Implementations and Challenges of Sustainable Development Goals in Developing Nations: In the Case of South Gondar Zone, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the implementations and challenges of SDGs in South Gondar. To attain this purpose, survey questionnaires were administered on a sample of 176 employees. While to the qualitative analysis interview and document observations were used. The study employed mixed methods research approach of parallel concurrent research design. For quantitative data analysis, one sample t-test, Pearson correlation and hierarchical linear regression were used. To the qualitative data, thematic analysis was employed. The study found that the SDG implementation in the study region was "moderate", with average differences between institutions. The major challenges facing the implementation of SDGs are unrealistic goal setting, lack of political commitment, lack of participation, lack of clear policy guide, lack of synergy, lack of capability and over emphasis on one pillar of development. This indicated that both key identified institutional challenges and goal setting characteristics determine the implementation of the SDGs in the study area. Based on this, the study recommends that the study area should set policy goals that are implementable. There should be also participation of the target beneficiaries in the SDGs implementation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation status and the challenges to the implementation of SDGs in South Gondar Administration at zonal level. To examine the influences of the challenges on the implementation of the SDGs, the study was focused on the implementation status of the SDGs, the extent of the challenges in the study institutions and the relationships between the challenges and the implementation of SDGs in signatory public institutions of South Gondar Zone. This is to add value for previous studies conducted in specific reference to the issue under investigation.

Hence, according to Ajulor [1] in recent years, the African continent has found itself at a crossroads due to economic stagnation, political upheavals, crime, inequality, and incompetent government, all of which have resulted in national instability and poverty. The write also added that it is now more important than ever to join together in finding answers to the multifaceted problems of Africa by implementing sustainable development goals. Sustainable development goal is conceptualized as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [2]. It is not only paradoxical, but also unusual for Africa, which has abundant human and natural resources, to experience economic recessions [1]. In concern of this, the vulnerability to shocks in Ethiopia increased from 14.9% in 2000 to 19.5% in 2010 [3], with an average population growth of 2.6% during that time. At the same time, the share of the population living

below the poverty line is still high, at 23.5 percent [4]. It is still grouped under the poorest countries in the world. Ethiopia's appeal for emergency food shortage financing increased by 57 percent from USD 263 million in 2005 to USD 457 million in 2010 (when the PSNP with revised policies was in effect) [3].

According to Ajulor [1], to address and tackle such myriad of problems, the latest pattern in Africa is to follow foreign-made solutions. It has been a repeated action for the international community to introduce a policy in the context of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to developing countries. In the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) period, eight goals with 18 milestones and 48 benchmarks were set to be accomplished by 2015. According to Maduabum [5] at the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) implementation period, there were nations in Africa that had made a significant impact on each of the eight goals. Among them; South Africa, the Seychelles, Equatorial Guinea, Cape Verde, Egypt, Gabon, and the Comoros are expressible.

As to Maduabum, with the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to achieve 17 goals by 2030, the African situation has become much more sympathetic, as many countries, including Ethiopia, have experienced economic downturns. This was due to insufficient planning, political unrest, and bureaucratic bottleneck [1]. In regard to the SDG implementation in Ethiopia, the national and departmental policies and strategies of the FDRE focuses on eradication of poverty and implementation of development interventions that would have returns satisfying all the nation-wide demands while ensuring inter-generational equity. According to the FDRE [6] report, Ethiopia's economy expanded at a pace of 10.8% after three consecutive National

Development Plans were effectively implemented and the SDGs were incorporated. According to Radu [7] the sustainable development goal implementation in an organization is measured by performance indicators. Performance can be defined as "a state of competitiveness of the organization, reached through a level of efficiency and productivity which ensures a sustainable market presence" [8]. Thus, for the concern of this study, goal accomplishment, service quality, time efficiency, employee productivity and organizational learning were utilized as performance indicator dimensions [7].

Ethiopia, without doubt, faces significant difficulties in executing policies and services aimed at long-term growth, including its failure to maintain participation and inadequate policy reform management [9]. As to previous studies, lack of participation of stakeholders or actors such as individuals, private companies, or advocacy groups, each with their own needs and desires and power to affect policy enforcement often causes implementation delays [10]. Sabatier further claimed that "Policy is just a positive idea held in the database if it is not executed correctly". There is still the argument that policy reform deficits are the product of policy implementation rather than the policy-making process [11]. Other scholars [8] also claimed that the policy framework for the implementation of sustainable development, the synergies between stakeholders, supervision, tangible rewards, availability of resource and the human capacity to enforce policy are the major institutional challenges that decide the effectiveness of SDG implementation.

