive year 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 were 8.7%, 9.6%, 6.2% and 10.2%. Also first grade dropouts were 11.3% and 12.1% in year 2011 and 2012, respectively. The repetition and dropout rates reported and low achievers were seen while practicing automatic promotion in the first cycle of primary education the problems still now. In first cycle schools research related to automatic promotion policy practice of students is not conducted with challenges and remedial measures, but one study on Practices of Automatic promotion in first –cycle of West Gojam was conducted by Dereje (2003) and another study which conduct by NoE (2000) the National Baseline Assessment study mainly focuses at the result achieved in reading environmental science of grade four students. The past study touches the policy and assessment method of student in the classroom, but the views of different stakeholders of education not touched. In addition, due to

geographical difference of research site the researcher interested to assess Automatic Promotion policy practice in primary first cycle schools in Bale zone. So this research will fill the gap of the past research finding for these two reasons. Therefore, the above main problems lead to questions. Automatic promotion policy practice is implemented with its entire advantages or disadvantages? So studying of automatic promotion policy practice of students in Bale Zone first cycle primary schools seems timely.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research focuses on answering the following basic questions.

1. What are statuses of automatic promotion policy practices in the first cycle schools of Bale Zone?
2. What are the views of teachers, principals, experts and parents towards students' automatic Promotion policy practices in first cycle primary schools?
3. What are the problems related to automatic promotion policy practices of the first cycle primary Schools?
4. What remedial measures can be taken to overcome the challenges of automatic promotion policy practices in the first cycle primary schools in Bale Zone?

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the study is to assess the status of automatic promotion policy practices in primary first cycle schools of Bale zone.

1.4.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study

1. To assess the status of automatic promotion policy practices of first cycle primary schools of Bale Zone.
2. To determine automatic promotion policy practices views of different stakeholders of schools like parents teachers and leaders in Bale Zone,

3. To identify problem related to the automatic promotion practices in first cycle primary schools in Bale Zone.
4. Determine remedial measures can be taken to overcome the challenges of automatic promotion policy practices in the first cycle primary schools in Bale Zone.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study may significant for the following reasons: Providing an overview of automatic promotion polices practices in first cycle primary schools and helps to create awareness of the practices among different stakeholders like policy makers, experts of education, management organs and others by providing true image of it. Suggest recommendation to solve at least some of the main challenges which affect the implementation of automatic promotion policy practices of first cycle primary education to policy makers. As spring board for those interested researchers by giving an oversight of the policy practices of automatic promotion on similar and other related topics in wider sense. NGO's those works in education areas by showing its practices of implementation.

1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study delimited to four sample districts of Bale Zone and attempted to assess automatic promotion in first cycle primary schools because of the reasons below:

Automatic promotion assessment is broad in its implementation and needs extensive time and budget, especially for Bale Zone, which is highly broader in geographical area and primary school distribution and delimited with the sample area. The study areas focus at high land districts in case of accessibility of transportation.

1.7. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

It is true that research work cannot be totally free from limitation. Some limitations were also faced during this study. One limitation was that most of primary school principals, vice principals, teachers and District education experts, CRC supervisors were busy and would not have enough time to respond to questionnaires and interview. Many of the PTA members are not willing for the focus group discussion. Some of them who had enough time were also reluctant to fill in and return the questionnaire as per the required time. Another limitation was lack of recent and relevant literature

on the topic, especially about Automatic promotion guide on Ethiopian condition. There is acute shortage of books or lack of updated related literature in the area. In spite of these shortcomings, however, it was attempted to make the study as complete as possible. To minimize these limitations the researcher was arranged appropriate time schedule for data gathering for all the respondents specially, using school principals for collecting questionnaire from the respondents, to minimize shortage of literature the researcher was used internet access.

1.8. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Access: refers to how much the eligible school age children are in appropriate grade or in appropriate level of schooling (UNESCO, 2009).

Attitude: attitude refers to the teacher's beliefs, feelings, and commitments in practicing automatic promotion (Oxford 8th.ed).

Automatic promotion: is a practice in first-cycle of primary schools which is advancing of pupils from one grade to the next higher grade at the end of the school year regardless of the educational attainment of the pupils (UNESCO, 2008).

Basic Education: refers to education intended to meet basic learning needs, it encompasses and early childhood and primary education (UNEFA, 1990).

Grade repetition/retention: refers when pupils are given an additional year to repeat a grade to go over the same academic content, often taught the same way, that they failed to master the previous year (UNESCO, 2009).

Internal Efficiency: refers to efficient utilization of resources to avoid wastage in the form of drop out and repetition (MoE, 2010).

Primary Education: In Ethiopia context, primary education is defined as education in grade 1-8 in two cycles 1st cycle grade (1-4) and 2nd cycle grade (5-8) (MoE, 2010).

Quality Education: is education system which consist relevant inputs, pertinent process and competent outputs, provision of education facilities, qualified teachers and students performance (UNESCO, 2005).

Retention: when a student is not doing the level of work that indicates the student should be promoted to the next grade, based on the recommendation of the Intervention Assistance Team.).

Universal Primary Education: (UPE) means that all children of primary school age participate in the school system and complete primary school (UNESCO, 2005).

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section contains empirical and theoretical views about automatic promotion policy practices of first cycle primary schools, automatic promotion policy practices retention of students, repetition and its effects to education, different stakeholders Views related to automatic promotion discussed in this section.

2.1. AUTOMATIC PROMOTION POLICY OF STUDENTS

Students experienced neither promotion nor retention but rather a solitary form of forward movement. With the arrival of universal public education Students promotion, suddenly become an important social issue. The result of the graded structure imposed on the new common school system at the time of their funding. According to Labree (1984) grading was a response to two forms of pressure exerted on the new school systems organizational and cultural. Organizationally, the sharp rise of number of students put the common school under intense pressure to develop a system of instruction, which was physically, socially and pedagogically efficient. Culturally the new schools were under pressure to embody and to transmit values particularly belief that rewards are allocates according to individual ability and effort that are earned.

The education sector's vision is "to see all school-age children get access to quality primary education by the year 2015 and realize the creation of trained and skilled human power at all levels who will be driving forces in the promotion of democracy and development in the country". The mission of the education sector is to: Extend quality and relevant primary education to all school-age children and expand standardized education and training programs at all levels to bring about rapid and sustainable development with increased involvement of different stakeholders (MoE, 2010/2011).

The ideal case for educational efficiency has always been to move entire classes through the grade levels like an assembly line with the age-cohort or the individual with no rejects (Labree, 1984; Smith and Shepard, 1994). As the truth of learning promotion implies that students have widely varied capacities for learning either because of differences in innate ability or differences in

motivation schools are seen as trying to select the most able and willing students in order to proper them into higher forms of education while teaching the less capable students at less advanced levels. This conflict between organizational efficiency and merit values between the goals of group learning and the goal of individual selection has been a source of controversy from the time of the first graded schools to the present days.

Now a day's promotional policy become more controversial when it comes to dealing with low-performing and low achieving students in a given grade. To ensure the realization of Universal Primary Education (UPE), the Government will make every effort to provide financial, human and material resources. However, it is apparent that the Government's resources will not be sufficient. Expanding educational opportunities will there for require the partnership of a wide range of domestic and international partners. The program assumes an increased role of communities' in constructing low cost schools and classrooms. Similarly, increased participation of local and international partners and the private sector will have a significant role to play in contributing to expanding access to primary education services to children and keep quality by providing materials (MoE, 2007).

2.2. AUTOMATIC PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Automatic promotion and retention have seen as opposite ends of a continuum of approaches to students having difficulty making progress in the school (Johnson, 1984). Promotion policies changes from one extreme to another. The experience has swung back and forth, as the educational community and public have tried to determine which practice is accurate response to low achievers. Teachers' views regarding the efficacy of grade retention are generally based on short-term. Teachers usually only know of student achievement in the immediate years following retention. They often have limited knowledge of the long-term student trajectories after retention. Since many retained children make some progress the second year, retention may appear effective to educator (Karland, 2003).

Automatic promotion considered as the most beneficial to children. At this time, rigid promotional standards see as punitive (Cunningham and Owens, 1979). It believed that promotion by ability

expose children to mental stress at an early age. This causes psychological damage. This damage becomes more pronounced when those children who do not achieve the minimum requirements in a given grade usually determined by standardized test are forced to repeat the grade (Shepard and Smith, 1986; Holmes and Mathew, 1984). Consequently these students may develop negative attitude towards school and they are more likely to drop out of school (Roderick, 1993). As the result of the above theoretical assumption, most examination required for promotion in the different grades are abandoned and promotional standards become more relaxed. This relaxation of promotional standards is justified by three arguments. First educator argued schooling should structure around the learning needs and abilities of the great bulky of its students rather than the selection and development of most able.

Willms (2000) school should give all students equal access to a high quality education experience According to these educators, the function of school is to furnish an elementary education to maximum number of children. Other things being equal a schools best when it is regularly promotes and finally graduates the largest percentage of its pupils. More over advocates of automatic promotion asserted that schools should not only adapt themselves to the academic abilities, but also to the broader social needs of the average students (Dewey, cited in Labree, 1984). In practice this means a shift from curriculum-centered school, with its exclusive focus on intellectual development to a child centered school, which included concern for the social and emotional development of the student. It is argued that child who is well adjusted socially or emotionally will achieve better than the child who is maladjusted (Cunningham and Owens, 1979).

Second educators argued that a zealous policy of non-promotion seriously impaired the organizational efficiency of the school (Smith and Shepard, 1994; UNESCO, 1998). Cost effectiveness is an important goal of any school, and from this perspective extension, repetitions reflected in a large pool of over age students appear wasteful indeed. Third, educators did not entirely abandon a concern for merit, but they know sought to foster academic achievements not by means of high standards and frequent retentions but by instituting a system of tracking (Labaree, 1984). Schools can develop what they call differentiated curricula, for example, academic, commercial, manual and training, etc. Special education classes and ability grouping is also used by

applying intelligent testing standardized tests are used as a factor in the process of placing a student within the appropriate track, rather than as a promotional standard.

The advocates of merit promotion, on the other hand, oppose the practice of automatic promotion for its less emphasis to students' achievement. They take the decline in students' scores on standardized achievement tests in those schools where automatic promotion is practiced (Ebel, 1980). Why they ask should schools be advancing students to the next grades who have not yet mastered the skills taught in their current grade. They assert that something is clearly wrong with the structure of schooling when high schools graduate functional illiterates. Automatic promotion is blame for much of this deficiency in achievement, for the following reasons (Ebel, 1980; Labaree, 1984, Clarizio, et al., 1994). Within a school system, a policy of automatic promotion appears symbolic of general lack of commitment to students' achievement. Promoting students who have not mastered the material for their grade level perceived as a form of dishonest. Schools are occurred of rewarding students for lack of accomplishment which not inspires in them an inflated sense of their own capabilities and teaches them that one can indeed get something for nothing. Promoting students according to age rather than demonstrated achievement, opponents of the policy content, ignores the significant difference in abilities and application that mark students with in a particular age group.

Automatic promotion sees students as broad similar in learning capacity and thus seeks to deal with them collectively, but critics charge that students' abilities are distributed approximately along a normal curve, which means that schools must make individual discrimination among them. Automatic promotion sees as a prime example of a more general problem with in the schools. Promoting the unqualified school students adjusting their curriculum and instruction to the needs and wishes of the students, In fact, students should be adapting to schools standards. Critics understanding it as the function of school to load students, not follow them, they see other examples of this trend particularly in the propagation of electives in place of a more rigorous academic courses and in the relaxation of discipline (Torres, 1995).

Improving efficiency entails reducing dropout and repetition rates and thereby increasing survival and completion rates. Reducing high rates of repetition implies improvements in the learning achievements of pupils and a more efficient use of scarce resources, which would be wasted

otherwise. Reducing repetition rates also frees the school places for new pupils, thus making way for a substantial increase in enrolments. Improving the learning achievement of pupils will also result in success in examinations, which implies a reduction in the level of dropout that may be caused to failure in examinations. This clearly shows that improving the quality of education has a key role to play in enhancing the internal efficiency of the system. Therefore, the following are envisaged to improve the quality of education and thereby the internal efficiency of the system (MoE, 2004/2005). If a student fails to meet these standards in a given grade, she/he needs to repeat the grade. The advocates of merit promotion try to justify the link between repetition and academic achievements of under achieving students using different theoretical assumptions. These assumptions include fear of retention; such a policy may turn out to have a significance effect in motivating a student to achieve and in motivating the students, parents and teachers to help such achievement. Merit promotions encourage students to look over their shoulders to the possibility of retention. This negatives motivation influence low achieving students who are likely to respond to the stimulus since they are the population at risk of retention. In particular, the students most likely to spur into action by a merit promotion policy are those receiving a midyear letter announcing that retention will occur performance improve (MoE, 2010).

