EDUCATIONAL DECISION MAKING PRACTICES IN PREPARATORY SCHOOLS IN EAST SHOA ZONEOF OROMIA REGIONAL STATE

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JUNE 2013

ADDIS ABABA

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIRMENTS FOR DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Hora Roba Bultu, entitled: Educational decision making practices in preparatory schools in East Shoa Zone of Oromia regional state; and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in (Educational Leadership) complies with regulation of the university and meets the accepted standards with to originality and quality.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Zenebe Barki, who tirelessly combed through this manuscript to correct my tremendous faults and enabling me to come with this finalized work.

I also acknowledge my indebtedness to my wife Jitu Shugute for her love and strong support she has offered me ever since I joined Addis Ababa University. My warmest gratitude also goes to my lovable children Elemo Hora and Anane Hora.

My acknowledgement is also extended to principals of sample preparatory schools for their cooperation and facilitating conditions to me in getting the necessary information during the data collection of my study.

Finally, I would like to thank the tremendous support I have received from my father, sisters and brothers. Especially my father Roba Bultu, ChaltuRoba and Feyissa Roba and longtime friends, Shane Korma, Wari Kushna, Biyo Wrse and Malka Korji for their wise encouragement and moral support during my study.

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
MoE	Ministry of Education
OREB	Oromia Regional Education Bureau
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopian
ZED	Zonal Education Department
DF	Degree of Freedom
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
WEO	Woreda Education Office
GOV'T	Government

ABSTRACT

The rationale for the establishment of representative school governing bodies is essentially to ensure that all stakeholders participate in the governance and management of schools. The purpose of this study is to examine educational decision-making practices in government preparatory schools. It attempted to identify the degree of teachers, students and parents participation in decision-making; the dominant models of decision; how decision is logical; and factors that influence on the implementation of decisions. The method employed in the study was a descriptive survey. Questionnaire, interview and review of documents were used to collect data from 45 teachers, 36 students' council members, 4 principals and 4 PTA members. The samples were selected from four government preparatory schools using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The collected data were analyzed by using various statistical tools such as percentage, frequency, mean and t-test.. The results indicated that stakeholders such as teachers, students and parents have relatively less involvement in decision makin, where as principals hold the lion share. In addition the dominant style of decision-making was more of autocratic leadership style and less participative. Moreover the process of decision-making is not logical and scientific. Furthermore, ineffective communication, lack of transparency, autocratic leadership style and hierarchical structure of authority are found to be among the major factors that negatively affect the decision-making process in the school. Finally, the research investigates that teachers, students and parents prefer participating in the administrative aspects of school leadership and indicated the need for adoption of shared decision-making. Because, it allows greater involvement of stakeholders in decision-making. Shared decision making is a process of making educational decisions in a collaborative manner at the school level. The democratization of school governance supports the idea that stakeholders such as teachers, learners and parents and other members of the community be involved in the activities and decision-making processes of the school. The recommendations forwarded include: Principals need to provide an opportunity to teachers, students and parents to participate in school's decision making in order to develop a sense of responsibility and ownership, administrators should encourage participation in planning and policy formulation, which will facilitate and commit stakeholders to effective implementation of school decisions and the school organization should be structured in such a way that hierarchical differences are diminished and that teachers are given professional autonomy and collegial involvement in decision making process.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, background and statement of the problem with basic research questions, objectives, significance, delimitations of the study of key terms and organizations of the study are discussed briefly.

1.1. Background of the Study

Decision making is the process by which choices are made between alternatives to solve a given problem (Drucker, 1993: 14). Barnard (1938:55) defines decision making as making choices that lead to environmental change. Owens (2001:264) adds to this definition, describing decision –making as, "... the heart of the organization and administration." Holbrook (1999: 22): Veroom and Yetton (1974:47) simply put, decision making reinforces norms and institutes changes within the organization. As a type of organization, schools represent a dynamic, shifting, and evolving environment that gives rise to a nearly continuous stream of decision situation. In response to these circumstances, educational leaders must engage actively in decision making through solving problems in order to continue effective organizational functioning Samier, 2002: 102).

Regardless of instructional environment, decision –making pervades all areas of educational administration (Taylor, 1984:89). Some decision call for committee's input, with a chairperson at the lead who must carefully weigh options before making any conclusion "for" or "against" a proposed solution (Duke, 1980:73). Lunenburg and Ornstein (2000: 155) write that decision- making influences many areas of educational leadership, such as "planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, and controlling."

In addition decision-making serves as an important conflict resolution tool, allowing the members of the school environment to resolve their differences before the educational process is hampered and student learning diminished (Nye and Capelluti, 2003:58)

Though often difficult, decision making assists in reconciling individual needs and organization goals (Barnard, 1938: Hoy and Miskel, 1991:304).

As well as stressing the central role of decision making in an organization, Owens (2001:270) also claims, that organizational leaders are directly responsible for the quality and efficiency of the decision making process. So, within schools decision- making authority rests primarily with school- based administrators- in particular, principals -who may choose to make a decision or delegate the power to another within the school (Barth, 2000: 56).

Indeed, while scholars stress the importance involving staff members and teachers in a shared decision- making process (David, 1995:33; Enderlin Lamp, 1997: 24), principals ultimately control decision –making by initiating the process and ensuring the implementation of the resulting conclusions (s) (Bennis, 1989:66; Johns, 1995:105). Who should be involved in the decision- making process, how an administrator or committee arrives at a solution, and when or how that solution is put in to place are, according to Griffiths (1959:78:), all under the direct control of the schools administration. As a consequence of their position within the educational institution and because of the organizational authority granted to them.

Principals make decisions on an almost continuous basis (Hallinger, 1992:10). To assist in this task, principals may use a variety of decision making models and involve a number of different stakeholders (Green field, 1987:130).

In addition, continuous monitoring and evaluation of plans is also important during the implementation stage by the decision makers. Walelign Admassu and Genet Demissie (2000:106) put it:

> *.....because planning compels visualization of the entire organizational work, it helps mangers in their decision making process. The decisions that are made about the organization's objectives and means of reaching them provide the guide. Lines for making subsequent decisions.*

Therefore, it is certainly worth for decision makers to look in to the objectives and priorities of the organization as a whole in pursuing their decision.

Thus, based on the above facts the study was tried to investigate practices of decision making process, the degree of key stakeholders involvement and the dominant decision making models to make an effective decision in preparatory schools in East Shoa Zone.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Scholars have called for greater participation in decision making as a progressive way of making schools more democratic and more efficient. In Ethiopia, the 1994 education and training policy of Ethiopia indicated participatory system in respect of administration and management of the education system (TGE1994:5). One aspect of decentralized management of education system is the participation of stakeholders in decision making. Decision making at schools is now characterized by greater participation of all stakeholders (parents, teachers, learners and non-teaching staff).

According to Bush and Heystek (2003:19), the stakeholders are all those people who have a legitimate interest in the continuing effectiveness and success of an institution. In contextualizing this definition, one gets a picture of an ideal situation where various stakeholders in a school setting (parents, teachers, learners and principals) come together and make decisions in pursuit of a common interest. This reform in decision making approaches followed by schools presents a challenge for principals in terms of their skills and capacities as they have to adopt more collaborative and inclusive decision making processes.

Research in to the ever- changing school environment and the changes experienced by principals clearly shows that there is now a far greater focus on principals interpersonal skills and capabilities. Since principals are now required to lead the whole school community while facilitating participation and collaboration among stakeholders in decision-making, planning and budgeting, their leadership skills and capacities are critical (Cranston 2001:13).

Day et al. (2001:82) note that the majority of activities to be implemented by principals involve collaborative decision making and that this demands sound interpersonal such as negotiation. Conflict management, Persuasion and collaboration. In addition, Jackson (2000:25) points out that principals need continually and increasingly to involve staff in collective decision making. As key aspects of their job and he emphasizes the importance of consultation, collective decision making and delegated responsibility. It is clear that now a days there are marked changes in the roles and responsibilities of principals in comparison to earlier, when the principal was the main (often only) decision- maker in the school.

Other scholars in the field of school leadership and stakeholder involvement underscore the importance of facilitative leadership by school principals. Principals have to initiate, implement and sustain viable forms of teacher empowerment and shared decision-making at school level. scholars point out the need to think in terms of notions of "power with" and "power through" rather than the more traditional hierarchical "power over" notion that probably most closely aligns with how principals operated in the past (Blasé 2000:64). One may conclude that the success of participatory decision-making has much to do the readiness of the principal to share power and his ability to establish the processes to make participatory decision-making works.

A study conducted by Mulford et al. (2000:6) examined school decision- making process as perceived by principal's teachers and school council members. Their findings seem to suggest that all the stakeholders (teachers, parents and learners) need to be engaged in real decisions about teaching and learning in the school if real improvement in education is to be achieved. Other studies of shared governance, such as those by Karlsson (2002:45) and Mncube (2007:170) point towards the same understanding.

Though the 1994 Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP) calls for active involvement of all stakeholders in all aspects of school decision making process, research has shown that some principals allow little or no subordinate participation in school decision making processes, because such involvement is perceived as un productive (Bush and Heystek 2003:19).

There are considerable researches done on educational decision making. Aseffa Abahumna (1995) studied teacher's participation in decision making in the technical and vocational schools of Ethiopia and found out that the actual level of teachers participation in school decision making was relatively very low.

Makuria Abera (2009), who has conducted a research on implementation in some selected governmental secondary schools of Addis Ababa city administration, has found that most decision making and implementation practices seem to be centralized around principals.

Wendwessen Birhanu (2011) conducted a research on the practice and problems of decision making in secondary schools of Nekemte Town revealed that principals were not participating teachers, students and parents in decision making through their representatives.

The above researchers have studied and found significant out comes of decision making problems and implementation. The researchers were conducted out secondary schools (grade 9-10) and technical /vocational school levels. But this study was conducted to examine educational decision making practices at preparatory school level. According to 2012 the yearly evaluation of the zone, reported that the participation of stakeholders in the implementation of decision was relatively very low.

Correspondingly, the practical observation of the researcher also shows that the existence of less participatory of stakeholders in decision-making process and ineffective implementation of decision might be the causes for conflict and unstable situation in the school compound. These and other observation provokes the researcher to carry out this study.

The purpose of this study was, therefore, to investigate the educational decision-making practices, the dominant of decision making models practiced in government preparatory schools of East Shoa Zone. Moreover, the study was tried to examine the effect of

stakeholders' participation in decision making process. In line with that, the study was attempted to answer the following basic research questions:

1. What are the dominant decision making models in preparatory schools?
2. To what extent do stakeholders participate in school decision making process?
3. To what extent do the decision making process is rational?
4. What are the factors that influence the implementation of decisions in preparatory schools?

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study was to investigate the educational decision making practices in preparatory schools of east Shoa Zone, with a view to provide ideas for enhancing its effective implementation.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

1. To identify the decision making models frequently practiced in preparatory schools.
2. To assess the degree of key stakeholders involvement in decision making through their representatives.
3. To examine whether the decision making process is rational or not.
4. To identify those factors that influences the implementation of decisions in preparatory schools.

1.4. Significance of the Study

As research findings indicate a number of functional outcomes stakeholders involvement showed the encouragement of better decisions. It can be noted that when stakeholders are made involve in meaningful participation and their contribution is considered important, an increase in productivity and organizational commitment.