Again, as to Locke and Latham [12], another set of challenges that hinder the implementation of the SDGs are the dimensions of goal setting theory. As to ref. [13] goal setting model has four characteristics to measure goal achievement; goal difficulty, goal specificity, goal participative and goal commitment.
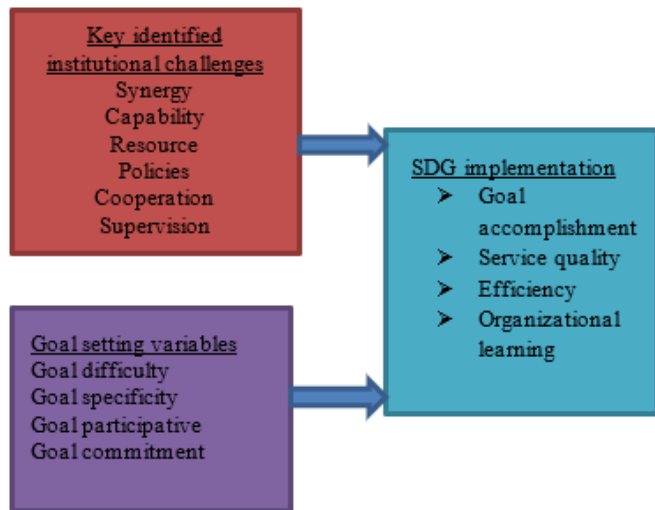

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Furthermore, the relationship between the key identified institutional challenges, goal setting dimensions and the implementation of sustainable development goal is also the other main concern of the research. Thus, the study used the above conceptual frame work to show the relationship between the challenges and implementations of the SDGs as indicated in Figure 1.

Regarding this, researchers such as [1, 8, 11, 14-16] have conducted their studies. According to Jaiyesimi [16] the key

factors that influence for successful implementation of SDGs are level of political support, synergy, institutional and human capacity development, inclusive of development process, mutual accountability, and policy framework. Besides, according to Aunurrafiq et al. [14] goal specificity, goal participative, and goal commitment together cause the level of performance to be enhanced. But the influence of goal difficulty to explain the goal accomplishment was not supported.

Thus, to mitigate the challenges and as a comprehensive public policy, Ethiopia appears to accept international policies as part of its public policy to struggle against underdevelopment. In Sep.2000, the nation implemented what it referred to as a 'millennium development goal', which was abolished and replaced by a 'sustainable development goal', indorsed on Sep.25, 2015. Therefore, in this paper, the researcher made an attempt to examine the implementations and challenges of sustainable development goals in South Gondar at Zonal Administration Level.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In related to public policy implementation issues, several empirical studies have been undertaken in the world in general and in Ethiopia in particular over the years [1, 10, 17-20]. According to Ali [17], academics look at the roots of policy application problems from various angles. They split the causes of implementation problems into two categories: conventional and neurocognitive. Uncertain priorities, a lack of political responsibilities, centralization, and the amount of money available are all factors in conventional accounts. In addition to this, Terefe [10] claimed that cognitive factors also play a critical role in policy implementation. The problem is happened when executing agents or partners attempt to make sense of policy provisions before acting on them. Ali [17], for example, assume that the personal cognitive component has a significant impact on how a policy is applied.

Therefore, as like as any other countries, in Ethiopia, policy implementation faces several bottlenecks. Both policymakers and implementers admit that there is a gap between what is intended and what actually gets implemented. As a result, lamentations are often times heard in public conferences and implementation reports, at parliamentarian conventions, ministerial and wider social institutions [9, 19, 10].

Therefore, from the reviewed studies, the first weakness identified in most of the literatures conducted in Ethiopia regarding policy issues is their less concern for foreign adopted policies and emphasis to the domestic policy implementations and challenges [9, 19, 10]. Besides, the theoretical gap recognized is the research results inconsistency on the relationships between goal setting characteristics and implementation of designed goal. Further, the effects of goal setting characteristics such as goal difficulty, goal participative, goal specificity and goal commitment on goal implementation have not examined in one study collectively. Additionally, the influence of key identified institutional challenges together with goal setting characteristics on policy implementation has not addressed adequately in single research. This shows that the issue of implementations and challenges of the sustainable development goals has not been researched well.