Several implications of this motivational system should make an administrator cautions first, retention is only effective as a motivating device for students to the extent that they find it distasteful. Reasons for this distaste include that unhappiness at being separate from classmates and the same at labeled low. If students feel in this way, anticipation of retention is not possible that being compelled to experience retention might have harmful affection their personal adjustment. Of course, proponents of retention policies argue that the policy is not in fact punitive but remedial. If retention is a strong motivating device, then retention are likely to be fewer. However, the students retained are more likely to experience it as punishment. If retention is a weak motivating device, the effect on the student is likely to be remedial than punitive, but the number retained is likely to be large. No school system wants to make retention unpleasant simply to scare students into passing (Ebel, 1980; Labire, 1984; Clarizo et al., 1994).

Second, while the fear of retention may motivate the low achieving student. It is likely to have little or no effect on the average or superior students whose scores are comfortably within the passing range. Therefore, this is not a strategy aimed at raising the minimum level of all students.

Third, the focus on motivation assumes that the problem of under achievement derives from lack of incentive. To the extent that poor test scores are the result of such factors as class background, racial dissemination family conditions and test invalidity the student. The news that a child is in danger of failing is likely to have an effect on most parents but the way in which this effect transmitted to the child may vary considerably. Parents who interpret the problem as disciplinary may be more likely to punish the students. At home or at school, merit promotion possess a choice between remediation and punishment.

Advocates of rigid promotional standards in school recommend repetition for those students who do not meet the standards. This policy of repetition based on the assumption that repeating the same grade (for one, two or more years) will insure teaching (Torres, 1995). Pedagogically, this means that the student that did not learn or did not learn enough will learn. If he or she take the same road again, that nothing was learned along the process and it is thus necessary to start from the beginning once again. That knowledge and learning operate in a linear dimension follow fixed routes and derive from cyclic repeating and drilling but critics argue that there is no guarantee that the same road that made the child fail will help him/her perform better. They also criticize that the social and psychological child repeated that grade is usually harmful to the children (Roderick, 1993). Generally issues related to the curriculum and the schools system strongly surfaced. There was unanimity among teachers', students and parents about the complexity of the curriculum for students and teachers alike, teachers filling ill equipped, mismatch time content empirically of self-contained class bare advantage of continuous assessment and discouraging influence of free promotion of student from one grade to the other (UNESCO, 2006).

2.3. REPETITION AND ITS EFFECTS

Grade repetition sometimes referred as grade retention occurs when students held in the same grade for an extra year rather than being promoted to a higher grade along with their age peers. In some schools, systems grade repetition seen as a valid corrective action that should be taken in cares of academic failure. In other school, systems grade repetition not permitted, and instead the policy for all pupils is in social promotion. Where by students pass automatically to the next grade with their peers and if required, receive remedial academic assistance. The implementation and effects of grade

repetition has extra costs (UNESCO, 1991). This analysis commences with an examination of the three major reasons for the decision to repeat and the sources of that decision (students, families and schools). The reason for applying grade repetition often differs across developed and developing countries.

Although the repetition rate is improving, the dropout rates remain high especially in Grade one. Unless dropout and repetition rates are brought down and internal efficiency is improved, the nation cannot achieve universal primary education by 2015. Low internal efficiency entails the wasting of very scarce resources. The quantity and quality of critical inputs such as teachers, textbooks, classroom etc., must be improved in order to improve the internal efficiency of the education system (UNESCO, 2006). The effects of grade repetition among three dimensions as:

The effects of academic achievement, where research has indicated short term gains along term problems because grade repeaters eventually fall further behind.

The effects of students' self-esteem, peer relationships, and attitudes towards schools with negative outcomes in these areas leading to increased risks of dropping out and repeating of students.

The effects on school operation, where by high levels of grade repetition can lead to increased class sizes and classroom management problems (Due to large age differences among pupils in the same classroom).

The application of grade repetition brings extra costs and long term negative academic and social consequences. Grade repetition versus "Social Promotion" the strategy should prefer automatic promotion (UNESCO, 2006). Each year about 22 percent of primary students and 21 percent of secondary students were repeating their grade. The North African and Middle Eastern countries average about 12 percent for the primary grade students repetition represents in efficiency and wastage of resources for society grade repetition has been analyzed both as a macro level societal problem /in directing in effective use of resources/ and as a micro level individual option/ occurring for one of the Promotion grade, regardless reasons described in previous section.

Some countries and school systems, adopt automatic promotion policies, which mandate that all students; who complete a given school year promoted to the next of their levels of achievement. However people who believe that it lowers school often oppose automatic promotion and student

achievement. They want to allow or even to require schools to retain in grade all students who fail to meet specified promotion criteria. Grade repetition is more common in developing countries than in developed countries and is especially common in rural areas (Jackson, 1975).

Teacher in developing countries are ordinarily are not trained to more promotion/repetition decisions and do not have access to detailed achievement standards and aligned assessment instruments. So concerns have been expressed that many decisions may be based on arbitrary observations or beliefs rather than justified criteria (MoE, 2005). Continuous assessment is essential to improve the quality of learning and the internal efficiency of the education system. It helps teachers to quickly identify weaknesses in the abilities of their pupils and provide the necessary support. The education and training policy envisages that assessment at all levels of education and training be made using continuous assessment. Although this policy direction is important to all levels, the enforcement of the continuous assessment strategy will serve as a typical instrument to improve lower grade repetition and promotion recommend schools to raise their standards for promotion from one grade to the next.

2.4. PARENTS VIEWS OF AUTOMATIC PROMOTION POLICY PRACTICES

Successful achievement leads to feeling of satisfaction and generates increased effort for getting something better is a human tendency. On the contrary performing low or below average is dissatisfying which results in decreased effort on the part of the individual parent of student. With this connection parents who their students perform below achievement emotionally disturbed and they blame the automatic promotion of student of grade 1-3 strongly. Aklilu (1998) said it is not surprising that students who do not perform well in school seek to leave the school. Many parent of student do not give concern for the low achievement of their student; instead decide to refuse of automatic promotion.

Communities and PTAs are playing important roles in all aspects of education from generating resources to managing schools. Resources are mobilized for purchasing basic equipment and materials, hiring contract teachers, and building classrooms and schools. PTAs are active in raising the awareness of the general community on the benefits of education and in encouraging parents to

send their children to school so as to increase access and reduce dropout. PTAs are involved in school management, preparing annual plans and follow-up disciplinary cases. Hence, communities are funding new school buildings, building teachers' houses, running non-formal education initiatives, and encouraging girls to go to school and be retained in school until they complete a given level of education. However, PTAs and communities still need further capacity enhancement in order to enable them to carry out the quality of support that schools need to help them functions each stakeholder in the education sector. It also highlights each stakeholder's accountability to each level. As a result, the last two years have shown an unprecedented community turn-out, not only in raising funds and constructing classrooms, but also in owning and managing the development of education in their respective communities. Education and training boards and PTA's have become instrumental in lowering dropout and repetition rates and restoring good discipline in schools (MoE, 2011).

2.5. TEACHERS VIEWS OF AUTOMATIC PROMOTION POLICY PRACTICES OF STUDENTS

The number of students in a classroom affects the level of student achievement (MoE, 2004). The number of students should be optimum because Students in a large class receive minimal attention by the teacher, so they will perform poor. Large class teachers will have little time to communicate with individual students and serve special needs and will have problems with managing. Ratio is one of the efficiency indicators (MoE, 2004). A lower ratio in comparison to the national standard means underutilization of resources a higher ratio indicates, overcrowdings and less interaction between teacher and student (MoE, 2004). The target set for pupil (student-section ratio) for primary as ESDP-II is sixty. However in 1999 were 69 even in the year 2011 the ratio was more than that of described the policy formulated in most governmental schools. The lower the PTR is higher the opportunity of contact between teachers and pupils to check homework and class work as well as provide support to student individually becomes difficult. However the reality is opposite to these in past four to three years the number of student were increase because of this the teacher pupil ratio is above the standard means in primary first cycle 1:55, so in the implantation of the policy there is gap (Lisan, 2004).

2.6. LEADERS OF EDUCATION VIEW ABOUT AUTOMATIC PROMOTION POLICY PRACTICES

Leaders in education are a matter of guiding community (students, teacher, and parents) to realize the policy for them. There are many priorities for leaders to convince of the policy formulated for different stake holders of education in the correct line, but leaders at different level proclaim the advantage of automatic promotion in first primary schools. The implementers of the policy don't have adequate knowledge about how to implement, the pre-conditions, methods of supporting students at different understanding level and methods of assessment couldn't get attention (Bath, 2001).

One of the most consistent findings from studies of effective school leadership is that authority to lead need not be located in the person of the leader but can be dispersed within the school between and among people. There is a growing understanding that leadership is embedded in various organizational contexts within school communities, not centrally vested in a person or an office. The real challenge facing most schools is no longer how to improve but, more importantly, how to sustain improvement. Sustainability will depend upon the school's internal capacity to maintain and support developmental work and sustaining improvement requires the leadership capability of the many rather than the few (Olsen, 2002). According to UNESCO (2007) to attain progress in achievement of Education for All, Lesotho is the only country that has the highest chance of achieving universal primary education by 2015. In regarding to achieving the goals the roles of school leaders is not replaced by any other else if school leaders cooperate and effectively work with teachers, PTAs and students, as well as with all stake holders, meaningful change may registered by practicing of automatic promotion policy (MoE, 2002).

2.7 Factors Affecting Automatic Promotion Practices

Many study shows problems related to automatic promotion practices were numerous. According to Dufour (1994) reform has never been to the satisfaction of public during the reform undertaking, certain problems have been encounters, especially by the existing situation on the ground did not match the plans and the policy formulated. It has been found that there are clear inadequacies in the

major educational inputs such as the provision of training for stakeholders, Shortage of text books and school facilities affect the implementation of reforms. In Ethiopia starting from the very beginning of modern education there are a constant series of change in the country education in general and primary education in particular Dereje (1998). Many primary schools in Ethiopia has insufficient numbers of text books, in appropriate numbers of class size, teachers and student ratio during the implementation of the automatic promotion policy in primary first cycle schools. These days also the problems were not solved fully.

Key factors identified in the NLA's relating to student achievement include school organization and management, teacher training on new techniques, school supplies, availability of curricular and instructional materials, and language of instruction. All these imply that students are not equipped with the necessary numeracy, literacy and life skill at primary schools, and that there is a considerable challenge to meet the quality and standard of education at the primary level in Ethiopia. There is, therefore, a need to investigate contributing factors for the decline of quality of primary education in the country taking into consideration teachers' qualification and their years of professional experience; perceptions of teachers, students, and leadership (at school, woreda and zonal levels); factors related to learning resources and environment; factors related to teaching methods and curricula; factors related to school leadership and management; factors related to external environment; and strategies to address the problems affecting quality of education in the country.

Study on Early Grade Reading and Writing was conducted by IQPEP, USAID Ethiopia (2010). The research findings suggest that there are poor reading and writing skills in all three grade levels and in almost all regions. Although students in grades 1-3 have been exposed to the three early grade reading curricular themes (reading letters, reading words, and reading and comprehending simple sentences and phrases), their proficiency level in these themes is unsatisfactory. In many cases, the distinctions among the three grade levels seem to be blurred. the lack of a minimum standard that distinguishes one grade level from the other (for instance, grade 3 from grade It is believed that quality of education in schools is influenced by many factors related to teachers, students, curriculum, teaching methods and assessment, resources, learning environment and leadership. Teachers claim that lack of professional support, lack of incentives and low salary for teachers as well as lack of student's interest for learning are major factors that influence quality of education in schools. Similarly,

lack of incentives and low salary for teachers are rated as major contributing factors for the decline of quality. The influence of teachers' low level of motivation and lack of qualified teachers on quality is rated as moderate by both teachers and students (UNESCO 2009).