Therefore, the findings of this research may have the following importance:

1. It may help preparatory school leaders who are experiencing management problems in their schools:
2. The study may encourage the creation of the necessary climate, structures and support mechanisms for engendering genuine participation and involvement in the management of preparatory schools.
3. The study may also create opportunities for principals to review their decision making strategies with the view that other role players should participate in decision making processes and better decisions could make as a result of wider participation.
4. Provide ideas for those who want to pursue further study in the area

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

This study attempted to examine the educational decision making practices by assessing key stakeholders involvement in decision making process (that is principals, teachers, student councils and PTAs members), the dominant decision making models and factors that hinder the implementation of decision making process., for the sake of its relevance, the study was not included other educational leaders with in and out of the school compounds. Preparatory school was selected because the problem is more serious at preparatory school than at other level of education.

Moreover, the study was delimited to gov't preparatory schools. The other non-government preparatory schools were excluded from the sampling due to variations observed in administration process. Accordingly, the four preparatory schools that were taken as sample units are: Batu preparatory school, Oda Bokota preparatory school, Mojo preparatory school and Boset preparatory school.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

It goes without saying that any activity requires availability of sufficient time and accessibility of the relevant current and related materials. In carrying out the study, the researcher did not find his walks free from these problems.

Another challenge that has been encountered by the researcher is that the respondents' unwillingness and carelessness in filling the questionnaire. However, the challenges were faced through patience and resiliently dealing to convince them. Limited experience of research expertise can also be taken as limitation of this study.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

Involvement: Means who makes what decision well as the level of their participation in decision making

Parent Teachers Association (PTA): School committee who are elected by parents and teachers with main responsibility of bridging the school and the community and responsible to the parent teacher congruence (MOE, 1994)

Participation: state of taking part with others, in school's decision making process formally on the basis of determined objectives.

Preparatory school: The second cycle of secondary school (grade 11-12) after passing grade 10 National Examination in Ethiopia.

Principal: staff with school background assigned at the top position in preparatory schools for the purpose of managing, controlling and processing the whole school activities.

Stakeholders: directly concerned in and out school individuals consisting of students', teachers, parents, administrators or other members of the community.

Students' council: An elected body of students with consultative power in administration.

Teachers: degree holders with specialized training who teach in preparatory schools (from grade 11-12).

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study has five chapters. The first part deals with the problem and its approach, the second chapter treated with the review of related literature, chapter three is deals with methodology, and chapter four is about presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study and finally, chapter five deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPRET TWO

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter mainly deals with reviewing literary works of various scholars on educational decision-making practices in preparatory schools. The Chapter contains exposition on the nature of decision-making. It also concentrates on the major types of managerial decision-making and the various conditions under which decision- making takes place. The chapter also provides some definitions of decision-making and discussion of the decision making process as it occurs in organizations. The decision-making process and the steps associated with it plus the for techniques improving decision making were discussed.

2.1. The Nature of Decision-Making

Decision making can be regarded as the process of making a choice between two or more alternatives (Daft. 1994: 251). This definition implies that the decision-makers are faced problem for which various course, of action are proposed and analyzed, and from which a choice that is likely to move the organization in the direction of its mission and goals is made. In making a choice, the decision makers come to a conclusion and select a particular course of action that they fell might enhance the success of the organization. Some decisions are trivial while others have a major impact on the operation of the organization. However, there is wide range of principles to which managers can resort when they are faced with a problem or opportunity.

2.2. What is Decision Making?

There are many definitions of decision making in the literature of the subject. Blau and Scott (1962: 250) see decision-making as a process that usually results in incremental progress and they define it as follows:

> *The experience in solving earlier problems is not lost but contributes to the search for solutions to later problems..... The process of organizational development is dialectical-problems appear, and while the process of solving them tends to given rise to new problems, learning has occurred, which influences how the new challenges are met.*

Sergiovanniet. al (1980:37) provide the following definition.

. . . the process boils down to the basic concept of making a choice among alternative courses of action

Campbell, Corbally and Nystrand (1983:108) prefer the following definition of decision making.

. . . the basic nature of decision is that it is a choice of one from among two or more alternative ways to achieve an objective.

Fraser (1988: 881) broadens this definition and explains decision making as follows.

> *Most authorities describe decision-making as the process of making a choice, from among alternatives. Same make description broader including the steps of defining the problem, generating alternatives to solve problems evaluating the alternatives, selecting the best alternative, putting the best alternative in to effect, and then evaluating the results.*

Lipham, Rankin and Hoeh(1985:80) view decision-making as consisting of three basic dimensions, namely, decision content, decision processes and decision involvement. They explain that decision content is analyzed according to the administrative functions and the types of decisions made by the principals. For example, decision content relates to the following functions of the principal in a school situation, it involves the instructional program, staff personnel, learner personnel, financial and physical resources and school- community relations. Although most of the decisions made by principals all primarily with one of these functions, broader decisions, such as introducing a new curriculum may transcend several of the decision areas. Decisions processes are a dimension which is regarded as the stages of a rational decision-making process for the authors, decision involvement concerns who makes what decision well as the level of their participation in decision-making.

2.3. Type of Decisions

Decisions are made at all levels of the organization, either by individuals or groups of individuals. The type and complexity of the decision to be made will vary according to the hierarchical level at which it is made. However, decision-making is the key activity of the leader or manager. There are different types of decisions to be made within organizations. Many decisions are made unconsciously while others need a good deal of thought and analysis. Daft, (1994:251) makes a distinction between" programmed" and non-programmed decisions as follows:

2.3.1. Programmed Decisions

Programmed decision are repetitive and routine and are based on established systematic procedures (Daft, 1994:251) programmed decisions are made when the situation occurs often enough for the decision rules, policies and procedures to be developed and applied in the future. Examples in schools include the processing of applications for admission, re-ordering of paper and other office supplies when the inventory drops to a certain level: and the processing of end of the year reports. School leaders can usually handle programmed decisions by means of rules, standard operating procedures and specific policies if it occurs frequently. These enable decision makers to eliminate the process of identifying and evaluation and making a new choice each time a decision is required. While programmed decisions, to some extent, limit the flexibility of the leaders, they free the decision-makers to devote attention to other, more important decisions. Programmed decisions can be delegated to lower level employees (Daft, 1994: 251)

2.3.2. Non Programmed Decisions

Non-programmed decisions are made where the situation is unique, poorly defined, unstructured and has important consequences for the organization. An example in schools is the launch of a new instructional program, and designing new study material. Routine for handling such problems do not exist. In the case of non- programmed decisions, leaders have to rely on their own creativity. Leaders are often evaluated on this ability to apply creativity, intuition and judgment to the solution of problems.

Hoy and Miskel (1991:307) use the terms generic and unique to describe both programmed and non-programmed decisions respectively. Generic decisions come from established principles, policies or rules. Recurring problems that mostly confront organizations are routinely solved by formulaic rules and regulations. For example, generic decisions are needed when a principal monitor's teacher absenteeism, mediates student-teacher conflicts, and enforces the disciplinary code. Administrators normally make generic decisions by applying the appropriate rule, principle, or policy.

In contrast, unique decisions are creative decisions that require an administrator to go beyond established procedures for an effective solution. Unique problems are exception to the general principle or rule. A unique decision might arise when a superintendent asks the principal and teachers to introduce curriculum reform. Creative decisions to solve unique problems quite often change the thrust of an organization. In order to seek a creative solution decision maker must be open to a wide range of ideas. They must break out of the standard organizational mindset. It is true that unique events are rare, but it is imperative that decision makers should be able to differentiate between routine & unique problems. Decision-makers make a mistake when they treat a routine situation as if it were a series of unique events or when they treat a new event as if it were just another old problem. Once a problem has been classified as generic or unique, the analysis proceeds.

However, in this ever-changing environment, leaders need to transcend recognize, understand and able to apply sequential steps involved in creative or rational decision-making, Friedman (1990:21) argues that one of the factors related to organizational effectiveness, is the ability of a leader to make sound, logical decisions based an analysis of factual information and the readiness to take appropriate actions to implement the decisions.

It is clear from this discussion that programmed or generic decisions are guided by rules, standard operating procedures and policies. In case of non- programmed or unique decisions, managers have to rely on their own creativity.

The most important factor influencing the creativity of the subordinates is probably the environment in which they work (Smit and De J Cronje, 1997:171). Managers usually foster creativity among subordinates by developing effective communication systems throughout the organization.

Inability of the manager to share information with his subordinates jeopardizes creatively and innovation. Managers are often evaluated on his ability to distinguish between certain types to decisions and accordingly apply appropriate approaches to the solution of the problem.

2.4. Conditions of Decision-Making

Various factors affect decision-making thus often rendering the process complex and difficult. One reason for this is that decisions-making tasks differed greatly in the level of complexity. There are a number of reasons as to why decision-making tasks differed in their levels of difficulty. Some of the reasons include the perceived effort to make the decision, the likelihood that the decision will be correct, the novelty of the decision, and the novelty of the context.

Decision-making is also affected when there are multiple stimuli. Research has demonstrated that if there are more than two information sources, people generally do not use the additional information to make more accurate decision. It is believed that this is due to the use of selective filtering strategy. One such strategy is called the salience bias, where information is selected solely on the basis of how important the decision-maker perceives it to be(Harris, 1998: 114).Also information that is difficult to interpret and process is usually ignored, or given little weight.

Given the scenario that decision-making tasks differ in their levels of difficulty and that one utilizes cognitive resources differently to make decision, it is useful to identify conditions under which decisions occur, so as to enable leaders to make better decisions. According to Smit and de J Cronje(1997:172) decisions occur under certainty, uncertainty and risk.

2.4.1. Decisions Under Certainty

A decision is made under conditions of certainty when the available alternatives and the benefits associated with each are known (Smit and de J Cronje, 1997:172). Decisions in such a situation are made by examining the value of each choice, based on visible attributes and the importance of those attribute to decision-makers. Making decision under certainty involves compensation, that is, the choice is based on one thing over another, which is compensated for by a higher value on attributes.

When choices become more difficult, decision-makers form their choices. This process involves assessing values and previous ideas with their frame of reference. Sometimes choices are on the minimum criteria, which is appropriate in that situation and it is called "satisfying" choice (Harries, 1998:115).

2.4.2. Decisions Under Uncertainty

A decision is made under conditions of uncertainty when the available alternatives, the probability of their outcomes and their potential benefits of effects to individuals are unknown to the manager. The complexity and dynamism of today's organizations and their turbulent environments lead to this state of uncertainty. Uncertainty therefore refers to the conditions under which a manager can't assign even subjective probabilities to a possible state of things (Daft, 1994:253).

It is not surprising that most management decisions involve varying degrees of uncertainty, in the light of the foregoing, since there are usually too many unknown facts that can affect a decision for a manager to be able to predict its probable outcome. Because managers cannot predict outcomes under conditions of uncertainty, they often make decisions based solely on their intuition and belief that their decisions will lead to desirable outcomes.

2.4.3. Decisions Under Risk

A decision occurs under conditions of risk when the available alternatives the potential for costs associated with them, and the probability of their occurrences are unknown (Smit and De J Cronje, 1997: 172) under risk conditions options are already known, but

their outcomes are unknown. Risk therefore means that a decision has clear- cut objectives and that good information is available but the future outcomes associated with each option are subject to change (Daft, 1994:253). Risky decisions are a choice between a definite occurrence and an option with less certain out comes. The selection between these is dependent on individuals, frames of reference, past experience and personal judgment and belief (Smit and De J Cronje, 1997:172). However, the decision maker may refuse to decide or attempt to delegate or involve subordinates in situations where the risk of failure is high. Nevertheless, participation in decision-making remains a basic tenet of human relations theory (Strauss and Rosenstein, 1970:71).

2.5. Decisions-Making Process

2.5.1. Steps in the Decision-Making Process

Various authors have indicated that the identification of a problem followed by logical steps to solve the problem is the point of departure in making a decision (Reynolds, 1997:33: Ubben and Hughes, 1997: 43: Reinharttz, 1989:265) Reynolds (1997: 133) claims that the effectiveness of the team in developing school improvement plans will be dependent on the predetermined sequence of steps that are followed in the decision-making process.