Hence, examining the implementations of SDGs and the effect of the four characteristics of goal setting theory and the key identified institutional variables on the implementation of sustainable development goals is need great attention.

Therefore, against these drawbacks; this study is aimed to examine the implementations and challenges of key identified institutional variables and goal setting facets on sustainable development goal practice in South Gondar at zonal administration level. Thus, this study would contribute to better understand the implementations, challenges, and the relationship between the challenges and SDGs implementation by employing distinctively public policy perspectives. Therefore, to attain the research objective and its contribution, the study was guided by the following research questions.

The main questions of the study are:

- What is the extent of SDGs implementation in selected organizations of South Gondar Zonal Administration?
- What challenges are encountering to implement sustainable development goals?
- Is there a significant relationship between the key identified institutional challenges and SDG implementation?
- What is the effect of goal setting Variables (goal difficulty, goal specificity, goal participative and goal commitment) on SDG implementation?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explains briefly the related conceptual and empirical literature relevant to the implementations and challenges of sustainable development goals.

2.1 Concepts of policy implementation

Policy execution is one of the most important phases in which the government's determination is realized and the pledge made to the public is kept. Implementation, according to Webster's Dictionary and Roget Thesaurus is "to carry out, achieve, fulfill, create, or complete." The combination of individual, substance, technology, and capital is critical in the implementation of public policy [1]. The implementation environment is not without obstacles due to its multi-stakeholder relationships and varied desires. Such problems are more common in developing countries than in developed countries. For example, Nwagboso [21] discovered that policy implementation bottlenecks are widespread in developing countries, especially in Africa, of which Ethiopia is a member.

Sabatier and Mazmanian [22] identified three key factors that impact the attainment of policy goals throughout the whole process. These are manageability of problems addressed, the capability of the statute to constructively structure the implementation process and the net impact of a variety of political factors. Again, Elmore [23] identified four major elements for effective policy implementation: the first is clearly specified tasks and objectives that accurately reflect the intent of a policy; the second element is a management plan that allocates tasks and performance standards to subunits; the third ingredient is an objective means of measuring subunit performance; and the fourth is a method of management controls and social sanctions adequate to hold subordinates responsible for their performance. Dye [24] claimed that implementation is "the continuity of politics by other means" (p. 45), meaning that policymaking does not end with the passing of a bill by the legislature and the signing of the president; rather, it is a change from the legislative branch to the bureaucracy (departments, agencies, commissions of the executive branch).

2.2 Sustainable development goal and Its implementation

On September 25, 2015, the United Nations Assembly, made up of 193 countries, enunciated and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in anticipation of the end of the Millennium Development Goals term, which was December 2015. This will take place over a 15-year cycle, beginning on January 1, 2016, and ending on December 31, 2030. The SDGs have included seventeen goals. Namely, 1, End poverty in all its forms 2, End hunger, attain food security and improve nutrition and encourage sustainable agriculture 3, Ensure healthy lives and promote well-faire for all of all ages 4, Guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all 5, Attain gender equality and empower all women and girls 6, Ensure accessibility and sustainable administration of water and sanitation for all 7, Safeguard access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all 8, Improve persistent, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all 9, construct resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation 10, Decrease inequality within and among countries 11, Create cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and maintainable 12, Safeguard sustainable consumption and production arrangements 13, Combat climate change and its impacts 14, Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development 15, Rehabilitate and promote sustainable use of forest ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss 16, create peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, offer access to justice for all and form effective accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels and 17, Support the means of implementation and strengthened the global partnership for sustainable development [25].

Regarding the implementation, Maduabum [5] contend that in Africa the five objectives and priorities such as slum population reduction, waste reduction, climate change mitigation, marine conservation, and violent death reduction are all headed in the wrong direction.

In regard to the SDG implementation in Ethiopia, the national and departmental policies and strategies of the FDRE focuses on eradication of poverty and implementation of development interventions that would have returns satisfying all the nation-wide demands while ensuring inter-generational equity. According to ref. [6] report, Ethiopia's economy expanded at a pace of 10.8% after three consecutive National Development Plans were effectively implemented and the SDGs were incorporated [6].