2.8. The School System in Brazil and Automatic Promotion Policy practices

Primary school is compulsory in Brazil for children between the ages of 7 to 14 and consists of eight years of schooling (MEC 1996).⁹ Public schooling is free at all ages and enrolment in primary and secondary school is open to students of all ages. The Brazilian educational system has undergone substantial changes during the last two decades and has achieved considerable progress in expanding access to education. Starting from a primary school net enrolment rate of only 85% in 1991, Brazil achieves today almost universal primary school enrolment with a net rate of 95% (UNESCO 2009). Primary school completion and youth literacy rates have improved notably, but the country continues to suffer from high repetition and drop-out rates. Besides the conventional annual grade repetition regime the option of automatic promotion was introduced, a system in which students progress automatically to the next grade at the end of the school year. Between these two extremes, a mixture of both regimes was also permitted. In the mixed regime, schools define "learning cycles" that stretch over several – most commonly three - school years. During the initial years of the cycle students are promoted automatically. In the final year of a cycle students that do not meet the minimum requirements set in the curriculum are retained. The idea behind these learning cycles is to allow students an individual studying pace (Mainardes 2004).

If students' fall the introduction of automatic promotion removes the incentive previously linked to the threat of retention and I use exogenous variation in the implementation of the policy over time in state primary schools in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais to obtain causal estimates of the disincentive effect from the introduction of automatic promotion measured by the impact on standardized math test scores. Another potential source for a compositional change is related to the possibility of students to change their school. Parents expecting a negative effect of automatic promotion on their children may want to move their children to a school the introduction of automatic promotion has an effect on drop-out rates in grades prior to 4th grade, this may change unobserved student characteristics that cannot be controlled for (Corman, 2003).

2.9. Strategies on Handling Automatic Promotion Practices

Teaching is a complex activity that requires substantial time to implement, assess, and refine instructional techniques. Finding time for such activities as study groups, action research, coaching, and collaboration must be a priority for all schools. Smaller class size is another reorganizational learning strategy that lets teachers work more efficiently with students who need extra assistance. By having smaller classes, teachers are better able to get to know their students, to share information, and to develop strategies for helping them succeed. Research has shown that classes with fewer than 20 children can improve students' academic achievements and are particularly beneficial for disadvantaged students. The below stakeholders have greatest share on handling automatic promotion policy (Uunesco,2005).

Systemic problems: The successful implementation of the new policy innovations such as self-contained classes, automatic promotion at the lower cycle, continuous assessment, active learning, teachers' action research, teacher professional development and induction are constrained by lack of enabling environment in and outside the school (e.g. attempting to implement policies without sufficiently ensuring the school capacity and readiness).

Leadership: The leadership has not been able to transform schools due to lack of competence, commitment and focus on the core activities of teaching and learning. This is aggravated by leadership turn over in primary schools.

Teachers: most teachers hardly promote quality of student learning due to low professional competence, motivation and commitment. This, among others, could be explained by lack of professional support, incentives and poor living conditions of teachers.

Students: There is a decline of students' interest in learning, low value attached by students to education, and inadequate preparation of students for learning at different grade levels. This is attributed to the cumulative effect of the systemic, school level leadership, teacher and family related failures.

Community: the role of parents and the local community in terms of collaborating with schools to enhance quality and supporting education of their children is limited. This may be related to the poor socio-economic status of many parents and the value.

From different countries practice the introduction of automatic promotion policy implementation solve the problem of education quality, access, dropout and repeating, however the problem of provision of training at automatic promotion policy, method of assessment, accessibility of materials still need improvement.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The chapter describes the research method that used to achieve the objective of the study. The discussion issues in this section are the overall research design, sources of data, sampling size and sampling technique, data gathering tools and methods of data analysis employed by the researcher to collect the relevant quantitative and qualitative data that enable to offer appropriate to the researcher questions.

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design employed to conduct this study is descriptive survey research design. Since, this design enables to gather data from relatively large population at one shoot basis. It also efficient and generate numerical data. Concerning to this method Best and khan (2003) stated that descriptive survey is more effective to investigate the phenomena and to assess performances in their natural setting (Seyoum et al., 1989). Also noted that “descriptive survey method is relevant and very helpful to show what is happening in a given observable setting.” Both quantitative and qualitative method used in the study.

3.2. Source of Data

The sources of data for the study were primary and secondary sources.

3.2.1. Primary sources

Primary sources were primary school principals, teachers, education experts, supervisors at districts level and parents because they were stakeholders directly involved in providing primary education of grade 1-3 about automatic promotion with rich information.

3.2.2. Secondary source

Secondary data sources were documents, reports and annual abstracts of primary first cycle schools data of repeaters and dropouts of 4 years (2009-2012) from sample district, Zone education office and OEB (2009- 2012).

3.3. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.3.1. Sample size

Bale zone consists of 18 districts and two administrative towns. According to the geographical setting the zone is divided into two which are the low land and the high land districts. The division is depending on the zone administration reality. The low land districts are ten and the high land are eight districts and two administrative towns totally ten in number. The researcher selected high land districts by simple random sampling and one Administrative town by random sampling a total of four districts selected. The four districts have 72 primary schools, 570 teachers, and 80 principals and vice principals, 288 PTA members, 25 district education experts, 12 CRC supervisors which are total population of 975.

3.3.2. Sampling Techniques

Twenty-five schools selected by using simple random sampling from the districts primary schools, 230 (40 %) teachers by simple random sampling concerning their service, 30 (38%) of principals and vice principals by simple random sampling, 105 (36.45%) of PTA members by simple random sampling, 5 (41.6%) of supervisors by purposive sampling and 9 (36%) of education experts purposive sampling because of their high service than others this techniques were used. All samples of teachers by simple random sampling, principals, vice-principals and PTA members selected by simple random technique, because all the respondents get equal chance. Pajares (1996) asserted that simple random sampling is one of which person has an equal chance of being Selected for the participation and where each combination of participants is equally likely Hence it gives equal chance to units of the population that the researcher used this technique for present study. Besides, purposive sampling technique employed to select experts and supervisors. Purposive sampling occasionally, referred to us judgment sample because the sampling units are selected subjectively by the researcher, who attempts to get as sample that appears to him to be representative of the population by employing this technique.

Table -1 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

No	Type of respondents	Population	Sample	%	Sampling techniques
1	Teachers	570	230	40	Simple random
2	Principals and vice of primary schools	80	30	38	Simple random
3	PTA	288	105	36	Simple random
4	Supervisors	12	5	42	Purposive sampling
5	Experts	25	9	36	Purposive sampling

3.4. Data Gathering Tools

The data gathering tool used for the study was questionnaire, focus group discussion, and interview and document analysis.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Anderson (2000) stated that “if well constructed a questionnaire permits the collection of reliable and reasonable valid data relatively simple, cheaply and in a short span of time.” Accordingly the researcher developed questionnaire that consisted open-ended and closed- ended questions, Close-ended questionnaires developed in dominant 5 likert-scales questionnaires were administered to teachers and principals. To investigate the reliability and validity of the questionnaires the researcher conducted a pilot test for principals and vice principals in number 4, 5PTA members, 2 supervisors and 3 experts which they are excluded of the main research.

In order to make sure whether the questionnaires were free from vague and unclear item, the draft questionnaire were examined by advisors and by one educational leadership post graduate students on the area for comment before the main study was conducted. The comments were used to improve the clarity of statement, grammatical and typographical error and interpretation of the instruction and to build revised questionnaires were administered to the sample.

The pilot study was conducted to check whether the Likert type scale can generate the expected information and to consider their internal consistency and to improve the items for the main research. Pilot testing was conducted on 12 teachers of Hesu primary schools. After piloting some of the items were improved and a few items were removed.

Reliability of the Instruments

By using the result of the pilot study, the reliability of the items which were prepared to measure teachers and principals' views towards Automatic promotion policy practices first cycle primary school of students were tested. The attitude inventory items was tested for its reliability using Cronbach Alpha method the reliability result from the pilot test is $r = 0.7$ which is reliable. According to the standard set, Cronbach Alpha value greater than 0.5 is taken as adequate for Research purpose (Montee et. al, 1990).

3.4.2 INTERVIEW

Interview were employed for the study because the researcher believes that this gives the respondents to express their opinion and feelings freely. According to Anderson (2000), interview has many advantages. People are more easily to participate in the interview than completing questionnaire; the interviewer can clarify questions, to be answered by respondent, providing more information that is complete available. Hence, open interview conducted with district education experts and CRC supervisors. According to Best and Kahn (2003), interview makes possible what a person knows (knowledge), what a person likes (values and performance) and what a person think (attitude and opinion) by providing access to what is inside a person's mind.

3.4.3. Focus Group Discussion

The researcher were conduct focus group discussions with each 12 members of 9 groups of 105 PTA in the sample school, So that the researcher could get detail and reliable information about the Assessment of Automatic promotion policy practice in first cycle primary school students. The very purposes of conducting focus group discussion with PTA members were many in number and difficult to disseminate questionnaire because most of them cannot understand and write properly. Before the FGD started, the researcher briefed the aim of the discussion and created conducive

environment for discussion. The points of discussion were on Assessment of Automatic promotion policy practice and implementation of it in first cycle primary school students. Generally, Focus Group Discussion was made on the same issues raised on the questionnaire and supposed to get clear and additional information regarding the issue under the study.

3.4.4. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Secondary data are useful for comparative purpose and are effective. They provide opportunity for replication and enable the employment of research design. Accordingly, the researcher obtain secondary data of 4 years (2009-2012) from districts and Zone education office reports, and OEB annual statistics of repeaters and dropouts and also the document that shows the ratio of PTR, PSR and STR included in the data gathering activities.

3.5. Method of Data Analysis

The researcher employed quantitative and qualitative method of data analysis. The data gathered in questionnaires and documents analyzed quantitatively using frequency table, percentage while responses obtained through focus group and interview responses analyzed using narrative analysis. In addition chi-square test used to close ended questions, so to check the presence of significant differences among the responses of two groups of respondents.

Finally, the data collected through interview and open-ended questionnaires were presented, analyzed, narrated, and organized in systematical form, by supplementing the data gathered through close ended questionnaires. In addition to this, the researcher used qualitative narrative written techniques and gives more attention to quotations from the respondents.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter contains the main part of the study which means analysis of the findings. The data collected through questionnaire and interviews are analyzed using percentage. The information obtained through document analyzed using tables. On the other hand the data obtained through interview is summarized qualitatively in words.

The data was collected from a total of 379 respondents. To this effect, a total of 260 copies of questionnaires were distributed to 230 teachers and 30 principals and vice principals the return rates of the questionnaires were 98.2% from both teachers and principals and vice principals. Moreover nine sample district experts and 5 CRC supervisors were interviewed and 105 PTA members made focus group discussion with them by arranging the groups in members of 15 in seven groups by clustering schools. The chapter consists of two major parts. The first section deals with the characteristics of the respondents, and the second section presents the analysis and interpretation of the main findings.

4.1. Distributed and Returned Questionnaires

Table 2 Number and percentage of returned questionnaires

No	Respondents	Distributed	Returned	Usable returns	Percent
1	Teachers	230	226	226	98.2
2	Principals	30	30	30	100
	Total	260	256	256	99

As it is indicated in table 2 above, out of 230 questionnaires distributed to the teachers, 226 (98.2%) properly completed copies, were returned and used for the analysis. Similarly, out of 30 questionnaires distributed to the Principals and vice principals, 30 (100%) were properly completed and included in the final analysis of data.

4.2. Characteristics of Respondents

The five groups of respondents were asked to indicate their background information. The details of the respondent's characteristics are given in table below.

Table.3 Characteristics of the Respondents

No	Item		Respondents										Total	
			Teachers		Principal		PTA		Supervisors		District Experts			
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Sex	M	95	41.30	25	83.3	92	87.61	4	80	5	55.5	220	58.08
		F	135	58.69	5	16.6	13	12.38	1	20	4	44.4	159	41.95
		T	230	100	30	100	105	100	5	100	9	100	379	100
2	Qualification	TTI	17	7.39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	4.48
		Diploma	197	85.69	17	56.6	1	1	2	40	6	66.7	223	58.8
		BA	16	6.95	13	43.3	2	2	3	60	3	33.3	37	9.76
		Others	-	-	-	-	102	97.14	-	-	-	-	102	26.91
		Total	230	100	30	100	105	100	5	100	9	100	379	100
3	Service	1-5years	27	11.4	2	6.7	81	77.1	-	-	-	-	110	29
		6-10 years	123	53.4	16	53.3	24	22.9	-	-	1	11.1	164	43.3
		11-15 years	65	28.3	7	23.3	-	-	2	40	2	22.2	76	20
		16-20 years	4	1.8	2	6.7	-	-	1	20	2	22.2	9	2.4
		21&above	11	4.8	3	10	-	-	2	40	4	44.4	20	5.3
		Total	230	100	30	100	105	100	5	100	9	100	379	100

4.3. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

As the policy of the Automatic promotion of the country more service and active teachers should assigned to teach first cycle primary school students because to get more talented student in the future career of their performance. From the above table observed most of the teachers are diploma holders and have service more than two years. This implies as the standard needed for the cycle fulfilled. In addition to the qualification, the percentages of female teachers were high. This helps many female students to attracted to school and stay in school without high percentage of dropout. The qualifications of district expert's majority of them were diploma holders that match of teachers.