Decisions are concerned with solving problems; any type of decision-making will have different definable steps in the process. The process of decisions-making can be considered to consist of steps beginning with problem identification and ending with evaluation of its outcomes. However, it is a cycle of events in that, having decided on a solution, it is usual to monitor and evaluate the results of that decision- this may give risk to further decision- making.

Those with responsibility in the decision –making process should go through a series of steps that lead to a particular result. Decision-making is therefore a sequential process in the sense that, in most decision situation, managers go through a number of steps that help them think through the problem and develop alternative solutions, problems that occur infrequently with a great deal of uncertainty may require the manager to utilize the entire process (Daft, 1994:251). In contrast, problems that occur frequently with a great

deal of certainty are handled by rules, specific policies and standard operating procedures of the organization, making it unnecessary to develop and evaluate alternatives each time these situation a rise (Daft, 1994:251). It could therefore be realized that decision-making steps are more applicable to non-programmed decision than to program decisions.

Identification and definition of the problem

A problem is regarded as an obstacle to the achievement of organizational goals and is therefore an obstacle that needs to be overcome decision- makers. According to Hoy and Miskel (1991:307) the first step in making a decision is recognizing that a problem exists and that a decision is necessary.

Identifying the problem means describing as precisely as possible the gap between one's perception of present circumstance and what one would like to see happen.

Starting the problem too narrowly represents the major difficulty in problem identification as it leads to artificially restricting the search for alternatives. The way a problem is conceived is important to its subsequent analysis and solution. A quick and narrow definition of a problem unduly restricts options and frequently treats symptoms, not the actual problem (Smit and De J Cronje, 1992:146).

Guthrie and Reed (1991:241) point out that during the problem identification step, the problem must be specified, the difference between the actual and the ideal situation must be determined and the problem must be categorized. Heller and Lundquist (1984: 57) argue that during this step, the decision maker needs to, first, quantify or qualify the problem, then with the assistance of information available and inputs from other people, determine the goals that need to be achieved and finally acquaint him with the limitations and anomalies that exist.

In addition, Crous (1990: 195) regards information gathering and analysis of the situation as an important part of the problem identification and explains.
The more applicable, accurate and reliable the information about the circumstances regarding the problem or situation, the better the identification and definition of the problem.

Beinstock (1984:14) notes that collecting too much information can actually confuse the situation rather than clarify it. However, lack of complete information must not be allowed to paralyze the decision. A decision based on practical knowledge is usually better than not making the decision when a decision is needed (Harris, 1998:15). The statement by Harris is in line with the adage" any decision is better than no decision" while perhaps the extreme, shows the importance of choosing.

Also, as part of the collection of facts for problem identification, it is wise to consult those who will be affected by and who will have to implement the decision. Inputs from other people and stakeholders not only help supply a leader with information that helps in making the decision but it begins to produce the acceptance of the decision. The implementers of the decision arrived are often happy about it because they fell that they are part of the decision-making process. As Ackff (1981:36) noted in the art of problem solving, tendency not to consult people who are supposed to the involved in the decision-making is often perceived as an act of aggression.

Analysis of the problem

Once the problem has been identified and appropriately defined, it needs to be analyzed as to what type of problem, it is, how it occurred and hot it can be solved. This analysis is sometimes referred to be "situational analysis" and it calls for the problem to be classified according to whether it would lead to programmed or non-programmed decisions (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:307) . Some decisions may be handled by applying appropriate rules principles or regulations. Daft (1994: 251) classifies such decisions as programmed decisions because they are repetitive and routine in the sense that they are based on established any systematic procedures. Again, these decisions are made in accordance with the organizational goals, polices, procedures, rules regulations methods or procedures. According to Daft (1994: 252) programmed decisions can be delegated to lower levels within the organizations.

However, certain problems cannot be handled by established sets of rules and regulations. Instead, they require going beyond established procedures for solutions. Decisions are classified as non-programmed decision .According to Daft(1994:252) non- programmed

decisions may have a major impact on the organizations and these decisions require analysis that cannot be based on prior circumstances: therefore, they include a level of risk and uncertainty problems may lead to decision-making process steps being followed (Daft, 1994: 252)

Crous (1990:191) maintains that non-programmed decisions occur at all levels of any organization, including school and further

> .....*are usually non-recurrent and less structured than programmed decisions are made when a problem or situation does not occur in the same way as previously. This type of decision requires a creative approach by managers because a policy, procedure or rules have to be developed. Non programmed decisions also demand special attention because they are usually more complex than programmed decisions.*

Generation of alternatives

Once the problem has been analyzed, a manager needs another step in decision-making developing alternative solutions to deal with the problem. These alternatives are possible solutions to the problem. The solution must be generated by taking in to account criteria that have been developed (du Toit, 1990: 47). The decision-making process requires that the decision maker identify the different alternatives and ensure that he possesses in depth knowledge of each alternative.

Enough time should be spent on the generation of alternatives steps in order to ensure that non- standard and creative alternatives are generated. A brainstorming technique can be used during this step. Brainstorming is a technique by which an individual or a group formally jots down as many ideas or solution as they come to them (Guthric and Reed 1991:241)

Hoy and Miske (1991: 310) emphasize the fact that it is advantageous to have a great number of choices because it "increases the possibility of finding satisfactory alternatives that meet the already specified conditions". Crous(1990: 197) shares the same view and states that the development of more than one alternative established the potential for better solutions.

Evaluation of alternatives

The next step in the decision-making process involves evaluating the various alternatives generated in the previous step. Glasman and Nevo(1988: 34) consider evaluation as "a systematic activity of using information" to describe organizational objectives and to make a judgment on their merit and worth. Simkins (1983: 187) shares the same sentiment and considers evaluation as "making judgments on the effectiveness of the strategy adopted. To make a judgment on the worth of an alternative, involvement of other interested parties is essential.

Selection of the best alternatives

Once the previous steps of decision-making have been completed and complied with, the next step is to select the best alternative. The act of the selecting a solution strategy from among the alternatives is the actual decision. Views on which alternative is selected vary: the one that is most suitable, the one that is the best, the one that is the most appropriate, the alternative providing the optimum solution or the one that provides the minimum utility (Hoy and Miskel 1991: 309).

Bush (1986: 34) points out that the optimum alternative is the one that best fulfils the criteria developed from the organizational objectives, aims, goals and standards of the organization. For relatively simple problems, one alternative may be obviously superior. However, in complex situations several alternatives may likely be combined to form advantage of form a more effective's solution .A major advantage of this process is that if previous steps have been done well then choosing a solution is less complicated (Bush 1986: 35)

However, many factors mediate the choice among preferred alternatives. Factors such as the values of the manager, the cultural context, Perceptions of those involved, the significance of the situation, and pressure on the organization influence the selection of the alternative (Hoy and Miskel 1991: 309).

It is clear from the discussion that the selection of the best alternative requires the selection of optimal solution. Perceptions and overall feelings of the stakeholders involved are essential in this regard.

Implementation of decision

After a decision is made, mangers should make plans to put the decision in to effect. This is the stage called the "implementation of decision" by researchers such as Bush(1986: 34) du Toit (1990: 47) and Gorton (1980: 235). The plan must be sufficiently detailed to allow for successful implementation and methods of evaluation must be considered and developed. When developing a plan, the major phases of implementation are first considered, and then steps necessary for each phase are generated.

It is often helpful for managers to construct time line and make a diagram of the most important steps in the implementation. The plan is then implemented as carefully as possible. According to Hoy and Miskel (1991: 312), initiating the plan of action requires at least the following four steps:

"- - - programming, communicating, monitoring and appraising".

Sharing a similar view, Fraser (1988:88) describes the steps of initiating a plan of action as follows:

> *. . . an implementation plan will include the following... what the tasks are, who is to perform each: the schedule and deadlines for task completion. Essential to an implementation plan is providing for communication an evaluation of each step and the final result is also necessary.*

However, an important issue to consider when implementing decisions is the resistance to change by people within the organization. The leader should secure the commitment of those involved in implementing the decision, since its success is invariably dependent on the acceptance by all affected people in an organization. Implementers are much more willing to support decision when they primarily understand the risks and believe that they are being treated with honesty and like adults(Harris, 1998:16). If the decision is a good

one but subordinates are unwillingly or unable to carry it out, that decision will not ultimately be a good one.

Evaluation and follow-up decision

Evaluation is necessary after a decision has occurred to provide feedback on its outcome. According to Bush (1986:34) and Hoy and Miske (1991:300) this step often concludes the process of decision-making. Guthrie and Reed (1991:274) offer the following aim of evaluating the follow-up action on a decision.

> *Evaluation is a set of procedures undertaken to assess effectiveness of a program. The intent can be either to improve the program or to make judgment regarding its continuation.*

The decision-making process is not complete until a decision is exposed to the realities of the practical situation. Lipham, Rankin and Hoeh(1985:88) state that "the ultimate effectiveness of a decision is judged according to whether or not the systems problem has been solved to the satisfaction of those involved." Evaluation requires an objective assessment of how the decision solves the problem. Without this step the decision-making has little value beyond providing an immediate solution to a problem.

Lipham, Rankin and Hoeh(1985:89) point out that in schools the decisions-making process typically occurs in three broad phases, namely, before the decision, the moment of decision and after the decision. The before the decision phase includes interactive activities and behaviors that typically include posing many alternative solutions as a means for defending and redefining the problem.

Instead of each alternative being considered interims of its positive and negative outcomes, various alternatives are weighed against each other as to their acceptability. It is not at all unusual for the least upsetting alternative to be selected as the possible decision.

The moment of decision is typically seen as a crucial stage in decision-making process. In fact, the tendency exists in schools to debate about the decisions until the time runs out, thereby shifting the decision-making process from shared to authoritative rule.

Lipham, Rankin and Hoeh (1985:15) maintain that "Do whatever you wish "Ultimately becomes a rule.

After the decision is normally characterized by commitment, interest and expertise by those who should implement the decision. After the decision choice is made, particular individuals become the driving forces for putting the decision in to action. Lipham, Rankin and Hoeh (1985:90) argue that before the decision action include a high degree of input and involvement using group processes, after the decision actions include a high degree of individual effort and initiatives.

2.6. Group Decision-Making

A large number of alternatives can be generated and analyzed when more people are involved. This is called group decision-making. Group decision-making has been found to be effective and to enhance non- programmed decisions where there is usually a great deal of uncertainty about the result. Group decision-making is effective because it involves a collective transparent and consultative approach undertaken throughout the decision –making process (Daft, 1994:270). There are advantages and disadvantages to arriving at group decisions- an obvious disadvantage is that it take a longer time to arrive at a consensus (Daft 1994:272). But there are advantages in the sense that a group brings more knowledge and expertise to the situation and by involving more people in the process, increases chances of acceptance of the decisions (Daft, 1994:272).

2.6.1. Techniques for Improving Group Decision- Making

Three widely used techniques to encourage creativity in decision-making are brainstorming, the nominal group technique, and the Delphi technique suggested by Smit and De Cronje (1997: 181).