2.3 Challenges of sustainable development goals implementation

The intentional imposition of policy, full modification of the agenda if it is not beneficial to the implementers or civil servants saddled with the duty to implement it, insufficient planning, political unrest, and bureaucratic bottleneck are all manifestations of sustainable development goals implementation challenges in Africa [1]. According to Dialoke et al. [26] policy implementation can be influenced by organization, interpretation, and application. Many scholars have often concluded that Africa has no problem with policy plan or formulation rather it is faced with the difficulty of

policy implementation. Another challenge to the implementation of SDG is the incapability to participate the target beneficiaries in policy process [26].

Moreover, the latest pattern of Africa that follow foreign-made solutions to its myriad of challenges, and the introduction of such policies often undermines the ability of indigenous intellectual capabilities to address local concerns. These seem to exacerbate local talent underdevelopment and deprive them of the ability to solve the issue in their own terms. These failures often include policymakers' inability to understand the social, political, fiscal, and institutional context while evaluating policy execution, which often leads to policy failure [27].

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was employed the pragmatic model as its ontological and epistemological base with a mixed methods research approach of parallel concurrent research design (QUAN + QUAL) [28]. For survey questionnaire 176, for interview 8 a total of 184 participants were involved. Both primary and secondary sources were used. Primary sources of the study comprised leaders and employees of South Gondar Administrative Zone. Secondary sources of the study involved documents and reports from selected institutions in the study site. Therefore, the population of the study was employees of the signatory institution in which the sample frame was draw from. Both probability as well as non-probability sampling procedures was used to collect primary data from respondents. This is to increase external validity and transferability [29]. To

select public organizations, purposive sampling technique was employed. Then, the researcher used lottery method simple random sampling technique to select the respondents from the sample frame. The study was also used standardized sample determination and sample proportionate formula to have faire representative of respondents from each organization. Thus, this study is designed to use a standard formula formulated by Israel [30]. Lastly, purposive sampling was employed to identify participants for QUAL strand from selected institutions. Again, closed-ended questionnaires, semi structured interviews and document analysis were tools employed to collect the data. For quantitative data analysis, one sample t-test, Pearson correlation and hierarchical linear regression were used. While to the qualitative data, thematic analysis was employed. Finally, the sample size and its proportional allocation are indicated in Table 1 below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where, n= is the sample size,
N= is the population size,
1= probability of event occur,
e= is the level of precision 5% (0.05) with 95% confidence level;

Therefore, the sample size can be computed in the following manner:

$n = \frac{315}{1 + 315(0.05)^2} = 176.22 \approx 176$. Therefore, 176 is the sample size of the study. Then, the proportion of sample (n) can be adjusted in the following way:

Table 1. Total sample size and sampling design profile

No.	Signatory organization	Population/employee/	Proportional allocation of Sample size to each organization	No. of interviewee
1	Water development, hygiene and sanitation	26	15	1
2	Urban development	42	23	1
3	Rural agriculture development	51	29	1
4	Land administration and environmental protection	36	20	1
5	Health	33	18	1
6	Education	41	23	1
7	Finance and economic development	55	31	1
8	Women, children and youth affair	31	17	1
	Total	315	176	8

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter is all about results and discussions in relation to the research questions stated before. The research findings are grouped into demographic characteristics and findings of data analysis. Results of all quantitative data analysis are presented in the following tables. The first table focused on the demographic characteristics of participates; whereas, the remaining tables comprised of the results of quantitative data analysis complimented by qualitative data analysis concerned on the main questions stated in chapter one. For this research purpose a total of 176 survey questionnaires were distributed to participants who were employees. The rate of return of questionnaires was 158 (89.77%) of which 149 (94.3%) were properly filled in and the rest 9(5.7%) were partially filled in and rejected. In addition, interviews were conducted with 8 individuals who were leaders of the selected institutions.

Furthermore, document analysis was utilized.