This implies that there is no variation in education status the leading bodies if more qualified than the followers all support given get more acceptances.

As depicted in the table above, male respondents account for 41.3% of teachers, 83.3% principals, 87.6% PTA, 80% of CRC supervisors and 55.5% district education experts while 58.7% teachers, 16.7% principals, 12.4% PTA, 20% CRC supervisors and 44.4% district education experts were females. This implies that the participation of both sexes found different. The participation of female teachers in sample first cycle primary schools is high, but the numbers of female in the parts of other respondents are low in number this shows as the numbers of females in part of leaders' position needs especial attention because most female students forced to come school, With respect to education background majority of the teachers 85.6% are diploma holders as the standard of the country the minimum qualification for the cycle fulfilled. On the other hand PTA's 97.4% of them are below grade twelve. The qualification of district experts education status are 6 (66%) diploma and 3 (33%) are first degree holders and that of CRC supervisors 2 (40%) diploma and 3 (60%) are first degree holders from this we understand that to give the more knowledgeable one should be higher than those of managed one in addition to this understanding the policy needs better skills.

UNESCO (2005) asserted under qualification of teachers is directly linked to lack of adequate academic qualification, training and mastery of content and know-how of teaching. In relation to this, one can safely say that though there were remarkable progresses were made so far in provision of qualified teachers, still the presence of under qualified teachers in some districts requires more effort in Bale zone.

As we see from item 3 of table 3 the service year of majority teachers between 6-10 years 123 (53.4%) as we know the implementation of automatic promotion policy practices for first cycle primary school students in Ethiopia before those teachers employed began, so most of them have no adequate understanding. Beside the teachers, the school principals and vice principals also lacks understanding of the policy of automatic promotion policy practices so, this issues needs attention in the eye of policy makers and experts of education. On the other hand in most schools the service years of PTA 81 (77.1%) are 1-6 years because the school management guide. so this also has its own side effect to implement the policy because it is difficult to internalize the practices. Regarding service years

most of the experts and supervisors have more service years than that of teachers'. This helps teachers to get experience and different practices. In other hand the service years of PTA were in average of three Years. As we know to bring change in the school more times needed to understand the external and internal situation of the school, so this has its own effect to implement the policy as well as the plan of the school.

4.4. Grade Retention and Automatic promotion of students

The main problems, especially in the early grades of primary school, are related not so much to learning as to teaching, that is, to methods and contents. The criteria used for assessing academic performance and then way schools are managed higher repetition rates are related to more student years on average needed to pass a grade and to complete primary school success fully, entailing additional cost and a loss of internal efficiency for the education system (UNESCO, 2007).

Parents expecting a negative effect of automatic promotion on their children may want to move their children to a school with grade retention. The introduction of automatic promotion removes the incentive previously linked to the threat of retention and use variation in the implementation of the policy over time in state primary schools

Table4. Views of Automatic promotion Policy of Stakeholders

NO	ITEM	RE-SPON-DENT	A		UD		DA		TOTAL		χ^2
			NO	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	Grade retention is better than automatic promotion.	T	160	70.4	4	1.7	62	27.42	226		.58
		P	25	83.3	2	6.7	3	10	30		
		TO	185	76.5	6	4.2	65	18.71	256	100	
2	Grade repeaters develop negative Attitude towards school.	T	152	42.9	3	1.3	71	31.3	226	100	.380
		P	20	67	2	7	8	26.6	30	100	
		TO	172	54.95	5	4	79	28.95	256	100	
3	Grade retention increases the likelihood That a student will become a dropout.	T	160	71.1	3	2.2	63	27.9	226	100	.186
		P	20	66.7	-	-	10	33.3	30	100	
		TO	180	69.1	3	2.2	73	30.6	256	100	
4	Repetition and dropouts cause Educational wastage.	T	220	97.3	-	-	6	2.7	226	100	.001
		P	28	93.3	-	-	2	6.6	30	100	
		TO	248	95.3	-	-	8	4.65	256	100	
5	Introduction of automatic promotion Helps to reduce dropout rates.	T	172	84.9	4	1.7	50	22.1	226	100	.405
		P	10	33.3	2	6.7	18	60	30	100	
		TO	182	59.1	6	5.35	68	41.05	256	100	
6	Automatic promotion Increases school efficiency.	T	192	84.9	10	4	24	10.61	226	100	.017
		P	19	63	1	3.3	10	33.3	30	100	
		TO	211	73.95	11	3.65	38	21.95	256	100	
7	Repetition and dropout are the two challenges in primary education In Ethiopia.	T	210	92.6	4	1.7	12	5.31	226	100	.001
		P	25	83.3	2	6.7	3	10	30	100	
		TO	235	88.95	6	4.2	15	7.65	256	100	

T = Teacher P = Principal To = Total N = Number % = Percent

Table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degrees of freedom.

As indicated in table 4 item1 most of the teachers 160 (70.4%) said grade retention is better than automatic promotion to help under achieving students performing better in latter grades. More than

half 25 (83.3%) principals also responded that the statement “grade repeaters may develop negative attitude towards school is not correct.”

A chi-square test was also calculated to check whether the opinion difference exists among the two groups or not. The table value of $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ was found to be extremely greater than the calculated $\chi^2 = 0.58$ for four degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, which implies there is statistically no significant difference among the respondents response regarding the automatic promotion is better than retention for under achieving students.

On the other side, from the interview with the district education experts and CRC supervisors; Automatic promotion is better for under achieving students in latter grades therefore, as indicated in the chi-square results it is possible to conclude that underachieving students perform better if repeat than automatic promotion but as the interview made with district experts and CRC supervisors’ retention has no advantage in latter grades. In addition as the discussion made with PTA of the majority sample schools if students treat accordingly automatic promotion is better than retention.

With regard to item 2, 152 (42.9%) teacher respondents and 20 (67%) school principals’ respondents responded that “grade repeaters may develop negative attitude towards school” is correct. The interview responses obtained from district experts and supervisors also agree with the teachers and principals. The computed chi-square value $\chi^2 = 3.80$ for item 2, less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This means, there is no significance difference in response of the two groups of respondents about grade repeaters may developed negative attitude towards schools.

In item 3, respondents of teachers 160 (71.1%) and 20(66%) strongly agree and agree grade repeating increases to dropout. The respondents confirmed that it is true that grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will become dropout. A considerable number of teachers 63 (27.9%), 10 (33.3%) however, did not know this fact. The computer $\chi^2 = 0.186$ was less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at a significance level of 0.05 and four degrees of freedom indicated no significant difference between the views of two groups.

As item 4 of table 4 indicates, 220 (97.3 %) teachers and 28 (95.5 %) principals Concerning the facts related to grade repetition, dropout and educational wastage, most of them agreed that grade

repetition cause educational wastage. Only 2 (6.6%) of principals answered disagree with out know the fact. Since the computed chi square value $\chi^2 = 0.001$ is lower than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning the idea grade repetition and dropout causes educational wastage. In addition the interview result from supervisors and experts of district office the challenges of automatic promotion is dropout. The discussion of PTA also insures the above idea. As the table 4 item5 also indicate 172 (84.9%) of the teachers responded that the statement “the Introduction of automatic promotion will help to reduce dropout rates” is true and agree in addition majority of the principals 18(60%) disagree with that of teachers furthermore the education experts and supervisors agree automatic promotion cannot solve the dropout rates in the school. the computed chi square value $\chi^2 = 0.405$ is lower than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning the idea the introduction of Automatic promotion will help to reduce drop rates but the knowledge between teachers and principals has gap principals closely know the main challenges of automatic promotion more than teachers.

Regarding table 4 of item 6 most the respondents of teachers 192(84.9%) and principals more than one third 19(63%) to the statement of introduction of Automatic promotion increases school efficiency agree with the statement in the other hand one third of principals disagree with the statement as they explain their idea after the implementation of Automatic promotion most students dropout so it is impossible to say Automatic promotion increases school efficiency. As the responses of education expert and CRC supervisors if automatic promotion get attention in all stakes holders of education it can help for school efficiency. The other group of respondent at focus group discussion with PTA members of sample school strongly disagrees with above statement. The computer chi-square result 0.017 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning the idea of Automatic promotion increases school efficiency.

Regarding item 7 of table 4 most of respondents of teachers 210(92.6%) and 25(83.3%) agree with statement repetition and dropout are the two challenges to universalize primary education. Responses obtained from education office and CRC supervisors also the same to the above, focus

group discussions with PTA also assure the challenge to universalize primary education is repeating and dropout of the student is the main. Chi-square result 0.01 is less than the table value $\chi^2= 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning to the idea repeating and drop out are the main challenge to universalize primary education.

Combined with insufficient coverage, repetition, and drop-out and low learning achievement are critical problems facing school systems in low-income countries. Enrolment has traditionally been the principal concern and the educational indicator of key consideration. Drop-out and low learning achievement have gained attention in recent years and there is growing consensus on the importance and magnitude of the problem. Repetition, on the other hand, has been somewhat opaque in school statistics both at the school and at the national and international levels scarcely researched and analyzed, and seldom taken into account in the definition of educational policies and programs (World Bank, 1990)

4.5. Students Dropout and Retention in Sample Districts

Table 5. Students Dropout and Repetition 2009-2012 in Sample Districts

No	Districts	Year	Dropout %			Repeaters %		
			Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Sinana	2009	9	8	8.5	3.1	4.2	3.7
		2010	8.4	6.8	7.6	4.3	4.7	4.5
		2011	8.3	6.9	7.6	4.1	5.1	4.6
		2012	8.9	4.5	6.7	3.2	4.5	3.9
2	Goro	2009	3.2	5.5	4.3	2.5	1	1.7
		2010	7.6	8.8	8.2	1.2	3.4	2.3
		2011	9.5	7.3	8.4	2.4	4.5	3.45
		2012	5.6	8.2	6.9	1.5	2.0	1.75
3	Dinsho	2009	5.2	6.7	5.9	2.3	3.5	2.9
		2010	4.3	5.4	4.8	5.1	2.3	3.7
		2011	6.4	6.9	6.6	4.3	3.2	3.7
		2012	4.4	5.7	5.1	3.3	2.3	2.8
4	Robe	2009	8	8	8	3.1	3.5	3.3
		2010	6.5	8	7.2	3.4	4.2	3.8
		2011	4	3.6	3.8	4.6	3.4	4.0
		2012	4.2	5.5	4.85	5.2	3.2	4.2

Source: Bale Zone and Sample Districts Annual Report Document 2009-2012

As above data obtained from sample districts of Bale zone at the end of the year the percentage of repeaters and drop out increases and decreases this means it shows fluctuation. For example the number of repeaters in Sinana in 2009 (8.5%) in 2010 (7.6%) again in year 2012 (6.2%) on other hand the number of repeaters in Robe in 2009 (8%) and in 2010 (7.2%), in 2011(4.6%) however the number of repeaters decreases in many of districts still there are repeaters and drop out students the implementation of automatic promotion still applied with such problems. From the above truth one can understand repeaters and dropout of students the challenges encounters automatic promotion of first cycle primary school students.

Relating to repetition rate (UNESCO, 2002) asserted that if UPE is to be achieved by the year 2015, it would require universal enrollment in grade1 and the cohort should be proceed through cycle with zero repetition, and stay in the school with no interruptions. High rates of repetition stay in the school with no interruptions. High rates of repetition and dropout leads to inefficiency and wastage of scare resources and becomes the major challenges to achieve UPE goal particularly in developing countries.