Brainstorming Technique

Brainstorming is a group technique for generating new and useful ideas, and it promotes creative thinking (Smit and De Cronje, 1992:12). It can be used to help:(1) define what project or problem to work on (2) to diagnose- problems and (3) remedy a project by coming up with possible solutions and to identify possible resistance to proposed

solutions. During the brainstorming session there is no criticism of idea- the idea is to open up as many possibilities as possible, and break down preconceptions about the limits of the problem (de Bono :1992:88)

Delphi Technique

Delphi technique refers to an interactive process that uses controlled feedback to isolated, anonymous (to each other) participants. In this technique the group members never meet face- to –face, instead, a series of confidential questionnaires are involved to refine a solution to the problem. The Delphi procedure consists of a series of steps undertaken to elicit and refine the perspectives of a group of people who are experts in their area of focus or representative of the target group (Rothwell and Kazanas, 1997:17)

Nominal Group Technique

Research in a group dynamics are that more ideas expressed by individuals working alone, (but in a group environment) than by individuals engaged in a formal group discussion. The Nominal Group Technique is a good way of getting many ideas from a group. It has advantages over the usual committee approach for identifying ideas. Group consensus can be reached faster and everyone has equal opportunity to present his or her ideas.

The nominal group is a structured group that meets to gather information about a specific concern, that is, to identify problems and priorities. Individuals work alone but in a group setting (Smit and De Cronje, 1977:182).

2.7. Different Decision-Making Styles

Friedam (1990:10) argues that one of the important factors related to school effectiveness is the principals' decision making style. The term decision making style has been used to refer to individual differences in: the way people process information to make decision and the set of procedures that decision-maker engages in when attempting to select among courses of action (Rubbel and Cosier, 1990:19).

Through the use of the appropriate decision style, it is expected that teachers quality of work life, job satisfaction and school productivity will be enhanced (Sizer, 1983:13). One of the hidden assumptions in the management literature regards the democratic styles of decision-making as the ones most likely to enhance teacher's job satisfaction and yield acceptable decisions to all the stakeholders (Simon, 1982:91). The more role players are involved in the decisions to be taken, the better the chances that decisions will be accepted and supported by the majority of people because of ownership.

2.7.1. Decision- Making By Authority Rule

Decision-making by authority rule obtains when a leader makes the decision by using the information supplied by subordinates or other stakeholders (Wilkinson and Cave 1987:72). This referred to as an autocratic style of decision- making (Steyn, 1996:14) ;(Lunenberg and Orstein, 1995: 157). In such style, the decision-making powers are vested in the leader who uses the power to take decisions while other members comply with out questioning. This implies that the decision rests with the leader and that other members are not involved (Rosenbaum, 1996:23).

The advantage of the authority rule includes very fast decision-making and the personal responsibility by the leader for the outcome. If an emergency situation exists, the autocratic style of decision-making is usually the best choice. The disadvantages are varied and sometimes included less than desired effort from the people that must carry out the decision.

2.7.2. Decision-Making by Majority Rule

Wynn and Gudtus(1984:113) argued the majority decisions- making style as "groupthink" when this style is implement effectively, the loyalty of the members and greater motivation to achieve the goals of the group are ensured. Steyn(1996:15) refers to the decision making by majority rule as democratic in the sense that every individual is consulted before the group takes a decision. Decision-making by majority rule reflects the wishes of the majority of the people

Advantages include a fairly quickly made decision, and certain amount of group participation. The main disadvantage of this style is that an individual is not responsible for the outcome.

2.7.3. Decision-Making by Consensus Rule

Decision-making by consensus is defined as" All parties agreeing to the decision" (Herman, 1992:71). The complete group is totally involved in the decision. The leader is not individually responsible for the outcome. The complete organization or group is now responsible for the outcome. This is not a democratic style because everyone must agree and (by in) on the decision. If total commitment and agreement by everyone it is obtained, the decision becomes' democratic'' (Herman, 1992:77).

Consensual decision reacted after discussion by members; tend to be better than individual decision-making (Wynn and Guditus, 1984:113).

The advantages include group commitment and responsibility for the outcome. Teamwork and good security is also created because everyone has a stake in the success of the decision.

2.7.4. Decision- Making By Minority Rule

Rosenbaum (1996:25) indicated that when this style is used, a few members with a vested interest might enthusiastically support the decision while the rest of the members remain silent when the decisions taken. A good strategy in this situation would be to refer the issue to the interested members for further investigation. Minority decisions are also common in situations where a few members are experts on the topic and dominate the deliberations on the decision needed.

2.7.5. Decision –Making By Lack Of Response

Decision –making by lack of responseis a style adopted when the participants leave the decision in the hands of the leader and do not discuss or make any contributions to the solution of the problem. People remain quiet in the meeting and allow other members to move quickly and to consider alternatives before finding a viable solution. Another form

of decision by lack of response is when a motion is tabled and the decision is reached without allowing deliberations inputs from members. Van Balkon (1996: 19) indicates that if one or more individuals are frequently taking decisions without allowing proper consultation, then serious resentment is likely to arise.

2.7.6. Decision – Making By Participatory Rule

Collective and participatory decision- making style is used when the leader involves members of the organization Bredeson (1989:9) argues that the advantages of participatory decision making par outweigh the disadvantages. The positive effects of participatory decision-making are most evident in the areas of teacher attitudes to professional work and their commitment to the organization. Bernd (1991:65) concludes that the success of participatory decision-making has much to do with the readiness of the leader to share power and his or her ability to establish the processes, information and resources necessary to make participatory decision-making work.

2.7.7. Decision –Making By Unanimous Rule

When every member enthusiastically supports a decision, there is unanimity. When this model is used member often feeling impelled to keep silent and given the impression of supporting the decision (Wilkison and Cave, 1987:110). Contrary to consensus and participatory decision-making, unanimity does not start from the assumption that opposing views exist. Typical of unanimous decisions is a shared value system and a shared knowledge and information base. This may lead to a situation where decisions are taken without exploring alternatives,and groupthink tends to dominate the decision reached.

2.8. Selecting The Appropriate Decision-Making Style

Just as there is no best ways to organize, teach, or do research, there is no one best way to make decision (Hoy and Tarter, 1995: 89). Behavioral scientists interested in problems of leadership and administrations are recognizing the fact that the most effective decision style is dependent on the situation. Even the advocates of participative management have noted this "situational relativity" of leadership style. Hence, Argyris (1966: 84) writes

"No one decision-making style is the most effective. Each is probably effective under a given set of conditions. Consequently, it is suggested that effective leader are those who are capable of using many different decision-making style, depending on the requirements of reality, as they and others perceive it, which is called 'reality- centered' decision-making style".

Further analysis of the decision-making literature reveals that a leader's decision style is also influenced by personality factors such as age , intelligence, formal educational level, knowledge in specific specialization, and work experience (Gaziel , 1995:15 and Nutt ,1984:18) express the same view, and says that " According to the contingency models to decision-making, the selection of a decision style is contingent up on the characteristics of the decision-maker and characteristics of the decision- task".

2.9. Shared Decision-Making

2.9.1. Definition of the Concept

There are numerous definitions of shared decision-making suggested in the literature. The definition of shared decision-making developed by Lew and Glickman(1992:57) is as follows.

> *Shared decision-making is a process in which a variety of members of the school community collaborate (when appropriate) to identify problems, establish visions, define goals, shape direction, develop action plans and ensure implementation and accountability. Those responsible for implementing the decision must be actively and legitimately involved in making the decision.*

Bauer (1992:44) emphasizes that shared decision-making is content- free: that is, it does not deal with the specific topics or programs. Rather, it is an ongoing process of making decisions in a collaborative manner. Shared decision-making" cannot be done once and then forgotten," states Meadows (1990:13).

Harrison and colleagues (1989:55) as way of concluding suggest that the new arena for decision-making:

> *Brings the responsibility for decisions as close as possible to the school--- defining how school staffs can work collaboratively to make these decisions - - - creating ownership for those responsible for carrying out decisions by involving them directly in the decision-making process and by trusting their abilities and judgments. . .*

2.9.2. A Model of Shared Decision-Making

There are instances when participation improves the quality of the decision, as well as instances when participation obstructs implementation of effective decision (Hoy and Tarter, 1995:118). This view implies that there are times when subordinates are in the best positions to make decisions and that there are other times when they are not. The critical question to answer is "Under what conditions should staff members be involved in decision-making?" Two models of shared decision-making are useful in addressing this question: one based on comprehensive sets of decision rules (Veroom and Jago, 1988:19) and the other one a simple set of three criteria- expertise, relevance, and commitment (Hoy and Tarter, 1993:113). Both of these models are designed to enhance the acceptance and quality of decisions.

Hoy and Tarter'smodel of shared –decision making is adopted in this research because it is a simplified normative model of shared decision-making. The model suggests conditions under which subordinates should be involved in decisions and indicates the degree of frequency, nature, purpose, and structure of their involvement. Further, the model specifies different roles of the principal, depending up on the situation.

2.9.3. Hoy-Tarter Model of Shared Decision-Making

Successful shared –decision making at school level and its associated teacher empowerment is a function of the principal's readiness to share autonomy with those whose commitment is necessary for effective teaching and learning (Brown and Markus, 1991:43). If principals are required to share power, how should they involve teachers in

decision-making? Hoy and Tarter(1995:118) propose the simplified normative model that provides the direct answer to the question.

The Zone of Acceptance or Indifference

Based on Barnard's (1938:167) conceptualization of the "Zone of indifference" which states that subordinates have a zone of indifference within which an administrator's decision will be accepted without question. Bridges (1967:16) argues that not all decisions are appropriate for shared decision-making and that there are issues that subordinates do not care to be involved in. Bridges (1967:16) therefore, postulates the need for administrators to apply a "test of relevance "(interest) and a "test of expertise"(knowledge) before seeking to involve subordinates in the decision-making process.

Hoy and Miskel (1982: 291), in summarizing the research work regarding the zones of acceptance, stated that if subordinates possess a personal stake (high relevance or interest) in the decision and knowledge to make useful contribution (high expertise) then the decision clearly falls outside the zone of acceptance. Then subordinates should be involved in the decision –making process. If on the other hand, the issue is not of interest and falls outside their sphere of competence, then the decision is within their zone of acceptance and involvement should be avoided.

Mapping the Zone of Acceptance

Two decision rules were developed by Hoy and Tarter (1995:140) to answer this question the relevance rule and the expertise rule. Do staffs have a personal interest in the outcome of the decision? And the expertise rule. Do staffs have the expertise to contribute to the decision?

These two rules define four decision situations as illustrated in figure 2-1 below (Hoy and tarter, 1995, 141)Do subordinates have personal interest?

Can subordinates contribute expertise	Yes		No
	yes	Outside zone of acceptance (definitely include)	Marginal with expertise (Occasionally include)
	No	Marginal with relevance (Occasionally include)	Inside zone of acceptance (Definitely exclude)

Figure 2.1 Zone of acceptance and decision situation

If the response to both of these questions is yes, the staff members have both a personal interest in the outcome of the decision and expertise to contribute, and thenthe situation is outside the zone of acceptance (Hoy and Tarter, 1995:141) surely, the staff will want to be involved and their involvement will enhance the effectiveness of the decision.

The next situation is a marginal case of personal interest (relevance) but no expertise. When a staff member has personal interest but no expertise, involvement should be limited.

The third situation is the marginal case of expertise but no personal interest. In this case teachers can fell frustrated because they perceive their skills and knowledge to be exploited by their superiors. They have little interest in the outcome of the decisions because they are unaffected. However, teachers may be involved occasionally in this case to enhance the quality of decisions.

In the last situation teachers should not be involved in the decision-making if they have neither the personal interest nor expertise to contribute towards effective decisions. This fourth situation is a case unilateral decision-making by the administration.

2.9.4. Summation

As a way of recapping this model does not solve problems. However, the model is a guide to participative decision-making. The framework provides a guide by addressing the critical issue of teacher-principal collaboration under what conditions should

teachers' collaboration in decision-making? Principals who understand the interest and capabilities of their staff can use the model to determine who should be involved early, late or throughout the decision making process.