4.1 Results of the study

4.1.1 The extent of sustainable development goals implementation in the study area

The SDGs integrated in the GTP II are currently under implementation. Therefore, in order to assess the implementation status of selected public institutions regarding on the sustainable development goals, the researcher employed a standardized questionnaire, interview and document source. Therefore, to examine the survey data and understand the extent of SDGs implementation a one sample t-test was employed and triangulated by interview and document information. The one-sample t-test is employed to determine whether a sample comes from a population with a specific mean value. As the Table 2 below indicated, the

degree of institutions' implementation has a mean value of 3.3893and Std.Deviation of 1.03787. The result showed that the statistics mean is found in a moderate range. This depicted that the SDGs implementation status in the study institutions were placed in a medium level.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SDGs implementation	149	3.3893	1.03787	.08503

Besides, a one sample t-test is also important to determine the statistical significance of mean difference among the institutions. Hence, as shown in the Table 3 below, there is a statistically significant implementation mean difference among the institutions with t (148) =39.862 and p=000. Therefore, the implementation difference among the institutions is statistically significant at p<0.0001.

Table 3. One sample t-test

One-Sample Test						
					Test Value = 0	
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
SDGs	39.862	148	.000	3.38926	3.2212	3.5573

A document review on the six main themes of the SDGs implementation was also conducted. The reason to focus on these six SDGs is because of the July 29/2016 UN General Assembly's resolution A/RES/70/299 recommendation to use eradication of poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world as the main theme among the SDGs. Thus, the six main SDGs are Goal one: End poverty in all its forms everywhere, Goal two: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, Goal three: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, Goal five: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, Goal nine: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation, and Goal fourteen: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development [6].

Therefore, on the six main SDGs, document analysis based on 2018/19 document source of south Gondar administration was conducted. The document showed that in the institutions the implementation of GTP II and SDGs has continued in an even more organized and coordinated manner. A continuous efforts are being made in ensuring the development of agriculture sector that still remains the principal source of the economic growth, to bringing about the expansion of the manufacturing industry through encouraging private investments and coordinating the investments, to expand small and medium enterprises, to increasing the efforts to conserve and develop the natural resources, to strengthen the implementation of the government's development programs and to pave the way for the growth of smaller companies to larger ones. As to the document, this process has created

employments and benefitted the society in particular the youth and women who are presumed the most vulnerable parts of the society. Furthermore, to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, the local government has implemented the health sector policy, strategy and program along with other pertinent development policies across the nation over the past years. By establishing health institutions, training the human resources and deploying them to give health services, the health service coverage in the study site reached 96 percent. Maternal and children health improved considerably. To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and to enhance the level of economic benefit of women, in the last one decade we have seen various development interventions. In this regard, rural women have been supported to enable them get employed in various sectors and have been provided with land title-deeds [31].

On the other hand as to the document source, to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive & sustainable industrialization & foster innovation a considerable resources have been allocated to implement all-weather-roads construction serving all Kebeles. Average time to reach all-weather-roads reduced from 1.7 hours in 2014/15 FY to 1.6hrs in 2018/19. Percentage of communities located over 5 km away from all weather-roads reduced from 36.6 percent in 2014/15 to 35.8 percent in 2018/19. Besides, a considerable development works have been underway with respect to expanding services of potable water supply and sewerage; improving potable water supply service standards and expanding their accessibility; assessing the zonal water resources potential including its quality, and expanding the development of small and medium irrigated agriculture to bring about food security at the zonal level. Regarding to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, extensive watershed development including soil and water conservation is under implementation. Soil erosion is the main challenge for shortage of surface and ground water and efforts to prevent further depletions have been made. These measures created a reliable situation for soil and water conservation [31].

4.1.2 Challenges encountered to implement sustainable development goals

Nowadays, sustainable development is the social advancement model that every Member Country of the United Nations has adopted. It is a development strategy that can take the world to the desirable future. With the expiration of the MDGs which guided global development till 2015, the SDGs have been adopted as a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to the development of nations. To sustain the development of nations on a growth track, the world has established 17 integrated SDGs with its 169 targets to implement. Therefore, according to the interview result several factors encounter to implement the SDGs in its fullest form in the study area. The main factors explained are discussed in themes hereafter.

Weak Political Commitment. According to the participants of the interview lack of political commitment to implement laws that help to promote the practice of sustainable development effectively is one of the factors that hinder the integrated development. This creates other problems by systematically inclining towards one pillar of sustainable development which, in fact, is an obstacle to genuine sustainable development. This could be known from a shallow participation of the public in the decision making process of

investment programs.