4.6. Implication of Education Stakeholders to Automatic Promotion

The MoE (2002) guideline, which is under implementation, clearly defines the duties and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the education sector. It also highlights each stake holder's accountability at each level. As a result, the last two years have shown an unprecedented community turn-out, not only in raising funds and constructing classrooms, but also in owning and managing the development of education in their respective communities. Education and training boards and PTA's have become instrumental in lowering dropout and repetition rates and restoring good discipline in schools (MoE, 2004)

Table 6. Implication of Automatic promotion

NO	Items	Respo ndents.	AG		UD		DA		Total		Com.	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Automatic promotion implies the need to follow up each student's learning Progress.		T	215	95	-	-	11	4.8	226	100	.176
			P	27	90	-	-	3	10	30	100	
			TO	242	94.5	-	-	14	5.5	256	100	
2	Continuous assessment plays a great role in implementing automatic Promotion		T	202	89.4	2	0.9	22	9.8	226	100	.385
			P	26	86.7	1	3.3	3	10	30	100	
			TO	228	89.11	3	1.2	25	9.7	256	100	
3	Parent involvement is important in practicing automatic promotion		T	217	96	5	2.2	6	2.7	226	100	.001
			P	26	86.68	-	-	4	13.3	30	100	
			TO	243	95.3	-	-	9	4	256	100	
4	Implementing automatic promotion, Children with learning difficulties Should be given extra time.		T	224	99.1	-	-	2	0.9	226	100	.037
			P	30	100	-	-	-	-	30	100	
			TO	254	99.2	-	-	2	0.8	256	100	
5	Automatic promotion demands little on the part of teachers		T	26	11.5	7	3	193	85.3	226	100	.003
			P	5	8	6	20	19	63.3	30	100	
			TO	31	12	13	5	212	82.8	256	100	

T = Teacher P = Principal To = Total N = Number % = Percent

As it is indicated in table 6 item1, the majority of the teachers 215(95%) and principals 27(90%) included in the study said it is true that automatic promotion implies the need to follow up each student's learning progress agreed with the statement. Many education experts and supervisors said a program arranged to support different level performance students in the school to help students. Most PTA members believe this idea but they need the students' time for extra work in home but those of PTA members of the town strongly agree with idea. Chi-square result 0.017 is less than the table value $\chi^2= 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance disparity between two groups of respondents concerning the need to follow each students learning progress. As the truth of education this implies that all students if get follow up from different stake holders of education become best achievers as the other students Item 2 table 6 respondents of teachers 202 (84.9%) and 26 (86.7%) of principals the use of continuous assessment plays a great role in implementing automatic promotion some respondents of teachers 22 (9.8%) and principals 3(10%) refuse the idea because the complicated process of continuous assessment used in the school. The opinion received from focus group of two PTA members disagree with the idea.

Table 6 of ranking and promoting students with written test is the main. As chi-square result 0.385 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about continuous assessment plays a great role in implementing Automatic promotion in the finding of (Daniel, 2002) about continuous assessment reveals Variety of items and assessment techniques should be selected and applied, The teachers must be equipped with an adequate knowledge and capability about assessment techniques.

Regarding item 3 of table 6 most respondents of teachers 217 (96%) and 26 (86.6%) of teachers agree with the statement Parent involvement is important in practicing automatic promotion and 5 (2.2%) of teachers refuse themselves to said more but chose to say undecided, on the other hand 6 (2.7%) of teachers and 4 (13.3%) of principals response with opposition the statement Parent involvement is important in practicing automatic promotion. Chi-square result 0.01 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning Parent involvement is important in practicing automatic promotion. Parents and education experts said in words as they give their opinion but the reality concerning parents they need more time instead of follow their student and support school engage with their work.

Item 4 of table 6 almost total of respondents of teachers 224 (99.1%) and all principals 30 (100%) agree with statement in implementing automatic promotion, children with learning difficulties should be given extra time to catch up with others. The other few respondents of teachers refuse to give the side of their opinion instead 5 (2.2%) of them said undecided. In contrary to the opinion of most Teachers and principals 6 (2.7%) of teachers and 4 (13.3%) of principals respond to the statement Implementing automatic promotion, children with learning difficulties should be given extra time to catch up with others. The response received from education experts and supervisors also agree with that of most teachers and supervisors, similarly many PTA members' agree with most of teachers and principals but in action they can't give extra time for their study. As chi-square result 0.385 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about giving extra time for children with learning difficulties to catch with others.

Regarding item 5 of table 6 most teachers 193 (85.3%) and principals 19 (63.3%) disagree with statements Automatic promotion demands little on the part of teachers, some teachers 26 (11.5%) and 5 (8%) principals agree with idea Automatic promotion demands little on the part of teachers, some teachers 7 (3%) and 6 (20%) principals refused to give their idea instead said undecided. In addition to most education experts and supervisors disagree with it because implementing automatic promotion is the not the responsibility of one part it is the part of all stake holders. Chi-square result 0.01 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning automatic promotion demands little on the part of teachers. From the above findings we conclude that concerning the implication of automatic promotion all the stakeholders could give attention for the implementation.

Table 7 Attitude of teachers and principals towards Automatic promotion of students

	Item	Re- spo	AG		UD		DA		Total		X ²
			NO	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	I get more satisfaction when all my students promote to the next grade	T	58	25.6	17	7.5	151	57.81	226	100	0.26
		P	11	36.7	2	6.7	17	56.82	30		
		TO	69	31.5	19	22.1	168	57.31	256	100	
2	I am afraid that automatic promotion will leave a considerable number of students functionally Illiterate	T	205	90.7	-	-	21	9.2	226	100	0.385
		P	25	83.3	2	6.6	3	9.9	30	100	
		TO	230	87	2	6.6	24	9.55	256	100	
3	Automatic promotion means rewarding students regardless of their individual ability and effort.	T	215	95.1	2	0.9	9	4	226	100	0.385
		P	11	36.7	2	6.7	17	56.6	30	100	
		TO	226	65.9	4	3.8	25	30.3	256	100	
4	Automatic promotion policy helps me treat all the students equally	T	35	24.5	7	3	184	81.4	226	100	0.047
		P	7	20	1	3.3	14	46.7	30	100	
		TO	42	22.25	8	3.15	198	64.5	256	100	
5	I would prefer to continue with automatic promotion of my students even if I had the choice	T	71	31.4	20	7.8	135	59.9	226	100	0.196
		P	15	50	4	13.3	11	36.7	30	100	
		TO	86	40.7	24	10.5	146	48.3	256	100	

T=Teacher P = Principal To=Total N=Number %= Percent

Table 7 Item 1 summarizes the degree of agreement of teachers to statements which express feelings beliefs or commitments related to automatic promotion. Accordingly 151(57.8%) teachers and 17 (56.8%) of principals do not agree with the statement their students promote to the next grade. on the other side 58(25%.6) teachers and 17(36.7%) of principals show their agreement. From this one can say automatic promotion is the best instead of repeating and dropout of students in school.

Few of teachers 17 (7.5%) and 2 (6.7%) of principals also fall on an undecided position with regard to this statement. As most of education experts said the aim of teaching is to understand the ability needed at that level if students learn accordingly no more satisfaction there than looking the fruit so they agree with idea. But PTA members not satisfied with passing of student totally. Chi-square result 0.26 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents concerning getting more satisfaction when all their students promote to the next grade.

Regarding item 2 of table 7 most of the teachers 205 (90.7%) and 25(83.3%) principals who participated in the study agree that automatic promotion will leave a considerable number of students functionally illiterate. Contrary to this idea few numbers of teachers 21(9.2%) and 3 (9.9%) of principals disagree with the former statement but few number principals 2 (6.6%) give their opinion undecided. Parents of children also said students of grade 1-3 have no ability to understand numeracy and other abilities needed at that level so they strongly agree with automatic promotion automatic promotion will leave a considerable number of students functionally illiterate. As chi-square result 0.385 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about automatic promotion will leave a considerable number of students functionally illiterate.

Item 3 of table 7 respondents' 215 (95.1%) teachers and 11(36.7%) principals believe that automatic promotion means rewarding students regardless of their individual ability and effort, But most principals 17(56.6%)and 9 (4%) of teachers oppose the statement above. Few number of teachers 2 (0.9%) and 2 (6.7%) of principals refuse to give their opinion instead said undecided. Chi- square result 0.385 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about automatic promotion rewarding of students without their ability but there is gap of knowing students ability between principals and teachers.

As majority of education experts from Sinana said automatic promotion means support students with different learning abilities set for the implement ion of it if students treated with school program it is not rewarding students without their ability.

From the above finding we conclude that if students use programs for them in school show progress in addition all stakeholders of education follow students achieve the desired goal for the level. Regarding item 4 of table 7 majority of the respondents of teach 184 (81.4) and 14 (46.7%) principals do not believe that automatic promotion policy will help them treat all the students equally. In this regard, only 35 (24.5%) teachers and 7 (20%) of principals agree to the idea. The respondents of teachers 7 (3%) and 1 (3.3%) principals' responses were undecided. The computer chi-square result 0.047 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about automatic promotion policy will help them treat all the students equally.

From the focus group discussion of two groups of PTA members said most the students with learning problems day to day after lunch spend their time in school compound they believe that clever students and retarded cannot treat equally in school.

From the above views of different respondent one can finalize that arranging schedule for all types of learners in school cannot get equal understanding treating the fast learners, medium learners and slow learners help to treat all students equally.

Table 7 item 5 concerning the commitment of teachers to continue practicing automatic promotion in their school 135 (59.9%) of teachers and 11(36.7%) of principals have found not to be committed. On the other hand, the half of principals 15 (50%) agree to continue and one third of teachers 71 (31.4%) also agreed to practice of automatic promotion. 20 (7.8%) of teachers 4 (13.3%) of principals concerning commitment undecided to continue or not. The computer chi-square result 0.196 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about automatic promotion. In general terms, the above responses of teachers regarding their beliefs, feelings and commitments indicate the negative attitude of teachers towards automatic promotion.

4.7. Different Education Inputs in Sample Districts

Table 8.Data of Different Inputs Ratios in Sample Districts

No	Districts	year	PSR G.1-4	PTR G.1-4	STR G.1-4
1	Sinana	2009	1:55	1:55	1:2
		2010	1:50	1:46	1:2
		2011	1:57	1:57	1:2
		2012	1:51	1:51	1:2
2	Dinsho	2009	1:45	1:45	1:3
		2010	1:47	1:47	1:2
		2011	1:45	1:45	1:3
		2012	1:43	1:46	1:3
3	Goro	2009	1:52	1:46	1:3
		2010	1:47	1:47	1:4
		2011	1:54	1:60	1:3
		2012	1:46	1:55	1:3
4	Robe	2009	1:50	1:50	1:2
		2010	1:45	1:52	1:2
		2011	1:43	1:55	1:2
		2012	1:43	1:55	1:2

Source: Sample District Annual Abstract and Bale Zone Education Report of 2009-2012.

As the table above shows, the ratio of pupils sections in sample districts is above the standard. For example the ratio of PSR of Sinana in three consecutive years was 1:55, 1:50 and 1:57 in years 2009, 2010 and 2011. Similarly the ratio of sample districts also above the standard of minster of education. According to, MoE (1994) the standard for PSR for first cycle was 1:50. However, the above data depicts that in sample districts the ratio was above the standard of first cycle.

In general, the above in puts are believed to directly influence the students' performance in first cycle primary schools. The provisions of these inputs facilitate the teaching learning of education. The zone

under discussion need to focus on the provision of these inputs so as to meet the standards set by the Ministry of Education. EFA global monitoring report 2005 revealed that PSR and PTR are much higher in sub-Sahara Africa, typically exceeding 40:1 which puts as a target for 2015.

4.8. School Facilities Impact on Students Learning

Table 9. Facilities of Teaching Materials

No	Item	Respo ndents	AG		UD		DA		Total		Comp.
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Facilities of teaching are appropriate in the school (text book, chair, black board etc...	T	60	26.5	15	6.6	151	66.8	226	100	.585
		P	7	23.3	2	6.7	21	70	30	100	
		TO	67	26.2	17	6.6	172	67.2	256	100	
2	The School compound Has sufficient water, sport field.	T	127	54.6	8	3.5	101	44.7	226	100	.016
		P	9	30	3	10	18	31.1	30	100	
		TO	136	53.1	11	4.3	119	49.7	256	100	

T = Teacher P = Principal To = Total N = Number % = Percent

Table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degrees of freedom As depicted in table 9 item 1 Most of teachers 151(66.8%) and 21(70%) principals responses for the statement facilities of school materials show their commitment by disagreement, in other side 60 (26.5%) of teachers and 7(123.3%) principals show their agreement by showing opposition, similarly 15(6.2%) of teachers and 2(6.7%) of principals not to say more but undecided. PTA in discussion responses some of school facilities like text books of students, furniture in school has scarcities because of this many parents were forced to pay different expenses for school if it difficult to them they drop out their children from school. The computer chi- square result 0.585 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about facilities of teaching learning materials. From the above implications one can conclude that most school students have no sufficient facilities because of this they are not satisfied to continue with their lesson. Similarly item 2 of table 9 most teachers 127(54.8%) and few of principals 9(30%) show their commitment by agree with idea the school compound is comfortable for learning atmosphere. More than one third of the respondents 101(44.7%) of teachers and 18(31.1%) principals give their responses by opposition to comfort ability of school compound, beside to this 8(3.5%) of teachers and 3(10%) of principals show their

idea by answering undecided. Chi-square shows the significance difference or not with 0.16 is less than the table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about comfort ability of school compound.