The model by Hoy and Tarter (1995:118) suggests that the leader in deciding who to involve in the decision process, needs to consider, amongst several criteria, whether subordinates have the expertise and interest to contribute to the solution or not.

Partners in a collaborative effort do not have to bring with them identical levels of expertise, but they do have to have an equal sense of responsibility for the outcomes of the effort, and they should be equally committed to the goals of the organization.

2.10. Factors Affecting the Implementation of Decisions in the School

Effective implementation of any decisions depends largely on the acceptance and support by the other people. It is important to consider other people's concerns because, as Woodward and Buchholz (1987:16) put it, "if people are angry regarding the way decisions are taken, and their views are not accommodated, such decisions will not proceed smoothly". Their feelings and perceptions account for the success or failure of the decision.

The need to understand other people's concerns is predicted on the notion that for a decision to be acceptable and supportable, it has to be properly communicated. Kassarjian (1992:28) suggests that before beginning to involve in the decision-making process, it is important to check one's intentions as a manager. Does one involve them because one honestly wants to learn how they feel, or does one do it simply to protect oneself from criticism? Kassarjian goes on to say that many managers tried participative decision-making but failed because their underlying intentions were to protect themselves, not to learn.

2.10.1. Communication

Communication is an essential management function aimed at achieving mutual understanding. All organizations have to rely on this crucial aspect to converse effectively with all their internal and external publics. Modern, dynamic and successful organizations use communication media such as memoranda, circulars, meetings, mass communication and information technology to send messages and receive feedback.

Huebsch (1986:3) asserts that communication is an effective tool for promoting understanding. It brings people nearer to one another. Without upward, downward and horizontal communication, a healthy community life is inconceivable. The continual and complex nature of mutual understanding and the need to be understood is of such a nature that where basic communication proficiencies are lacking, the necessary understanding, insight, empathy, effective transmission of knowledge, feedback and social progress will never be possible.

People communicate not because of similarity in their thoughts, but by the very reason of their differences, which they want to reduce (Wilson et al. 1986:81). In other words, mutual understanding – which is at the core of human communication – is still achievable even if the communicator and the recipient of the message disagree. They can even agree to disagree, meetings-and by implication all communication tools- should be used to transfer information, exchange ideas, to discuss matters of mutual interest and to solve problems and make decisions asserts (Huebsch, 1986:367).

2.10.2. Power Sharing

Research has revealed that successful shared decision-making at school level is a function of the principals readiness to share power with those whose commitment is necessary for effective teaching and learning (Lucas, Brown and Markus, 1991:56). Many principals believe that if they promote participative decision-making, their roles will diminish drastically with respect to power, control and authority (Erlandson and Bifano, 1987:31; Cherry, 1991:34).

Herman and Gioia (1998:25) asserts that, if staff members have the authority of making decisions, they will be able to see their influence on the school and that in turn will increase the meaningfulness of their work.

The principals have to trust staff members' ability to make the right decisions, while staff members much have a sense of trust that it is safe to risk decisions that might be wrong. Mutual trust and open communication are indispensable for such an exchange to be successful (Oakland, 1998:187).

2.10.3. Resources

The word "resources" as used in this study refer to financial, physical and human. These include per capita expenditure, equipment, infrastructure, and suitably qualified teachers. The resources of the school make it possible to provide education. According to Davies and Ellison (1991:4), teachers are the most valuable assets that the school can't do without.

Hoy and Tarter (1993:4) clearly asserts that, teacher participation in decision-making can improve the quality of the decisions and promote cooperation if the right strategy is linked to the right situation. Similarly, Guskey and Peterson (1996:13) stress that, school governing body members must ensure that they make decisions based on valid evidence rather than persuasive opinion.

2.10.4. School Policy

School policy, like any other state policy, may be defined as a course adopted by the school governing body through a particular regulation, and pursued through administration and control, with the general assumption that it should be beneficial to the school and its clients. Policy is therefore, closely linked to decision-making, and to control of the structures where the decisions are made and of the people by whom they are made and carried out. School policy is classified under programmed decisions. Programmed decisions are those decisions that are made by following the policy and involve simple, common frequently-occurring problems (Daft, 1994:251). Examples in schools involved handling disciplinary cases, processing applications for admissions, re-

ordering office supplies when inventory drops to a certain level. Steers and Porter (1979:38) stress "managers of the schools have the responsibility to create a proper climate in which subordinates can operate pleasingly."

2.11. Strategies for Effective Decision-Making

2.11.1. Delegation of Decisions /duties

Delegation of decision-making is regarded as entrusting authority to others. An administrators assigns specific decisions to others, usually subordinates (Hoy and Sousa, 1984:321). Under such circumstances, the subordinates are then free to make their decisions without further consultation with the supervisor. Principals who delegate recognize that they are yielding some of their authority and that, for the most part, they are bound the subordinates' decisions. When a principal voluntarily delegates important duties to a teacher or group of teachers, the principal shows confidence in the ability of teachers to reach acceptable, reasonable, and useful decisions.

2.11.2. Changing School Structure

Mechanisms for teacher participation in school management, such as departmental structure, staff meetings and different school committees have existed for many years, although the degree of authority granted to teachers varies considerably (Kirby and Colbert, 1994:43). Such committees, however, are often chaired by the principals and do not operate under independent authority. Similarly, Dimmock (1995:172) states that democratizing schools implies that schools structures need to change to allow for greater participation. The school structures should be organized in such a way that hierarchical differences are diminished and that teachers are given professional autonomy and collegial involvement in decisions (Evans, 1996:55). This also confirmed by Smyth (1995:169), who advocates flat organizational for the sake of effectiveness.

2.11.3. Communication

Effective communication, according to Fielding (1997:3) is vital if an organization has to survive. It is critical to the success of an organization. Carrel (1997) contends that communication resembles a glue that binds various elements, coordinates activities,

allows people to work together and produces results. Communication, as Hannagan (1998:269) rightly points out, enables organizations to coordinate their activities. Though downwards, upwards and horizontal communication top management and employees can come to a common understanding about issues at hand through constant consultations and feedback. In this way the employees get a chance of making contributions.

2.11.4. Involvement

Involvement means overt active participation in one or more of the phases of decision-making. Research has demonstrated that involvement in decision-making is associated with a number of individual and organizational school outcomes. Among these are greater teacher morale and satisfaction, organizational commitment and acceptance of change, and cooperation and reduction of conflict (Hoy and Sousa, 1984:14). Similarly, Vavrus (1978:40) stated that where teachers are given an opportunity to participate in decision-making, indications are that they experience job satisfaction and higher morale. Furthermore, Pejza (1985) has this to say about involvement in decision-making process:

> *A principal has to learn that he or she can't do it all. The old style of one-man leadership does not work in this day and age ... people who participate in and help formulate a decision will support it ... they will work hard to make it go because it is their idea and has become part of their life.*

Drawing on this view one may conclude that open, collegial, and participative relations between the principals and other people are necessary if schools are to become truly professional organizations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the method of the research, source of data, sample of population, sampling techniques, data gathering tools and method of data analysis procedures.

3.1. Method of the Study

For the purpose of this study a descriptive survey method was employed since it is more appropriate to assess the currently available information on decision- making from relatively large number of respondents (teachers principals, student council members and PTAs members) at a particular time in the area under study. Concerning with this, best and kahn (2002:107), States that to collect data from a relatively large sample for the purpose of describing the nature of the existing condition survey method is appropriate. Further, the method could help the researcher to investigate and picture out the existing situation in the study area regarding the issue.

3.2. Sources of Data

A combination of primary and secondary data sources were used to make the study reliable. Primary data was collected from the subject of the study through questionnaire (close ended) and semi structured interview with principals and PTA's. Secondary data was consulted from documents (Annual plan, minutes, manuals, reports, and other available materials)

3.3. Subject of the Study

The research study was targeted these members of the school governing bodies (principals, teachers. Student council members and PTA's).

3.4. Sampling Techniques and Sample Population

3.4.1. Sampling Techniques

The researcher was employed both probability and non probability sampling techniques, in order to select the sample schools, subjects of the study population: teachers, principals, student councils and PTA members. Accordingly, the researcher used simple random sampling to select representatives' teachers and student council members from each school in order to give equal chances for all teachers and student council members of the school. Moreover, purposeful sampling technique was used to get principals and PTA members with the assumptions that relevant information was obtained from them. Purposeful sampling was also employed by the researcher with the aim to increase the utility of information obtained from small samples. Denscombe (2007:7) maintains that purposive sampling is applied to those situations where the researcher already knows about something, about specific people or events and deliberately selects particular ones who are likely to produce the most valuable data.

3.4.2. Sample Population

Table I. Population and Sample Size of the study

No.	Population	Sex		Total	Samples		
		M	F		M	F	Total
1.	Teachers	81	7	88	40	5	45(51.1%)
2.	Students' council members	25	11	36	25	11	36(100%)
3.	Principals	4	-	4	4	-	4(100%)
4.	PTA members	4	-	4	4	-	4(57%)
	Total	114	18	162	73	16	89(54.9%)

According to the east Shoa Zone Education Department Currently there are 87 teachers in the 6 government preparatory schools within 13 woredas of the zone.. From these to make the study manageable: with the intention that it would enable to show the existing situation of decision making practices in a more comprehensive manner and to

generalize the result of the study for all preparatory schools in the zone, 4(67%) schools which are located in different woredas were selected randomly for this study. To increase the reliability of responses 50% of the teachers and all student council members of the sample schools were taken as a sample population. In addition to these four principals and Four PTA members of each selected school was included in the study. Generally, the total subjects for the study was 45teachers, 4 principals, 36 student councils, and 4 PTA members, the total of population were included as the sample for the study.

3.5. Data Gathering Tools

To obtain reliable and adequate information, three basic instruments were used. These were questionnaires, semi structured interview and document analysis.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was prepared in English, because teachers at preparatory school level were expected to be bachelor degree holders who pursued their degree in English and students were prepared for university.

The first draft questionnaire was prepared in five parts. Part I, general back ground of the respondents: part II, decision categories. The views of the respondents; were measured by a 5- scale Likert- type attitude items: Part III, How rational is a decision making process. In this respect respondents were asked to select the response patterns ranges from 1 to 5 rating scale, which can be characterized by, 1= not at all; 2=Rarely; 3=sometimes; 4=usually; 5= almost always. Part IV, The dominant decision making style in which respondent were asked to rank orderly the styles of decision making according to the practice of the school; and part V, Factors that influences on the implementation of decisions. For this purpose, the respondents were asked to select responses that ranges from 1 to 5 on the rating scale; in which each number represent as, 1= very low, 2=low; 3=moderate; 4= high; 5= very high

Then, the pilot testing was carried out in Oda Bokota secondary school which is from non sample schools. The purpose of the pilot testing involves conducting a preliminary test of data collection tools and procedures to identify and eliminate problems, allowing

programs to make corrective changes before actually collecting data from the target population takes place.

In addition to this, to check the internal consistency of the attitude scale the data obtained was fed in to SPSS- 15 and reliability coefficient was calculated using cronbach's coefficient of alpha (Reliability statistics) and the result found to be (0.736), implies that the instrument is reliable.

After the collection of the questionnaire was examined item to detect ambiguous and unclear statements, which can affect the respondent's genuine responses. Finally, after correcting errors and conceptual difficulties, the final form of the questionnaire was prepared with the confidence in its ability to evaluate the educational decision making practices.

Interview

Interview particularly semi structured was conducted so as to elicit an in-depth information about the participants point of view, thoughts and feeling about the issues under the study. Interview was held with 4 principals and 4 PTA members. The researcher used interview guide approach by specifying issues to be covered in the course of interview in advance.