Inclination towards one pillar of development over the other. Participants emphasized that sustainable development can only be realized when the three pillars of development namely, economic, environment and social aspect are given equal priority. But participants stated that in the study institutions, the government's commitment is inclined towards promoting investment and other development projects than its commitment to environmental protection. They added that there is indisputable evidence of a weak political will to protect the environment, including the environmental impact assessment process.

Lack of synergy. Achievement of sustainable development, particularly the SDGs, is only possible with synergy among institutions. Concerning on this, respondents contend that this might be the reason of 2030 agenda to make partnership as its cornerstone for the implementation of SDGs. According to them, lack of synergy is a dominant problem to implement the SDGs in acceptable standard in the study area.

Feeble institutional capacity. According to the respondents of the interview, the problem of abled facilitators of programs or projects, problem to regulate against the violators, weak monitoring and evaluation systems can be expressed as challenges of SDGs implementation under this theme.

Lack of clear policy guide to implement the SDGs. Under this theme, participants were stated that lack of clear guidance on policy changes or how the goals ought to be achieved are some of the often reported challenges to the implementation of SDGs. This lack of guidance resulted in varying outlooks, interpretations and neglect of targets.

Unclear goal. The problem of redesign, lack of participation, imprecise goal and problem of common consensus to implement the SDGs are also other group of challenges explained by the interviewees. As to the participants lack of clarity to the SDGs has brought challenges to implement the SDGs within the intended pace of progress.

Lack of proper administration and adequate resource. Participants of the interview asserted that attaining success in the SDGs implementation demands a great amount of financial resource. However, according to the respondents institutions in the study site suffer from shortage of adequate resource to implement the SDGs. Besides, the interviewees contend that lack of transparency and a high prevalence of corruption doubled the problem in the study area.

4.1.3 Correlations between key identified institutional challenges and SDGs implementation

The spectrum of potential correlation coefficient values is from -1 to +1. A correlation value without a sign means that the relationship is positive, while, negative sign indicates negative relationship. A positive correlation conveys, when one variable's score increases (or decreases), the other variable's score increases (or decreases) in the same direction. A negative relationship indicates the change of the scores in different direction. Base on this concept the relation between key identified institutional variables and social SDGs implementation is analyzed here below.

As indicated in Table 4 below, a Pearson product movement correlation was conducted. As such, SDGs implementation has positive and strong relationship with availability of resource, policy framework, facilitators' capacity, teamwork and institutional synergy that ranged between (r =.765[**] and r = .935[**]). Besides, their correlation is statistically significant for all variables at 0.01. The highest correlation value was between SDGs implementation and facilitators capability (r = .935[**]). The lowest correlation value was between institutional synergy and SDGs implementation (r = .765[**]). Therefore, based on the correlation results, one may say that all of the variables have strong and positive relationships between them. This is to mean that as concerned bodies tried to address the identified challenges, they may attain improved SDGs implementation.

4.1.4 Effects of goal setting variables on SDGs implementation

Hierarchical linear regression analysis was performed to test the relationship between the four types of goal setting characteristics or variables and SDGs implementation. An assessment of the assumption of homoscedasticity by viewing a scatter plot between the residuals and predicted values was conducted. The results showed no pattern to the point, and the assumption was met. The paper also checked the assumption of multicollinearity by examining VIF and tolerance. The result showed that all the VIF value is below 10 and the tolerance value is above 0.1. Therefore, the result suggests there is no multicollinearity between the variables and the assumptions were met in a better way. Here, the statistical significance of relationships between variables was tested by examining the p-value, standardized beta coefficients and the coefficient of determination. Change in the coefficient of determination (ΔR^2) was used to examine the additional change in the variation of SDGs implementation with the subsequent addition of goal setting characteristics in the model.