AS one of CRC supervisors from Goro district said school facilities are the crucial things specially text books, class room size with number of students not match, in addition school compound is not safe for teaching learning conditions lack of clean water, school fence is not safe for students (16/11/2005).

From this finding we conclude that for students to stay in school learning facilities of school is mandatory. In addition in most school scarcity of materials like students' chair, text books, electricity should be fulfilled safe school compound attractive for children primary school students interested to play at their rest time sport fields ,water comfortable fence has great impact for students to achieve the goal of school or not. Schieflebe (1990) stated that the availability of text books and facilities of education are very important and facilitates the teaching learning process towards the goal.

Generally the teaching learning materials are one of the major factors that help student to stay School. The learning materials with safe compound attract students. Facilities of school like toilet, clean water, electricity and adequate sport field are necessary for any school. From the above finding we conclude that many of the schools have deficiency of these facilities so this needs attention in the future.

4.9. Challenges of Automatic Promotion policy practices

According to the response of different stakeholders automatic promotion has many challenges some of them are the attitude of teachers and parents, the facility of schools, the criteria of promotion the provision of support given to students the presence of training are some of the challenges automatic promotion of students in primary first cycle schools. Amare (2002) states the importance of instructional materials in teaching learning process that help to facilitate active learning, to relate theory with practice, to make learning more functional by increasing efficiency and encourage creative thinking.

The availability of instructional materials and facilities in the classroom is critical to efficient and effective student learning. These instructional materials and classroom facilities help learning more concrete to bring quality learning. Therefore, to achieve this, teacher commitment and wise use of instructional materials are very important.

Table 10. Challenges Related to Automatic promotion

No	Items	Respo	AG		UD		DA		Total		comp
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	There is Clear and Understandable policy	T	50	22.1	5	2.2	171	75.6	226	100	0.001
		P	12	39.9	-	-	18	59.9	30	100	
		TO	62	27.3	5	2.2	189	83.6	256	100	
2	Facilities of teaching learning in school	T	220	97.3	-	4	6	2.7	226	100	0.00
		P	23	76	-	3	7	23.3	30	100	
		TO	243	94.9	-	-	13	5	256	100	
3	There is regular follow up of parents and Teachers	T	19.5	86.2	-	17	31	13.6	226	100	0.01
		P	14	46.6	10	7	13	43.3	30	100	
		TO	219	85.3	1.2	24	44	17.2	256	100	

T=Teacher P=Principal To=Total % =Percent N= Number

As table 10 item 1 illustrates above most of the teachers 171(75.5%) and 18 (59.9%) they showed their understanding about clear policy about automatic promotion by disagreement they don't know how to apply the policy. On the other hand 50 (22.2%) of teachers and 12 (39.9%) of principals express their understanding by agreement but few numbers of teachers express their understanding of the policy. As a result the table value of $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ is greater than the chi-square value 0.01 with four degree of freedom. This implies there is no significance deference among the two respondents at the presence of clear and understandable policy of automatic promotion policy in primary schools. As one of the interviewed education experts from Robe said, *Since the implementation of new education policy no training given for the primary teachers as well as for principals but teachers and principals only practicing the policy from the former one and from college they trained before. (June13-2013)*

From the above finding one can conclude before implementing any reform training and seminar for those implementing the policy is compulsory. More over in service training at issues related to education if given for stake holders of education the reform brings the needed goals.

Item 2 of table 10 as shows above 215(86.2%) teachers and 23(76.6%) of principals regarding the accessibility of teaching materials in school strongly oppose without fulfilling education materials many schools opened for two or more years. But 6 (1.7%) teachers and 7 (23.3%) of principals support the idea teaching materials of education fulfilled in school. The computer chi- square result 000 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about challenges of automatic promotion insufficient facilities teaching learning materials.

Focus group PTA members from Hesu primary school CRC as they responded the main challenges of their schools are scarcity of materials of learning, especially books.

According to Lockheed and Verspoor (1991), one of the most common constraints of enrollment, participation and drop out of children at school is shortage of school facilities like inadequate buildings, latrines, water, seats, library and pedagogical center etc. For these scholars, quality of physical plant and facilities are directly related to student performance. From the above result the main challenges of automatic promotion is scarcity of materials in most primary schools of the zone especially text book for newly opened schools.

Regarding item 3 of table 10 most teachers 195 (86.2%) and almost half of principals 14 (46.6%) show their agreement by saying parents and teachers follow up has gap in other hand 31(13.6%) teachers and 13(43.3%) principals responds by saying there is no gap of parents teachers and teaching in following up of their students. Few numbers of teachers 3(10%) show their feelings by undecided. The computer chi- square result 000 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about challenges of automatic promotion.

Majority of focus group of PTA from Goro districts said *Challenges of Automatic promotion is absence of follow up of teachers as well as parents many of the students in the districts after school*

spend their time by looking after cattle in rural female students fetch water from other place out of home.

One district education expert from Dinsho said *many students drop from school and underachieve in the school because of teachers and parents follow up were forgotten so this absence of follow up is the main challenges of automatic promotion in most of Dinsho districts. (Monday 13/10/2005 E.C)*

One can conclude that parents and teachers follow up of students in school and out of the school improve the result of students and students do not spend time by plying instead give concentration for their lesson. Many parents think only school can improve their children but forget their part after school in home in addition regular relation with school is solution for the challenges.

As depicted in table 10 item 4 most of teachers 160 (70.7) and 26 (86.7%) of principals strongly agree with idea of students repetition and drop out are the main challenges of automatic promotion in most sample districts, but some of teachers 50 (22%) and 4 (13.4%) of principals express their feelings by disagreement in addition few of teachers express their idea by undecided. The computer chi- square result 0.080 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about challenges of automatic promotion is students' dropout and repetition is the most.

Some of the supervisors from Sinana district replied that many *primary school struggles to achieve the UPE goal by increasing the net enrollment and gross Enrollment of students but many of them after two or three months returned back of home because Many parent and social related problems drop out of school.* Coloclough (2003) states that many children of both sexes, who enrolled in September at the beginning of school year leave by November because of demands on their labor during harvest time, are great. From the result above and responses we conclude that drop out and repetition is the main challenges in primary school and brings education wastages in county as well as to achieve the universalizing of primary education by 2015 difficulty of the issue to be work in collaboration.

4.10 Promotion Criteria of Students in the First Cycle

Table11 Promotion Criteria of Students

No	Items	Respo ndents	AG		UD		DA		Total		Comp
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Develops capacity to read and use Mathematics to Acquire information	T	136	60.1	25	11.06	65	28.7	226	100	.077
		P	24	80	1	3.3	5	16.6	30	100	
		Total	162	63.3	24	9.4	70	27.3	256	100	
2	Helps students to understand their surrounding in School without absence	T	218	96.5	3	1.3	5	2.2	226	100	.075
		P	21	70	2	6.7	7	23.3	30	100	
		Total	239	93.4	5	1.9	12	4.6	256	100	

T=Teacher P=Principal To=Total % =Percent N= Number

Table value $\chi^2=9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degrees of freedom

As indicated in table 11 item 1 of above most of teachers 136 (60.1%) and 24(80%) of principals agree with the criteria for the promotion of students sat for the levels but some of teachers 65(27.8%) and 5(16.6%) of principal's Shows disagreement with idea for promotion of student set similarly few of them said undecided. Chi- square result 0.072 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ alpha 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no high significance difference between two groups of respondents about criteria sat for the promotion of students in the level.

As many of district supervisors and education experts replied the criteria sat for promotion of student develops the capacity to read and use mathematics is the criteria in addition to the others. From the above result we conclude that grade one to three should understand numeracy and the four skills in that level to promote to the next level

Regarding item 2 of table 11 as majority of teachers 218(96.5 %) and 21(70 %) of principals agree with idea to promote to the next the criteria is to understand their surrounding and present in school most of the lesson time. Some teachers 5(2.2%) and 7(23.3%) of principals disagree with above mentioned criteria of promotion of students to the next class. As the chi- square result 0.751 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that

there is no significance difference between two groups of respondents about criteria for promotion policy. Responses of two focus group discussion of PTA from Sinana districts indicates that *most students were promoted without even to spell English and their mother tongue letters so the criteria so for Promotion could not distinguish students' difference and performance.*(Thursday, June 15, 2013)The above mentioned findings showed as the criteria for promotion needs some improvements students understand the level knowledge and some other mechanisms of promotion criteria should be added.

4.11. Types of Support Provided for Students

Table 12 provision of students support

No	Items	Respo	AG		UD		DA		Total		Comp
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	There are Programs to Support Students in School.	T	192	85	7	3.09	27	11.9	226	100	0.00
		P	28	93.2	-	-	2	6	30	100	
		Total	220	89.1	7	3.09	29	8.95	256	100	
2	Parents follow their children Progress.	T	62	27.4	32	14.1	132	58.3	226	100	0.05
		P	5	16.7	3	10	22	73.4	30	100	
		Total	67	22.1	35	12.1	154	65.8	256	100	
3	Student Motivation Provided in school.	T	36	15.9	58	25.6	132	58.3	226	100	0.23
		P	7	56.6	1	3.3	22	73.4	30	100	
		Total	43	36.2	60	14.4	154	65.8	256	100	

T=Teacher P=Principal To=Total % =Percent N= Number

Table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degrees of freedom

Table 12 item 1 indicates most of the teachers 192 (85%) and 28 (93.2%) of teachers agree with the provision of support in school, but few numbers of teachers 27 (11.9%) and 2 (6.7%) of principals show their commitment by disagreement. Contrary to this very few numbers of teachers 7 (3%) of them responded undecided. As the chi- square result 0.00 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no significance difference

between two groups of respondents regarding the provision of program of support students in the school.

Most of the supervisors from Robe districts said there was program for Students support in school but some few teachers cannot attentively use the school program to support students even those use the program also not constantly support students. (Friday June, 2013).

The other PTA members from focus discussion held at Hisu CRC in sinana replied that *Parents with low educational back ground were not willing to send their Children to the school because they did not understood value of education. More, instead they prefer to involve their children in other activities (18/10/2005).*

Nega (2007:15) describes that Abduction and forced early marriage are among one of the harmful traditions that hinders student to participate in different programs arranged for them especially female students. Regarding table 12 of item 2 as shown above most of teachers 132 (58.3%) and 22 (73.4%) of principals show their responses by disagreement to the parents follow up has gap, in other hand some teachers 62 (27.4%) and 5 (16.7%) of principals agreed with the provision of parents follow up has no gap. Similarly few teachers 32(14.1%) and 3 (10%) of them show their opinion by undecided. The chi- square result 0.054 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no significance difference between two groups of respondents regarding the provision of support of parent has a gap.

Most of education experts from Dinsho express the reality of the districts where they work as follows.

Parent in the districts need their students time for extra works after school they fetch water, collect fire wood and look after sheep. In some season most of the student are absent from school especially during harvesting time (20/10/2005).

UNESCO (2011:49) revealed that if parents perceive education to be inadequate quality, they have less incentive to keep children in school. From the above result we understand that parents follow up for students were the main one as we understand most of the time students spend with parents. If parent treat student in their home they can achieve. Parent support is necessary with corporate with school teachers and leaders.

Table 12 item 3 indicates 132(58.3%) of teachers and 22(73.4%) of principals disagree with provision of Student Motivation Provided in school, in other hand 36(15.9%) of teachers and majority of principals 17 (56.6%) of them shows their feeling in agreement about the presence of motivation of students in schools. Only few numbers of teachers 7(3%) show their opinion by responded undecided. The chi- square result 0.230 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom. This implies that there is no significance difference between two groups of respondents regarding the provision motivation. Concerning the presence of motivation of students in school majority of focus group participant from Goro district said, *Motivation in school sometimes given at the end of semester with school leaders but it is missed most of the time. The motivation given also not concern all activities motivation in school sometimes rewarding of students ranked in school.*

The above finding shows in school motivating students' needs great concern motivation in terms of materials in terms of moral has great impact in student result. But as many of respondents show their opinion there was lack of motivation.