Document Analysis

Relevant documents related with the issue such as policy documents (education and training strategy national and regional guidelines), document's comprised minutes of management committees, PTA members and discipline committees were consulted at schools by the researcher notes of main finding on decision making practices were taken to be analyzed with findings of primary sources.

3.6 Procedures of Data Gathering

Questionnaires were developed, distributed and collected to and from the respondents by the researcher, after one week from each school. 81 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and collected. Interviews were conducted with principals

and PTA members in face-to-face interaction. Moreover, the relevant documents such as were consulted in the schools.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

Analysis and interpretation were made depending on the nature of the data. First the quantitative data was tailed, organized and tabulated in groups to get frequency distribution across the five scales.

The organized and coded data were stored in on editable Excel spreadsheet, was imported to SPSS and analyzed using descriptive statistics; frequency count, percentages, mean and t-test to determine significant difference between groups of respondents.

These techniques were selected based on the nature of data collected and the basic research questions. Percentage and frequency counts were used to show the number of participants who respond for each item in the questionnaire and mean scores of the alternative levels to justify the aggregate level of participation. The t-test was used to determine the significance difference in opinions between two groups of respondents

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter deals with presentation analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaire interview and document analysis

Questionnaire and interview were the major instruments used to collect relevant data for the study. Besides, record documents were used us a source of data. The subjects of the study were teachers, students' council members, principals and PTA members.

For this study a total 81 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 45 questionnaires were distributed to teachers and the rest 36 questionnaires were distributed to student council members. From the total questionnaires that were distributed to teachers 44 (97.7%) were field and returned. Similarly, out of 36 questionnaires that were distributed to student council member 35(97.2%) were field and returned.

Moreover, interview was conducted with 4 principals and 4 PTA members to further find out about the issue under study.

On top of these, different documents which deals with the educational decision making practices in each sample school were collected from the schools and the analysis and interpretation of all these has been presented below.

4.1. Characteristics of the Respondents

The characteristics of respondents are shown in one Table. Students' background was included in the study to see the distributed in terms of sex-Accordingly, Table 1 presents teachers' and students' background information.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents by Sex, Age, Qualification and Experience

No	Variables	Frequency of Respondents			
		Teachers		Students	
		N	%	N	%
1	Sex Male	40	90.9	25	71.4
	Female	4	9.1	10	28.6
	Total	44	100	35	100
2	Age 20-25	10	22.7		
	26-30	25	56.8		
	31-35	3	6.8		
	36-40	2	4.5		
	Above 40	4	9.1		
	Total	44	100.0		
3	Academic Qualification Certificate	-	-		
	Diploma	3	6.8		
	Bachelor Degree	40	90.9		
	Masters	1	2.3		
	Other	-	-		
	Total	44	100.0		
4	Total Years of Service ,<5	22	50.0		
	6-10	16	36.4		
	11-15	1	2.3		
	16-20	-	-		
	21-25	4	9.1		
	>25	1	2.3		

The above Table shows that 25(71.4%) of the students, council member were male and only 10(28.6%) of the students council members were females which implies that were very few female students who can serve as students council in the schools. Similarly, the Table shows that out of the total 44 teachers 40(90.9%) of the teachers were males and only 4(9.1%) of the teachers were females which implies that very few female teachers were participated in the decision making.

Regarding to age, 25(56.8%) teachers were 26-30 years of age which implies that most teachers were youngsters. Regarding their qualification and experience it was included in the background to see if the schools had qualified and relatively experience teachers. Accordingly, the data in the above Tables shows that 40(90.9%) of the teachers had firs t

degree and the remaining the 3(6.8%) of teachers and 1(2.3%) of teachers had diploma and masters respectively. This implies that the schools seems to have qualified teachers. With regard to their experience, 50% of the respondents have served for up to five Years and below in the teaching profession. Thus, it can safely be conclude that many of the respondents are new to their position. The other 50.1% of the respondents have an experience of 6 years and above. Therefore, it would be possible to generalize that more years of experience contribute more to the understanding of various issues and problems related to participation in the decision making process Another important point related to the principals, qualification, 75% of the sample members were trained in the area of leadership and management, that is, they were assigned with having the necessary managerial competence, knowledge and skills. This might be making them effective to create new ideas and improve the school environment.

4.2. Respondents' Views on Practice of Decision making

This part of the analysis was based on parte II of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to express their views about the current educational decision making practices.

Table 2: Respondents Views Regarding General School Governance

No	Items	Respondents group	N	Mean	t	df	P-Value
1	Rules and regulation	Teachers	44	3.57			0.828
		Students	35	3.51			
		Total	79	3.54	0.219	77	
2	School planning (strategic/operational/annual...)	Teachers	44	3..95			0.103
		Students	35	3.20			
		Total	79	3.62	3.096	77	
3	Discipline of students	Teachers	44	3.30			0.188
		Students	35	2.97			
		Total	79	3.15	1.330	77	
4	Discipline of staff	Teachers	44	4.00			0.000
		Students	35	2.80			
		Total	79	3.47	5.085	77	
5	School fees	Teachers	44	3.14			0.348
		Students	35	3.40			
		Total	79	3.25	0.943	77	

Significance at .05 levels

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

As shown above in Table 2 item 1, the rating of the respondents revealed that their moderate level of agreement on setting rules and regulation teachers with mean scare 3.57 and students with mean score 3.51. This showed that the participation of stack-holders on the decision making of school rules and regulation was found to be relatively moderate. In line with this a t-test of significance was computed to see if there was significance difference in the perception of the two groups of respondents regarding the issue under consideration. In conformity with this the computed t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.219 the obtained p-value is 0.828 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their opinions about the issue.

Item 2, in the same Table, the mean score for teachers 3.95 and the mean score for students 3.20.this indicated that the two group of respondents have similar opinions on the issue. In line with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77 at calculated t-value of 3.096 the obtained p-value is 0.103 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups of respondents.

Concerning item 3, in Table 2 the rating of the respondents reveals that their moderate level of agreement on discipline of student teachers with mean score 3.30 and students teachers with mean score 2.97 which is nearly average . This shows that the group of respondents have similar opinions on the issue under consideration. In supporting to this, the computed t-test for equality of means with 77 df at calculated t-value 1.330 the obtained p-value is 0-188 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore: the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their opinions about the issue.

For item 4 in Table 2 the mean score for teachers 4.00 and the mean score for students 2.80. The mean score for teachers were above average and relatively high while, the mean score for students were found to be below average and relatively low. This indicated that the existence of difference in perception between the two groups of respondents on the issue under consideration. In line with this, the observed value of t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 5.085 the obtained p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was

statistically significant different between the opinions of the two groups of respondents regarding to discipline of staff.

Item 5 in the same Table, the mean score for teaches3.14 and the mean score for students 3.40. This indicated that, their moderate level of agreement and similar opinions on the nine issues under study.

With regard to this, the computed t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.943 the obtained p-value is 0.348 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their opinion about the issue.

From the analysis made above, it can be observed that, the level of participation in this category seems to be normal among the respondents. As indicated in the Table above most stakeholders involvement in decision making of general school governance can be generalized as moderate. Hence, there is relatively better involvement in the issue under consideration.

Table3: Respondents Views about Curriculum and Instruction

No	Items	Respondents group	N	Mean	t	df	P-Value
1	Evaluation of contents and syllabus for improvement	Teachers	44	2.95			0.424
		Students	35	2.83			
		Total	79	2.87	0.804	77	
2	Text book preparation and selection	Teachers	44	3.23			0.537
		Students	35	3.40			
		Total	79	3.30	0.621	77	
3	Text book provision	Teachers	44	3.45			0.616
		Students	35	3.60			
		Total	79	3.52	0.504	77	
4	Procedures in obtaining instructional supplies	Teachers	44	3.36			0.027
		Students	35	2.80			
		Total	79	3.11	2.258	77	
5	Selection of supplementary texts and materials	Teachers	44	3.05			0.659
		Students	35	2.94			
		Total	79	3.00	0.443	77	
6	Allocation of teaching aids and teachers teaching load	Teachers	44	3.20			0.017
		Students	35	2.54			
		Total	79	2.91	2.456	77	
7	Appraising teachers performance	Teachers	44	3.16			0.292
		Students	35	2.89			
		Total	79	3.04	1.061	77	

Significance at .05 levels

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

As indicated in Table 3, item 1 the mean score for teachers 2.95 and the mean score for students 2.83. The mean score for teachers' and students were found to be below the average and relatively low. This showed that there is similar perception between the groups of respondents on the issue under consideration. In line with this, the completed t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.804 the obtained p-value is 0.424 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their opinions about the issue under study.

Item 2, in the same Table is concerned about text book preparation and selection teachers show their moderate level of agreement with mean score 3.23 and students show their level of agreement with mean score 3.40. This indicated that the group of respondents have similar opinions on the issue. In supporting to this, the observed value of t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.621 the obtained p-value is 0.537 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant different between the opinions of the two groups of respondents.

Concerning item 3, in Table 2 the rating of the respondents reveals that their moderate level of agreement on text book provision teachers with mean score 3.45 and students with mean score 3.60. This showed that the group of respondents has similar opinions on the issues under consideration.

In line with this, the computed t-test for the quality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.504 the obtained p-value is 0.616 which is great than 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two group of respondents.

As can be observed in Table 3, item 4 the mean score for teachers 3.36 and the mean score for students 2.80. The mean score for teachers was above average and the mean score for students was found to be below the average and relatively low. This indicated that the existence of difference in opinion between the two groups of respondents on the issue under consideration. In supporting to this, the observed value of t-test for equality

of mean with 77df at calculated t-value of 2.258 the obtained p-value is 0.027 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was statistically significant difference between the views of the two groups of respondents.

In Table 3, item 5 teachers show their moderate level of agreement with mean score 3.05 and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.94 which is nearly average. This indicated that the two groups of respondents have similar views on the issue under consideration. In line with this, the observed value of t-test for equality of mean with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.443 the obtained p-value is 0.659 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the views of the two groups of respondents about the issue.

In the same Table, item 6 is concerned about the allocation of teaching aids and teachers teaching load teachers show their moderate level of agreement with mean score 3.20 and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.54 which is relatively low. This depicted that the existence of difference in views between the groups of respondents about the issue. In supporting to this, the computed t-test for the equality of mean with 77df at calculated t-value of 2.456 the obtained p-value is 0.017 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents about the issue under consideration.

As indicated in Table 3, item 7 teachers show their moderate level of agreement with mean score 3.16 and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.89 which is nearly average. This implies that the two groups of respondents have similar views on the issue. In line with this the observed value of t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 1.061 the obtained p-value is 0.292 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant different between the views of the two groups of respondents about the issue under consideration.

Form the analysis so far mode, the level of participation of respondents on the issues of curriculum instruction is considered relatively moderate. This depicted that respondents

give due attention for curriculum and instruction as the basic incense of the teaching/ learning process.