The model summary output indicated that there were four models run. The results presented in Table 5 showed that goal difficulty has a statistically significant and positive effect on SDGs implementation with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.780. This indicates that goal difficulty explains 78% of the variation in SDGs implementation. The F Statistics was also significant at 0.000 indicating that the regression model was fit for estimating the relationship between goal difficulty and SDGs implementation. The standardized beta coefficient of .883 for goal difficulty indicates that for every 1% increase in goal difficulty, there is also a corresponding .883% increase in SDGs implementation. Again, the results in model 2 showed that goal participative has significant influence on SDGs implementation (ΔR^2=.087, ΔF =95.450, p≤ .01). This implies that the addition of goal participative significantly improved on the prediction of goal difficulty alone by explaining almost 8.7% additional variance. When we control for goal specificity in Model 3, the results show significant positive influence on SDGs implementation (ΔR^2=.030, ΔF=42.519, p ≤.01). Again, when we control for goal commitment in Model 4, the result revealed a positive influence on SDGs implementation (ΔR^2=.054, ΔF =155.807, p ≤.01).

Regarding the qualitative analysis, the participants indicated the relationships between key identified institutional challenges, goal setting characteristics and SDGs implementation in the following way. They claimed that improving such challenges can create a fertile ground for better implementation of SDGs in the study area. Participants further stated that from the start of GTP II integrated with SDGs the local government has taken different measures to mitigate the challenges. Among the many measures; improving allocation of resource, increasing the capability of facilitators, building teamwork, and establishing fertile policy environment has contributed for the improvement of SDGs implementation from time to time.

4.2 Discussion

The study emphasized on the implementations and challenges of SDGs in South Gondar at zonal level public institutions. In this paper the both the survey and qualitative results are considerably presented concurrently. Regarding implementation status of SDGs, the result stands against previous work conducted by Ajulor [1] and Maduabum [5] in Africa. According to Ajulor [1] and Maduabum [5] underdevelopment situation in Africa has not changed since the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals' programs. They added that poverty and hunger have not reduced, enrolment in the primary school has not improved, and the gap in gender equality and women empowerment has become broader. Furthermore, Ajulor [1] also claimed that in Nigeria, beneficiaries are not participating in the SDGs program awareness creation. According to him, the farmers, the rural people, the Community Development Associations (CDAs), women group and the youth, are isolated in the discussion on how to implement the SDGs. To the contrary, for effective implementation, Dialoke et al. [26] recognized the reality that there is a need to involve the target clients at every stage of the policy implementation process to ensure transparency and accountability. The finding of this paper also indicated that SDGs implementation in the study area was at a better position with overall mean value of 3.39 and all the indicators of the SDGs were rated as moderate performance level.

Similarly this paper also tried to address the challenges encountering to implement the SDGs in the study site. The finding revealed consistence with previous research findings. Researchers such as ref. [1, 5, 16] found that resource, technology, capacity building, policy coherence, synergy, political commitment, data availability, and monitoring and accountability as major challenges to implement the SDGs. Likewise, the qualitative finding of this paper is also coincide with the findings of these scholars in regard to the challenges faced to implement the SDGs.

Table 4. Correlations between identified institutional challenges and SDGs implementation

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. SDGs implementation	1						
	149						
2. Availability of resource	.893**	1					
	.000						
	149	149					
3. Policy framework	.928**	.912**	1				
	.000	.000					
	149	149	149				
4. Facilitators capability	.935**	.930**	.947**	1			
	.000	.000	.000				
	149	149	149	149			
5. Team work among employees	.874**	.951**	.884**	.905**	1		
	.000	.000	.000	.000			
	149	149	149	149	149		
6. Leader support	.844**	.940**	.864**	.882**	.964**	1	
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	149	149	149	149	149	149	
7. Institutional synergy	.765**	.844**	.797**	.800**	.871**	.898**	1
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	149	149	149	149	149	149	149
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

Table 5. Hierarchical linear regression model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.883[a]	.780	.778	.48882	.780	520.189	1	147	.000[a]
2	.931[b]	.867	.865	.38141	.087	95.450	1	146	.000[b]
3	.947[c]	.897	.895	.33655	.030	42.519	1	145	.000[c]
4	.975[d]	.951	.949	.23405	.054	155.807	1	144	.000[d]

In the aspect of the relationships between key identified institutional challenges and SDGs implementation, previous research by Yurtkoru et al. [8] indicated a strong and positive relationship between availability of resource, capability, support, synergy, policy, teamwork with policy implementation performance. The same is true for this paper finding. The findings showed that the correlations between all the variables were statistically significant and a strong positive relationship. The correlation between SDGs implementation with resource, policy, capability to facilitate, institutional teamwork, leader support and institutional synergy are (r=.893**, .928**, .935**, .874**, .844** and .765**) consecutively. From the finding, it is possible to conclude that the relationships among key identified institutional challenges and SDGs implementation were highly positive. This finding indicated that the more frequently public institution tried to improve the challenges, the greater the level of implementation of the SDGs in the selected institutions.