4.12. Availability of Training and Workshops

Effective professional training of teachers has a contribution on the sources of educational process. Hence, teachers needs to know much more about subject matter, methods of teaching, handling learners and the ability to relate the subject- matter with environment. Jones and Jones (1990) stated the importance of teachers training as "if education is to be successful, next to curriculum, teacher training is one of special significance which needs consideration so as to maximize the development and changes in education

Table13 provision of Training and workshops

No	Items	Respo	AG		UD		DA		Total		Comp
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Seminars and workshops about Automatic promotion given.	T	30	13.2	-	-	196	86.7	226	100	0.082
			P	16	55.3	3	10	11	19.4	30	
		Total	46	33.7	3	10	207	53.1	256	100	
2	Training of continuous assessment given.	T	100	44.2	7	3	119	52.7	226	100	0.756
		P	12	40	2	6.7	16	53.3	30	100	
		Total	112	42.1	9	4.85	135	53	256	100	

T=Teacher P=Principal To=Total % =Percent N= Number

Table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degrees of freedom

As table 13 items 1 indicated above most teachers 196 (86.7%) and few numbers principals 11 (19.4) showed their commitment by disagreement to the provision of workshop and training about Automatic promotion. Others 30(13.2%) of teachers and 16 (55.3%) of principals showed their commitment by agreement with the availability of workshop and training about Automatic promotion. With opposite to this 3(10%) of principals show their agreement by undecided. The chi-square result 0.082 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom This implies that there is no significance difference between two groups of respondents regarding the provision of workshop and training about Automatic promotion.

Majority of Goro district experts revealed the below idea. *Most of the time majorities of principals get the access to training and workshops. But the trained principals as well as the trained supervisors cannot give training or teachers about ways of assessment, automatic promotion implementation Because of this many teachers have deficiency to implement policy.*

Regarding table 13 of item 2, most of the teachers 119 (52.7%) and 16 (53.3%) of principals response, with the provision of training of continuous assessment by disagreement. in other hand some of teachers 100(44.2%) and 12 (40%) of principals show their commitment with agreement. In

opposite to this few number of teachers 7(3%) and 2 (6.7%) of principals express their idea by undecided. The chi-square result 0.756 is less than table value $\chi^2 = 9.4877$ at 0.05 significant levels with four degree of freedom this implies that there is no significance difference between two groups of respondents regarding the provision of workshop and training about the provision of training and workshops about the continuous assessment.

As one supervisor from Sinana replied

Most teachers in school have no guide how to evaluate their students the assessment techniques and method different from one school to the other in the same districts. In addition to this same teachers Student result without knowing their performance (14/10/2005).

Generally as the above different respondent responses replied the provision of training and workshops for teachers and principals has gap more over many teachers without getting training in special issues connected to students teaching learning process made many mistake to implement in the right way. Extensive research indicates that neither holding students back a grade nor promoting them unprepared fosters achievement. Studies indicate that retention negatively impacts students' behavior, attitude, and attendance. Automatic promotion undermines students' futures when they fail to develop critical study and job-related skills (Denton, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1999). In contrast, recent research and practice indicate that alternative strategies, which strike at the root causes of poor performance, offer genuine hope for helping all students succeed. These strategies are: intensify learning, provide professional development to assure skilled teachers, expand learning options, assess students in a manner to assist teachers, and intervene in time to arrest poor performance.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

As it mentioned in the introduction part, the study was about Assessment of Automatic promotion practice implementation in First cycle primary schools with particular reference to Bale zone in Oromia Region. From this point of view descriptive survey approach was employed as a method of the study. Twenty five First-Cycle Primary Schools were selected as source of information from four Districts of the Zone. Questionnaire, interview and document analysis and focus group discussion were the data collection instruments used to get information from District education experts supervisors, school principals, Teachers and PTA members of the schools. The collected data were, analyzed based on the specified research questions of the study research questions of the study were:

1. What are the statuses of automatic promotion policy practices?
2. What are the views of stakeholders of education about automatic promotion?
3. What are the problems related to automatic promotion practices
4. What remedial measures can be taken to overcome the challenges? Depending the above research questions summary of the major findings were as follows

1. Automatic promotion implication of Respondents

1.1. Most of the teachers failed to get satisfaction in automatic promotion in first cycle primary schools, Instead, they afraid that automatic promotion leaves a considerable number of students functionally illiterate. They believe that automatic promotion means rewarding students regardless of their individual ability and effort. They do not also agree with the opinion that the practices will teachers to treat their students equally. Consequently, school teachers disagree to the statement that they would prefer to continue with automatic promotion even they had the choice not to practice it. From the focus group discussion held with PTA members, it was also reported that there is strong opposition of automatic promotion among parents in the primary school.

1.2. Concerning teachers' awareness about the requirements in implementing automatic promotion, few of them responded positively. They know that automatic promotion demands lots of efforts on their part. More specifically, they believe that automatic promotion implies the need to follow-up

each student's learning progress, to help students with learning difficulties, the need to involve parents, and the need to give extra time to the children with learning difficulties to catch up with others. Most of the teachers identify that grade retention is better than Automatic promotion

1.3. Automatic promotion to help underachieving students perform better in latter grades. Considerable number of teachers does not also know the negative impact of grade retention on students' attitude towards school and dropout rates in schools. Most of them do not believe that the introduction of automatic promotion will help to reduce school dropouts and consequently increase school efficiency. Also, two third of the teachers do not know the fact that grade repetition and dropouts are the two major problems in the primary schools to universalize primary education.

2. Challenges of Automatic Promotion

2.1. Most teachers and parents failed to follow students for their progress. Some teachers try to follow but as many parents and school principals and vice principals responded parent are not volunteer to follow their students. As many supervisors and education experts respond school exhaust to get parent of student but parents are not to go school.

2.2. Students registered at the beginning of the year but after they stayed two or three months dropout of schools as school principals and most home room teachers responded. Parents participate in group discussion also agree with idea students drop out problems related to schools and parents themselves.

2.3. Regarding knowledge of automatic promotion most teachers have gaps how it implemented, as education experts of some districts replied especially newly employed teachers have inadequate knowledge given how ever in school induction course is given is not sufficient the older one also challenges the reforms.

2.4. Facilities of education and school compound of most schools in rural have no comfortable compound, in addition insufficient text book and large class size as most of the teachers' response

were the challenges for newly established schools. Majority of PTA and CRC supervisors as said new books has great scarcity.

3. Criteria of Students' Promotion in Automatic policy practice

3.1. Most of the teachers oppose the criteria for promotion that says students at primary level grade one to three should develop the capacity to read and use Mathematics acquire knowledge at the level with, contrary to teachers principals support the criteria. Other respondents of PTA members oppose the criteria set for the level. Majority of education experts and supervisors support the criteria.

3.2. Majority of teachers and principals supported the criteria students promote if they understand their surrounding and present in school. But student's parents strongly oppose the criteria if other criteria not added this insufficient to distinguish the ability of students.

4. Provision of Training for Respondents

4.1. Most teachers and principals responded about provision of training about automatic promotion have no adequate knowledge in case of this they said encounters with problems for implementation. Few of principals have knowledge of automatic promotion how to implement. Supervisor also has no adequate knowledge as they replied.

4.2. One of the techniques of evaluation in the level is continuous assessment but many of teachers and principals have lack of knowledge. As some supervisors of CRC express their feeling about provision of training about continuous assessment it is not enough.

5. Support Provided for Students

5.1. Majority of teachers and principals agree with students in school has program for support in school. All the respondents' supervisor, experts and PTA members agree with idea about support of student in the school. One of the challenges in programs of support is total support without separating differences of students' performance.

5.2. Many schools rewarding and motivating students at the semester and end of the year it has gap, in addition parent support to motivate their student as they express also has gap.

5.2. Conclusions

1. From the forgoing discussions and findings, one can see that teachers lack the awarnes about the negative impacts of grade repetition. Even they prefer it as an effective remedial strategy to help low-performing students in later grades. This belief may come from teachers' observation of the relative improvements in oppose the introduction of automatic promotion or any other alternative approaching alleviating the problem of grade repetition and its negative consequences. These lacks of awareness may be because teachers do not have the access to research findings on the issue.

2. Dealing with low-performing students both grade retention and automatic promotion are ineffective strategies unless the students are given individual attention and alternative pathways to achieve the necessary objectives assigned to their age-level. That is, teachers need to give day-to-day assistance based on their individual needs both inside and outside the classroom. However, it was found out that the majority of the teachers in the selected schools prefer to choose between grade retention and automatic promotion in dealing with low per forming students rather than helping these pupils based on their individual needs.

3. Teachers' attitudes are one basis for the decisions teachers make at the classroom level of the education system. If teachers have negative attitude towards a given reform in any education system, they may behave purposely or unconsciously in ways that change or undermine the programs proposed by policy makers. On the other hand, if teachers have appositve attitude towards a given educational reform they are more likely to take ownership of the change and to extend effort to its effective implementation in their classroom. In this study, however, teachers are found to have negative attitude towards automatic promotion of students in their schools. This may imply that even if teachers have the knowledge of all the implications of automatic promotion policy in their teaching at the classroom level, they may be reluctant to give up practices that have been followed for many years. This may inevitably affect the implementation of automatic promotion in our schools negatively.

4. Concerns to arrange programs that can be used to help low-performing students at school level were found to be almost insufficient. This could leave those students who need extra help to achieve the minimum requirements in the given grade before promoting to the next grade, attended. Practicing automatic promotion in this condition could result in the low achievement of a considerable number of students at the end of the first cycle.

5. Classrooms as well as teachers could not grow with the same proportion. This has resulted in large class size and high student-teacher ratio affecting the teaching learning process. There is also a need to print more text books so that every student gets a copy of a text book for each core subject. Generally great effort and resource is required to lower down the class size and teacher pupil ratio from 57 and 55 respectively to 50.

6. The implementation of continuous assessment in grades 1-4 requires, among others, the availability of assessment guides in the hands of each teacher, and manageable number of Pupils in each section. But, as it is found out in this study, assessment guides on continuous assessment are not available and the number of pupils per-section ranges from 55-57. It is then less probable to implement continuous assessment in a class containing more than 50 pupils and where there are no guides for assessing pupils' educational achievements. In addition, teachers' lack of training on continuous assessment could also contribute for implementing of continuous assessment in the primary schools.

7. For automatic promotion be effectively implemented, teachers need to correct the learning Problems of low-performing students by applying different strategies. Unfortunately, the teachers in the selected schools use only re-teaching (or tutoring low-performing students as a group). Even in this strategy, they use the same method and content presentation as in the original instruction. This may be a good indication that teachers lack the knowledge and skill about the different types of corrective measures. It may also be due to the large number of students in their class, due to the lack of appropriate instructional materials or poor assessment strategies. In any way, teachers are poor in taking the appropriate measures so that low-performing students catch up to their peers and promote to the next grade.

8. Obviously, there are repeaters and dropouts in the grades 1-3. All the respondents replied that students' promotion to the next grade level is decided based on continuous assessment and whether or not students do not miss a considerable number of periods in the academic year. But, grade repeaters are mainly characterized by their long absence from school in the academic year. The case of repeaters, who have attended almost all classes in the academic year, is very few. This implies that, implicitly, the main criterion used by schools to make decisions on students' promotion to the next grade is attendance. This type of practice accompanied by poor continuous assessment practices and poor supportive strategies of teachers and schools may leave a considerable number of students, who will automatically promote and complete the first-cycle, functionally illiterate. It is also a loss on the part of other repeaters, and the schools when students are made to repeat the same grade for one or more year(s) using only attendance as a main criterion. It will also leave the students at risk of dropping out of school.

In general terms, all the results of the study indicate that schools lack the main essence of automatic promotion and its implications. And one can conclude that automatic promotion is still in problem for the first-cycle primary schools of Bale Zone.

5.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the finding from this study, the following recommendations are forwarded in order to improve the implementation of automatic promotion in grades, 1-3 in Bale Zone primary schools.

- Any educational reform can be made meaningful if teachers, and, principals and all stake holders of education are made to understand why reforms have to be made in the education system and how these will be affected. However, the awareness of teachers and stakeholders of education in the grades 1-3 about the reasons behind the introduction of automatic promotion in our schools and about the different alternative strategies in dealing with low-performing students is found to be inadequate. Therefore, teachers should get the opportunity to learn about automatic promotion policy implementation practices and the different strategies in helping underachievers. Such opportunities can be organized in the form of in-service courses, seminars, conferences, workshops and field trips. The provision of different research findings on the issue for the schools will also help in this respect.