This finding is also supported by previous researches that the greatest level of participation in decision making, especially concerning curriculum and instructional methods yields enhanced teacher's commitment and job satisfaction. Moreover, the lack of opportunities to participation in decision-making is the greatest source of teachers' dissatisfaction. (Hoy and Miskel, 1996: 32)

Table 4: Respondents' Views Regarding Student Affairs

No	Items	Respondents group	N	Mean	t	df	P-Value
1	Adoption of promotion policy for students	Teachers	44	3.73			
		Students	35	2.77			
		Total	79	3.30	4.220	77	0.000
2	Setting objective for student's guidance and counseling service	Teachers	44	2.76			
		Students	35	2.60			
		Total	79	2.41	2.256	77	0.272
3	Setting governing rules and regulations for students	Teachers	44	3.70			
		Students	35	2.39			
		Total	79	3.44	2.208	77	0.031
4	Setting standard admission procedures for students	Teachers	44	3.78			
		Students	35	2.83			
		Total	79	3.23	3.595	77	0.001
5	Allocation of students in class room(class size)	Teachers	44	3.75			
		Students	35	2.80			
		Total	79	3.33	3.604	77	0.001
6	The decision to suspend or expel a student	Teachers	44	2.94			
		Students	35	2.89			
		Total	79	3.03	0.987	77	0.327

Significance at .05 levels

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

In Table 4, item 1 teachers shows their level of agreement with mean score 3.73 which is relatively high and students shows their level of agreement with mean score 2.77 which is relatively low. This indicates that the existence of difference in perception between the two groups of respondents on the issue under study. The statistical test is also confirmed this difference i.e. The computed t-test for the equality of mean with 77df at calculated t-value of 4.220 the obtained p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents about the issue.

In the same Table, item 2 is concerned about setting objectives for student's guidance and counseling service teachers shows their level of agreement with mean score2.76 and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.60 which is below average and relatively low. In line with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 2.256 the obtained p-value is 0.272 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant different between the views of the two groups of respondents about the issue under consideration.

As indicated in Table 4, item 3 teachers show their level of agreement with mean score 3.70 which is above average and relatively high and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.39 which is below average and relatively low. This indicated that the existence of difference in perceptions between the two groups of respondents on the issue. In supporting to this, the observed value of t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 2.208 the obtained p-value is 0.031 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was statistically significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups of respondents about the issue under consideration.

In the same Table, item 4 teachers show their level of agreement with mean score 3.78 which is above average and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.83 which is below average. This showed that, the existence of difference in opinions between the two groups of respondents on the issue. The statistically test is also confirmed this difference i.e.

The computed t-test for the equality of mean with 77df at calculated t-value of 3.595 the obtained p-value is 0.001 which is less than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, there was statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents.

As it sown in Table 4, item 5 the mean score for teachers 3.75 and the mean score for students 2.80. The mean score for teachers was above average and relatively high while, the mean score for students was found to be below the average and relatively low. This indicated that the existence of difference in opinions between the two groups of

respondents towards the issue under study. In supporting to this, the observed value of t-test for equality of mean with 77df at calculated t-value of 3.604 the obtained p-value is 0.001 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents about the issue.

Item 6, in the same Table, the mean score for teachers 2.94 and the mean score for students 2.89 which is below average. This indicated that the two groups of respondents have similar opinions on the issue under consideration. With regard to this, the computed t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.987 the obtained p-value is 0.327 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their opinions about the issue.

Thus, from the above analysis it could be easily observed that, teacher respondents confirmed that their participation in the decision about student affairs is considered relatively moderate while, the student respondents claim that they have low participation on the issues of student affairs. In line with this, the review of minutes showed that most school under study does not employ a procedural system to involve students in the issues of student affairs. Therefore, it might be safe to conclude that there are significant numbers of stakeholders, who involved in decision-making of students affairs.

Table 5: Respondents' Views about School and Community Relations

No	Items	Respondents group	N	Mean	t	df	P-Value
1	Establishing favorable conditions for the school community in the School activities	Teachers	44	2.79			
		Students	35	2.66			
		Total	79	3.06	0.875	77	0.505
2	Increasing participation level of parents in school' decision	Teachers	44	2.97			
		Students	35	2.20			
		Total	79	2.68	0.679	77	0.601
3	Establishing a program for community service	Teachers	44	2.84			
		Students	35	2.26			
		Total	79	2.58	0.736	77	0.282

Key: mean value < 3 = Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

In Table 5, item 1 is concerned about establishing favorable conditions for the school community in the school activity teachers show their low level of agreement with mean score 2.79 and students show their level of agreement with mean score 2.66 which is below average and relatively low. This revealed that, the group of respondents have similar perceptions on the issue. In conformity with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.875 the obtained p-value is 0.505 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents about the issue under study.

As it is shown in Table 5, item2 teacher show their low level of agreement with mean score 2.97 and students show their low level of agreement with mean score 2.20 which is below average. This indicated that the two groups of respondents have similar opinions on the issue. In supporting to this, the observed value of t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.679 the obtained p-value is 0.601 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents about the issue under consideration.

Item 3, in the same Table, the mean score for teachers 2.84 and the mean score for students 2.26 which is below average. This shows that, the two groups of respondents have similar views on the issue under study. In line with this, the computed t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 3.736 the obtained p-value is 0.282 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their views about the issue.

Thus, form the ongoing analysis, with regard to school and community relations both group of respondents depicted that their participation in the decision about school and community relations is considered relatively low. In line with this, the interview conduct with PTA members confirmed that their involvement in the decisions regarding school community relations was fairly low.

Table 6: Teachers Respondents Views Regarding Budget Preparation (N=44)

Item		Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Mean
1. Financial decision of the school throughout the year	Frequency	6	13	14	9	2	
	Percent	13.6	29.5	31.8	20.5	4.5	
	Frequency	33			11		
	Percent	74.9			25		2.27
2. Determining means of income generation	Frequency	4	13	14	10	3	
	Percent	9.1	29.5	31.8	22.7	6.8	
	Frequency	31			13		
	Percent	70.4			29.5		2.89
3. Utilization of school generated income	Frequency	2	13	19	8	2	
	Percent	4.5	29.5	43.2	18.2	4.5	
	Frequency	34			10		
	Percent	77.2			22.7		2.81
4. Planning and developing physical facilities and educational materials	Frequency	1	11	5	16	11	
	Percent	2.3	25.0	11.4	36.4	25.0	
	Frequency	17			27		
	Percent	38.7			61.4		3. 18

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

As indicated in Table 6, item1, 74.9% of the respondents (below average) viewed that level of participation concern financial decision of the school is relatively very low while 25% (average and about average) of them reported that the present level is fairly high. In conformity with this, the mean score 2.27 which is below average. This showed that there is a little opportunity for stakeholders members to participate.

In the same Table item 2, is about determining means of income generation 70.4% of the respondents (below average)have perceived that the level of participation in determining means of income generation is relatively low while 29.5% of (average and above average) indicated that the present level of participation is fairly high. In line with this, the mean score 2.89 which is below average depicted that the level of participation in the above mentioned issue is considered as relatively low.

As shown in Table 6, item 3, 77.2% (below average) of the respondents have reviewed little level of participation 22.7% (average and above average) viewed relatively high level of participation.

In supporting to this, the mean score 2.81 which is below average showed that the level of participation in the utilization of school generated income is relatively low.

According to the above Table, tem 4, 38.7% (below average) of the respondents viewed that the level of participation in planning and develop physical facilities and educational materials is relatively low while, 61.4% of (average and above average) depicted that the level of participation is relatively high. In conformity with this the mean score 3.18 which is above average indicated that the present level of participation is relatively high.

In general, the findings in Table 6 show that there is a little opportunity of stockholders such as teachers, students and PTA members to participate in budgetary decisions.

Table 7: Respondent Views about School Building (N=44)

Item		Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Mean
1. School building expansion	Frequency	9	11	12	9	3	
	Percent	20.5	25.0	27.3	20.5	6.8	
	Frequency	32			12		2.68
	Percent	72.8			27.3		
2. School building maintenance	Frequency	2	10	19	9	4	
	Percent	4.5	22.7	43.2	20.5	9.1	
	Frequency	31			13		2.87
	Percent	70.4			29.6		
3. Maintenance of school compound	Frequency	4	6	26	4	4	
	Percent	9.1	13.6	59.1	9.1	9.1	
	Frequency	36			8		2.95
	Percent	81.8			18.2		
4. Maintenance of school supplies and materials	Frequency	5	6	19	11	3	
	Percent	11.4	13.6	43.2	25.0	6.8	2.52
	Frequency	30			14		
	Percent	68.2			31.8		

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

As illustrated in Table 7, 72.8% (below average) of the respondents that the level of participation in the issue is found low while, 27.3% (average and above average) of the subjects indicated that the present level of participation is fairly high. In line with this, the mean score 2.68 which is below average indicated that the level of participation in school building expansion is relatively low.

In the same Table, item 2 is concerned about school building maintenance 70.45 (below average) of viewed that level of participation is relatively low while 29.6% (average and above average) of the reported that the present level of participation is high. In conformity with this, the mean score 2.87 which is below average depicted that the present level of participation is relatively low.

As can be observed in Table 7, item 3, 81.8% (below average) of the respondents viewed that the level of participation in maintenance of school compound is relatively low while, 18.2% of (average and above average) of indicated that the level of participation is relatively high. In supporting to this, the mean score 2.95 which is below average showed that the present level of participation is relatively low.

As indicated in Table 7, item 4 is about maintenance of school supplies and materials 68.2% (below average) of the respondents viewed that the level of participation in the issue is found low while, 31.8% (average and above average) of the respondents indicated that the present level of participation is fairly high. In line with this, the mean score for teachers 2.52 which is below average depicted that the present level of participation in the issue is relatively low.

In general, the findings concerning school building decision category, the level of present involvement of stakeholders in school building decision making seems very low.

Table 8: Respondents Views about Personnel Affairs (N=44)

Item		Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Mean
1. Recruiting, selecting and hiring teachers	Frequency	15	4	14	5	6	2.30
	Percent	34.1	9.1	31.8	11.4	13.6	
	Frequency	33			11		
	Percent	75			25		
2. Teachers transfer	Frequency	12	11	8	11	2	2.55
	Percent	27.3	25.0	18.2	25.0	4.5	
	Frequency	31			13		
	Percent	70.5			29.5		
3. Taking part in staff welfare schemes	Frequency	3	7	6	16	12	2.55
	Percent	6.8	15.9	13.6	36.4	27.3	
	Frequency	16			28		
	Percent	36.3			63.7		
4. Delegating responsibility and authority to personnel	Frequency	1	5	12	20	6	3.57
	Percent	2.3	11.4	27.3	45.5	13.6	
	Frequency	18			26		
	Percent	41			59.1		
5. Taking active part in staff development	Frequency	2	5	12	19	6	3.50
	Percent	4.5	11.4	27.3	43.2	13.6	
	Frequency	19			25		
	Percent	43.2			56.8		

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

As illustrated in Table 8, 75 % (below average) of the respondents viewed that the level of participation in the issue is found low while, 25 % (average and above average) of the respondent indicated that the present level of participation is moderate. In supporting to this, the mean score 2.30 which is below average depicted that the present level of participation is relatively low.

Table8, item 2 is concerned about teachers transfer 70.5% (below average) of the respondents perceived that the level of participation in the issue is found low while, 29.5% (average and above average) of the respondents indicated that the level of participation is relatively high. In conformity with this, the mean score 2.55 which

is below average showed that the present level of participation in teachers transfer is considered relatively low.

In the same Table, item 3, 36.3% (below average) of the respondent viewed that the level of participation in decision making about staff welfare schemes is relatively low while 63.7% (average and above average) indicated that the level of participation is relatively high.

In line with this, the mean score 3.34 which is above average depicted that the level of participation in the issue is considered relatively high.

As indicated in Table 8, item 4 is about delegating responsibility and authority to personnel 41% (below average) of the respondents viewed that the present level of participation in the issue is found low while, 59.1% (average and above average) of the respondents indicated that the level of participation is relatively high. In conformity with that, the mean score 3.57 which is above average showed that the present level of participation in decision making regarding the issue is relatively high.

In the same Table, item 5, 43.2% (below average) of the respondents viewed that the level of participation in decision making about staff development is found low while, 56.8% (average and above average) depicted that the level of participation is found relatively high. In line with this, the mean score 3.50 which is above average indicated that the present level of participation is relatively high.