The finding of the hierarchical linear regression also showed a statistically significant predictive power of goal setting characteristics on the implementation of the SDGs in the study area. The model summary result showed that goal

difficulty has a statistically significant and positive effect on SDGs implementation with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.780, p=0.000. This indicates that goal difficulty explains 78% of the variation in SDGs implementation. Again, the results in model 2, 3 and 4 showed that goal participative, goal specificity and goal commitment have significant influence on SDGs implementation with change in the coefficient of determination value of (ΔR^2=.087, ΔF =95.450, p≤ .01; ΔR^2=.030, ΔF=42.519, p ≤.01; ΔR^2=.054, ΔF =155.807, p ≤.01) respectively. This shows that the addition of goal participative, goal specificity and goal commitment significantly improved on the prediction of goal difficulty alone by explaining almost 8.7%, 3%, and 5.4% additional variance on the SDGs implementation respectively. In this regard, a study conducted by Aunurrafiq et al. [14] to show the moderating effect of the goal setting characteristics on managers' performance revealed significant results and coincide with the result of the current inquiry.

5. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

5.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to extract the implementations and the challenges of SDGs in South Gondar at zonal level. Therefore, to achieve the purpose, working against the challenges is vital. That means concerned bodies or partners for the implementation of the SDGs could apply more effort to mitigate the identified institutional challenges and goal setting characteristics influence for enhancement of the performance status of the SDGs in the study site. In a nutshell, to motivate development that is economically sound, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable, achieving high level of political support, alleviate unrealistic goal setting, ownership by local governments, institutional and human capacity development, inclusive of development process, mutual accountability, and policy reform need to be established and maintained.

5.2 Recommendations

To further strengthen the implementation status and to mitigate the challenges that hinder the attainment of SDGs at the expected standard, the study recommended the following:
- ❖ According to the survey result, the institutions have moderate implementation status of the SDGs. The one sample t-test also showed a statistically significant implementation mean difference among the institutions with t (148) =4.578 and p=000. Therefore, to further accelerate an integrated development, the local government should take performance improvement measures across the institutions and should narrow down the implementation gaps observed between the institutions.
- ❖ The findings revealed that the challenges encountering to implement the SDGs are weak political commitment, emphasis on one pillar of development over the other, lack of synergy, weak institutional capacity, and lack of clear policy guide, lack of proper administration and adequate resource, rent-seeking and lack of good governance. Hence, to come out from these challenges the local government should establish participation of the target beneficiaries, do more to check corruption, and synergy

between the policy implementers and the target beneficiary is highly necessary for the success of SDGs.
- ❖ The identified institutional challenges showed strong and positive relationships with SDGs implementation. Thus, to achieve the 2030 agenda, the zonal administration should consider the socio-political and economic environment of a particular target population, communicating more, thereby carrying along partners of the policy is needed. SDGs implementation in the study area should be changed from the top-down command structure to more consultative and participatory approach to enhance transparency and accountability and reduced political commitment problem.
- ❖ For further improvement in implementation of the SDGs, the local government should set realistic policy goals that are clear, participative, difficult up to acceptable standard, implementable with commitment and the sustainable development goals should be redesigned by the local government to properly inland the goals with environmental considerations.

5.3 Limitations of the study and future research direction

Although this study provides important insight into the implementations and challenges of SDGs, this large area of study needs additional human and material resource. Hence, due to this constraint, the researchers have used limited data from South Gondar administration. As a result, the challenges that affect the SDG practice and implementation of the study area might not be the same with other settings. Moreover, due to the nature of the study, where the participants were asked to evaluate their supervisors, may also affect the employees' focus to answer correctly and provide honest responses about the organizations. In other way round, the quality of data used in the study may be affected by response bias. Therefore, the application of results should not be generalized to all contexts of public or private sectors except those that have similar physical and socioeconomic settings. This implies that the issue under investigation requires future research to include several forms of public organizations and contexts.

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