- The effective implementation of automatic promotion in the schools requires, among others, the commitment of teachers. In this regard, encouraging teachers to conduct action research on the impacts of retention and the different alternative strategies on students' achievement, on dropout rates, on students' attitude towards school, etc., will help to win their commitments.
- As it is found in the study, teachers' utilization of the different assessment instruments to assess the progress of students is poor. Thus, for effective implementation of continuous assessment in the grades 1-3, adequate training should be given for teachers on how to prepare and use the different assessment techniques such as written tests, performance tests and observational techniques (i.e., anecdotal records, checklists, rating scales, interviews etc.).
- It was reported that teachers provide class work, home take assignments, oral exercises, and written tests to assess pupils' overall achievement, it was found that teachers keep records of written tests only. Hence, for assessing and making genuine decision about the true picture of pupils' achievement from different angles, it is of great importance to keep records not only of written tests but as well of the different assessment instruments used in classes.
- . The use of feedback and corrective measures usually depends on the number of pupil's per section, teachers' willingness and devotion, and knowledge of the impact of feedback and corrective measures on students' achievement. Without a sound feedback and the application of appropriate corrective measures pupils cannot have knowledge of their educational strengths and weaknesses and consequently cannot be helped to improve their weaknesses. Thus, the number of pupils per section should be reduced to a maximum of 50 so that teachers can manage to provide effective and sound feedback for pupils and apply the appropriate corrective measures. In addition, how to provide effective feedback and how to use appropriate corrective measures should be components of training on automatic promotion for teachers of grades 1-3.
- The provision of facilities should be made to schools in order to fully implement automatic promotion in the grades 1-3 The implementation of automatic promotion requires educational resources such as hand book of assessment guides for teachers, sufficient number of text books for pupils in each subject area, well developed checklists and

observational techniques, alternative materials (i.e. Movies, videotapes, audiotapes, videodisks, film-strips, models, etc.), workbooks and study guides, and promotion guides.

- Cooperation of schools and parents in helping low-performing pupils is found to be loose. This condition should be improved. In this regard, schools can form home assistance programs. These programs provide parents with structured, specific information about ways to help their child academically with homework, sound study habits, or sound work habits.
- Classroom set-up should be further strengthened. In addition, schools should arrange regular follow up before or after school, weekend and/or summer programs, and classes for study skill to help low performing students. The self-contained classroom set-up established in the first-cycle is one positive aspect in the schools in implementing automatic promotion because it helps the teacher identify the needs, strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and help the pupils accordingly.
- Quality of education depends on several factors such as mode of delivery commitment and qualification of teachers, the supply of educational materials, pupil-teacher ratio, pupil section ratio etc. According to the national standards, the first cycle (1-3) primary education requires teachers with minimum qualification of diploma so all concerned organ should seriously concern the above mentioned issues.
- All concerned parties, teachers, parents, students and the schools imparting their share. Retaining a child in a grade is a serious decision. Most of the times, its disadvantages far outweigh any of the advantages a child might receive if held back a grade. Thus, when schools contemplate retention for a child, they should seriously consider all available information (educational, medical and psychological) to help them evaluate keeping the child in a prior grade. The implementation of automatic promotion in schools heavily rests on teachers. Teachers' motivation in the form of training, workshops and seminars may contribute to the effective implementation of automatic promotion. In general, for the implementation of automatic promotion systematically and objectively in the grades 1-3, it is relevant to upgrade teachers' skill of using continuous assessment procedures and the different corrective strategies to identify and help low-performing students through designing training workshops of different kinds, should also be involved in making decisions of students' promotion.

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7. APPENDEXES

7.1 Appendix I

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Respondents:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about automatic promotion in First-cycle primary schools of Bale zone Based on the findings; possible ways for the Implementation of automatic promotion will be suggested. It is, therefore, hoped that at your responses would be very rigorous and sincere. Be sure that responses will be used only for academic purposes, consequently, you will not be responsible for the research outcomes, and all the responses will be kept confidential. Thus you are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire carefully honestly for your responses are the only way to achieve reliable research results.

I am very much grateful to you for taking your time and filling out the questionnaire.

PART ONE -- Background Information

INSTRUCTION: Please indicate your answer short & precise Writing where it is necessary in the space provided.

- 1.1. a. Name of your school _____
b. Location of your school: District _____; Keble _____
- 1.2. Sex: a. Male _____ b. Female _____
- 1.3. Total years of service: _____
- 1.4. Total years of service as a self-contained teacher: _____
- 1.5. Your qualification: a. 12th grade or below _____ b. TTI graduate _____ c. Diploma _____
d. If any other please indicate _____

PART TWO

INSTRUCTION

The practice of Automatic promotion of first cycle primary school of your school (grade1-3)

Use the following Likert scales to indicate your response according to your belief

5=strongly agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree

Use a mark appropriate to you in the box corresponding

No	Item	5	4	3	2	1
1	Grade retention is better than automatic promotion to help underachieving students' performance					
2	Grade repeaters may develop negative attitude towards school better in later grade					
3	Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will become a dropout					
4	The introduction of automatic promotion may help to reduce dropout rates					
5	Repetition and dropout rates are the two major problems that challenge the goal to universalize primary education in Ethiopia					
6	The introduction of automatic promotion increases school efficiency					
7	When it comes to dealing with low-performing students, it boils down to choice between automatic promotion and retention					
8	Automatic promotion implies the need to follow up each students learning progress					
9	Parent involvement is important in practicing automatic promotion					
10	In implementing automatic, children with learning difficulties should be given extra time to catch up with others.					
11	Automatic promotion demands little on the part of teachers					

PART THREE-Attitudes towards automatic promotion

There are four possible answers for each statement you should choose the answer that most closely corresponds to your general opinion.

Use the following Likert scales to indicate your response according to your view.

5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=undecided 2=Disagree 1= strongly disagree

No	Item	5	4	3	2	1
1	I get more satisfaction when all my students promote to the next grade at the end of the year.					
2	I am afraid that automatic promotion will leave a considerable number of students functionally illiterate.					
3	Facilities of teaching are appropriate in our school like book and class size.					
4	Automatic promotion policy enables me treat all the students equally.					
5	I would prefer to continue with automatic promotion of my students even I had the choice not to practice.					
6	I would like to motivate my student in class					
7	Parent like when their student promote without their performance.					
8	Most of the student dropout without completing the desired class					
9	Parents more satisfied when their students repeat in the class until they improved					
10	Most parents dislike automatic promotion in grade one to three					

1. Do you follow your students' progress in your class? -----
2. If your answer for question 1 yes when? -----
3. Are there constant class attendance taking? -----
4. What are the challenges to automatic promotion in your school? -----

PART FOUR: views of major factors that affect automatic promotion in first cycle primary schools.

INSTRUCTION: Indicate your answer by tick or circle on your own views

1. Have you attend training about promotion policy of first cycle primary students?

Yes-----, No-----

2. Are there student repeat in grade 1-3 after automatic promotion implemented?

Yes-----, No-----

3. Are there programs to help students' learning difficulties? Yes-----, No-----

4. Do you consult students' parent s for their students' progress or not?

Yes-----, No-----

5. Do you prepare Assessment plan for students? Yes-----, No-----

6. What are the criteria to promote to the next grade? -----

7.2 Appendix II

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS

Dear Respondents:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about automatic promotion in First-cycle primary schools of Bale zone Based on the findings; possible ways for the Implementation of automatic promotion will be suggested. It is, therefore, hoped that at your responses would be very rigorous and sincere. Be sure that responses will be used only for academic purposes, consequently, you will not be responsible for the research outcomes, and all the responses will be kept confidential. Thus you are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire carefully honestly for your responses are the only way to achieve reliable research results.

I am very much grateful to you for taking your time and filling out the questionnaire.

PART ONE -- Background Information

INSTRUCTION: Please indicate your answer short & precise Writing where it is necessary in the space provided.

1.1. a. Name of your school _____

b. Location of your school: district _____; Keble _____

1.2. Sex: a. Male _____ b. Female _____

1.3. Total years of service: _____ 1.4. Total years of service as a principal or vice principal _____

1.5. Your qualification: a. TTI graduate _____ b. diploma _____ c. BA__ d. If any other please indicate _____

PART TWO

INSTRUCTION. The practice of Automatic promotion of first school (grade1-3

Use the following Likert scales to indicate your response according to your belief

5=strongly agree 4=Agree 3=undecided 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

Use a mark appropriate to you in the box corresponding

No	Item	5	4	3	2	1
1	Grade retention is better than automatic promotion to help underachieving students perform					
2	Grade repeaters may develop negative attitude towards school better in later grade					
3	Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will become dropout					
4	The introduction of automatic promotion may help to reduce dropout rates					
5	Repetition and dropout rates are the two major problems that challenge the goal to universalize primary education in Ethiopia					
6	The introduction of automatic promotion increases school efficiency					
7	When it comes to dealing with low-performing students, it boils down to choice between automatic promotion and retention					
8	Automatic promotion implies the need to follow up each students learning progress					
9	Parent involvement is important in practicing automatic promotion					

10	In implementing automatic, children with learning difficulties should be given extra time to catch up with others					
11	Automatic promotion demands little on the part of leaders of schools					

PART THREE-Attitudes towards automatic promotion

There are five possible answers for each statement you should choose the answer that most closely corresponds to your general opinion.

5=strongly agree 4 =Agree 3=Undecided 2=Agree 1=strongly disagree

No	Item	5	4	3	2	1
1	I get more satisfaction when all my students promote to the next grade at the end of the year.					
2	I am afraid that automatic promotion will leave a considerable number of students functionally illiterate					
3	Automatic promotion means rewarding students regardless of their individual ability and effort					
4	Automatic promotion policy enables me treat all the students equally					
5	I would prefer to continue with automatic promotion of my students even I had the choice not to practice					
6	I would like to motivate my student in class					
7	Parent like when their student promote without their performance.					
8	Most of the student dropout without completing the desired class					
9	Parents more satisfied when their students repeat in the class until they improved .					
10	Most parents dislike automatic promotion in grade one up to three					

1. Do you follow your students' progress in your school-----
2. If your answer for question 1 yes when?-----
3. Is there constant student support in your school?-----
4. What are the criteria to promote to the next grade?-----
5. What are you think the challenge to automatic promotion in your school? _____

PART FOUR: views of major factors that affect automatic promotion in first cycle primary schools:

INSTRUCTION: Indicate your answer by tick or circle on your own views

1. Have you attend training about promotion policy of first cycle primary student

Yes-----No-----

2. Are there student who repeat grade 1-3 after automatic promotion implemented?

Yes-----No-----

3. Are there programs to help students' learning difficulties?

Yes-----No-----

4. Do you consult students' parent s for their students' progress or not?

7.3. Appendix III

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
FOCUS GROUP FOR PTA

Dear Respondents:

The purpose of this focus group discussion is to collect information about automatic promotion in First-cycle primary schools of Bale zone Based on the findings; possible ways for the Implementation of automatic promotion will be suggested. It is, therefore, hoped that at your responses would be very rigorous and sincere. Be sure that responses will be used only for academic purposes, consequently, you will not be responsible for the research outcomes, and all the responses will be kept confidential. Thus you are kindly requested to complete care react actively and honestly for your responses are the only way to achieve reliable research results.

I am very much grateful to you for taking your time and filling out the questionnaire.

PART ONE -- Background Information

INSTRUCTION: Please indicate your answer short & precise Writing where it is necessary in the space provided.

1.1. a. Name of your school _____

b. Location of your school: District _____ Keble _____

1.2. Sex: a. Male _____ b .Female _____

- 1.3. Total years of service: _____
- 1.4. Total years as a PTA of the school: _____
- 1.5. Education status:
- b. TTI graduate _____
- C .Diploma _____ d. If any other please indicate _____

PART TWO INSTRUCTION -Attitudes towards automatic promotion

1. 1. Do you get more satisfaction when your student promote to the next grade at the end of the year? Yes _____ No _____
Reason for your answer

2. Do you believe that automatic promotion will leave my students functionally illiterate?
Yes _____ No _____
3. Automatic promotion means rewarding students regardless of their individual ability and effort? yes _____ No _____
4. Is automatic promotion policy is helping your student to progress?
5. Would you prefer to continue with automatic promotion of students if you had the choice?
not to practice? Yes _____ No _____ what is the reason?
5. Do you like when your student promote without their performance? Yes _____
No _____
6. Do you have time of discussion with school teacher or leaders?
7. What do you think challenges of automatic promotion in your school?
a _____
b . _____
8. Is your student gets special support of teachers for their learning difficulty?
Yes _____ No _____

7.4. Appendix IV

**HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Interview guide for District Education Office experts and Supervisors of CRC

1. How do students in the first-cycle promoted from one grade to the next in your schools?
Since; when you started this promotional policy? Why?
2. How teachers, directors, parents and students receive it?

Is it being implemented as it is intended?

3. What special support do you give in implementing automatic promotion?
4. Are there changes in repetition and dropout rates since the Automatic Promotion Implementation?
5. Do teachers and directors take training about the implementation of automatic promotion and related issues? Yes _____ No _____
6. If your answers for question no 6 yes what are the topic of training?
7. What are the criteria to promote for the next grade?

8. What do you think challenges of automatic promotion?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

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