From the analysis so for made, it can be noted that large number of respondents viewed that the present level of participation in decision-making about personal affairs is found relatively high. Thus, this implies that there is better stakeholders involvement in the decision area of personnel affairs.

4.3. How Decision-making is Rational in Preparatory Schools

Various authors have indicated that the identification of a problem followed by logical steps to solve the problem is the point of departure in making a decision (Reynolds, 1997:33; Ubben and Hughes, 1997:43; Reinharttz, 1998:265). Therefore, decision are concerned with solving problems, any type of decision-making will have different definable steps in the process. The process of decision-making can be considered to consist of steps beginning with the problem identification and ending with the evaluation of its outcomes.

Table 9: How Decision -Making Is Rational

No	Items	Respondents group	N	Mean	t	df	P-Value
1	Identification and definition of the problem	Teachers	44	3.52			
		Students	35	3.14			
		Total	79	3.35	1.727	77	0.088
2	Outline the problem causes of the problem	Teachers	44	3.25			
		Students	35	3.17			
		Total	79	3.22	0.324	77	0.747
3	Developing alternatives solution to deal with the problem	Teachers	44	3.41			
		Students	35	2.86			
		Total	79	3.16	2.526	77	0.014
4	Follow up and make corrective actions	Teachers	44	3.45			
		Students	35	2.11			
		Total	79	3.30	1.681	77	0.097
5	Selection and decide the best alternatives	Teachers	44	3.25			
		Students	35	2.97			
		Total	79	3.13	1.130	77	0.262
6	Implement the decision	Teachers	44	2.78			
		Students	35	2.59			
		Total	79	3.08	0.645	77	0.521
7	Provide feedback on the decision outcome	Teachers	44	2.98			
		Students	35	2.51			
		Total	79	2.89	0.582	77	0.563

Significance at .05 levels

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

As it can observed from Table 9, item 1 the mean rating of teachers and students were 3.52 and 3.14 respectively. All are above average. This showed that the two groups of

respondents were agreed that prior to decision-making usually problems were identified and defined. In conformity with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 1.727 the obtained p-value is 0.088 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the opinions of the two groups of respondents about the issue.

In Table 9, item 2 the mean score for teachers 3.25 and the mean score for students 3.17. The mean score for both group of respondents were above average. This indicated that prior to decision-making usually the probable causes of the problem were outlined. In supporting to this, the observed value of t –test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value 0.324 the obtained p-value is 0.747 which is greater than 0.05, Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their views about the issue.

Item 3, in the same Table, the mean score for teachers 3.41 which is above average and the mean score for students 2.86 which is below average. This indicated that the existence of difference in perceptions between the groups of respondents about the issue.

The statistical test is also confirmed this difference i.e. The computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 2.526 the obtained p-value is 0.014 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the respondents have statistically significant difference in their opinions about the issue.

As indicated in Table 9, item 4, the mean score for teachers 3.45 which is above average and the mean score for students 2.11 which is below average. This result depicted that teachers agreed about the existence of follow up the implementation of the decision and making corrective action. On the other hand students replied that follow up the implementation of decision and make corrective action was relatively low. In conformity with this the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 1.681 the obtained p-value is 0.027 which is less than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the opinions of the groups of respondents.

Item5, in the same Table, the mean score for teachers 3.25 which is above average and the mean score for students 2.97 which is nearly average. This indicated that, selecting and deciding the best alternative practiced prior to decision-making. In line with this, the observed value of t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 1.130 the obtained p-value is 0.262 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their views about the issue.

In Table 9, item 6 the mean score for teachers 2.78 and the mean score for students 2.59. The mean score for both groups of respondents were below average. This indicated that the result obtained from both group of respondents depicted that decision is implemented rarely. In line with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.645 the obtained p-value is 0.521 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the views of the groups respondents about the issue under consideration.

As indicated in Table 9, item 7 the mean score for teachers 2.98 and the mean score for students 2.51. The mean score for both groups of respondents were below average. This shows that providing feedback on the decision outcome is practiced rarely. In conformity with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.582 the obtained p-value is 0.563 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between the opinions of the groups of respondents regarding the issue. In conformity with this, the review of minutes indicated that most school under study does not employ a sequential and scientific step in decision-making process.

On the top of this, the researcher found evidence from the interviews he conducted with PTA members that differs with the principals' views. The principals claimed that various stockholders were consulted before any decision could be made. However, PTA members were reported that the application of sequential steps in decision making process practiced rarely. Following the statements made by PTA members, it is clear that principals perpetuate a top down, hierarchical leadership style and management approach rather than participative decision-making.

4.4. The Dominant Styles of Decision-Making

One of the hidden assumptions in the management literature regards the democratic styles of the decision-making as the ones most likely to enhance teacher's job satisfaction and yield acceptable decisions to all the stockholders (Simon, 1982). The more role payers are involved in decision to be taken, the better the chance that decision will be accepted and supported by the majority of people because of ownership.

Table 10: The Dominant Decision making styles by Ranks

Decision making styles	Respondents Group		Standard deviation
	Teachers	Students	
Authority Rule	1	5	1.252
Consensus Rule	6	4	1.149
Majority Rule	5	7	1.321
Minority Rule	3	1	1.336
Lack of Response	2	3	1.409
Participatory Rule	7	6	1.178
Unanimous Rule	4	2	1.155

Respondents were asked to rank each of the decision-making Styles according to its dominance for stakeholders participation in decision-making process. Accordingly, Table 10 shows that different rank of each decision-making Styles made by teachers and students. The respondents gave different ranks to the decision-making Styles depending on the importance attached to it. As indicated in Table 10, teachers gave priority for authority rule, while students gave priority for minority rule. On the other hand teachers gave less concern to participatory unanimous rule and consensus rule of decision-making Styles.

As indicate in Table 10, teachers give priority for authority rule and lack of responses, while students gave priority for minority rule and unanimous rule on the other hand teachers gave less concern to participatory, consensus and majority rules of decision-making Styles similarly, students gave less concern to majority rules, participatory rule and authority rules of decision-making Styles.

As shown in Table 10, participatory rule, consensus rule and majority rule of decision making Styles were given less concern by both groups of respondents.

Therefore, from the ongoing analysis one can understand that the most dominant models of decision making in those preparatory schools were less participatory and autocratic

models of decision machining. This implies that the decision rests with the leader and other members are not involved.

The centralization of decision making by principals has been criticized by many who have called for greater participation in decision-making as a progressive way of making schools more democratic and more efficient (Ells and Fischer, 1994). Greater participation in decision-making has been a major focus in the educational reform movement worldwide. Behavioral scientists interested in problems of leadership and administrations are recognizing the fact that the most effective decision style is dependent on the situation. (Gaziel, 1995 and Nutt, 1984) expressthe same view, and says that "According to contingency models to decision-making style is contingent up on the characteristics of the decision-maker and characteristics of the decision-task"

4.5. Factors Influences on the Implementation of Decisions

Effective implementation of any decisions depends largely on the acceptance and support by the other people. It is important to consider other people's concerns because, as Woodward and Buchholz (1987:16) put it, "if people are angry regarding the way decisions are taken, and their views are not accommodated, such decisions will not proceed smoothly". Their feelings and perceptions account for the success or failure of the decision.

Table 11: Factors Influences on the Implementation of Decisions

No	Items	Respondents group	N	Mean	t	df	P-Value
1	Exercising power sharing and control	Teachers	44	3.50			
		Students	35	3.40			
		Total	79		0.414	77	0.680
2	Ineffective communication	Teachers	44	3.43			
		Students	35	3.00			
		Total	79		1.775	77	0.081
3	Lack of resources such as physical, financial and human	Teachers	44	3.55			
		Students	35	3.89			
		Total	79		2.932	77	0.105
4	School policy issues such as rules and regulations	Teachers	44	3.43			
		Students	35	3.20			
		Total	79	3.31	0.915	77	0.363

Significance at .05 levels

Key: mean value <3=Disagree, mean value=3=Neutral, Mean value >3=Agree

Table 11, Illustrates factors that influence on the implementation of decision-making. Teachers shows their moderate level of agreement with mean score 3.50 and students shows their

level of agreement with mean score 3.40 which is above average. This indicated that the similarity in opinions between the two groups of respondents regarding the use of exercising power and control to either promote or hinder the implementation of decision-making style. In line with this, the computed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.414 the obtainedvalue is 0.60 which is greater than 0.05. Those, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the views of the groups of respondents about the issue.

In the same Table, item 2 teachers and students show their moderate level of agreement with means score 3.43 and 3.00 respectively. This showed that the two groups of respondents have similar opinions about the factors that in effective communication to either promote or hinder the implementation of decision-making. In conformity with this, the computed t-test for equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 1.775 the obtained p-value is 0.081 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the views of the groups of respondents regarding the issue under consideration.

As indicated in Table 11, item 3 teachers and students show their moderate level of agreement with the mean score 3.55 and 3.89 respectively. This indicated that the two groups of respondents have similar views on the factors that lack of resources such as physical, financial and human concern to either promote or hinder the implementation of decision-making. In conformity with this, the computed t-test value for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 2.932 the obtained p-value is 0.105 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the respondents have no statistically significant difference in their views about the issue.

As it is shown in Table 11, item 4 teachers and students show their moderate level of agreement with the mean score 3.43and 3.20 respectively. This indicated that, the two groups of respondents have similar opinions on the factor that school policy either

promote or hinder the implementation of decisions. In conformity with this, the observed t-test for the equality of means with 77df at calculated t-value of 0.915 the obtained p-value is 0.63 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the two respondents have no statistically significant difference in their opinions regarding the issue.

As it was explained in the foregoing section of this analysis the respondents were having similar opinions on those factors that hinder the implementation of decisions. In conformity with this, the researcher found evidence of some dissatisfaction from the interviews he conducted with PTA's members about the way decision were taken at the school.

This findings is also supported by previous research that the need to understand other people's concern is predicted on the nation that for a decision to be accepted and supportable. It has properly communicated Kassarjian (1992:28) suggest that before beginning to involve people in the decision making process. It is important to check one's intentions as manager.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations.

5.1. Summary

The main purpose of this study was to examine educational decision-making practices in preparatory schools in East Shoa Zone and to forward alternative solutions that might help in alleviating the problem understudy. In order to achieve this purpose, a descriptive survey method was designed and employed. This study was attempted to get answers for the following basic questions:

1. To what extent the decision-making process is rational in preparatory schools?
2. What are the dominant decision-making models in preparatory schools?
3. To what extent do stakeholders participate in school decision-making process?
4. What are the factors that influence the implementation of decisions in preparatory schools?

The study was carried out in four government preparatory schools selected by random sampling technique. The study employed questionnaires, interview and document analysis as data gathering tools. As a source of data 45 teachers and 36 students' council members that selected by random sampling techniques as a source of information to answer questionnaires. In addition 4 principals and 4 PTA members selected by purposive sampling technique were used as interviewees to get supplementary information for the study. Out of the total questionnaires administered to teachers and students' council members 44(97.7%) and 35(97.2%) respectively were properly filled and returned for the study. In line with these, documents which deal with the educational decision-making practices in each sample schools were analyzed. Finally the data were carefully, collected, coded, tailed and presented for analysis. The statistical tools used in this study include frequency, present, mean and t-test.

Based on the analysis of the study the following major findings were drawn:

1. The finding of the study revealed that the decisions in which all respondents participate better are school governance, curriculum and instruction, personnel affairs and student affairs with mean scores 3.40, 3.10, 3.00 and 3.12 respectively. However, student's participation in all decision areas is found to be low as compared to other stakeholders.

2. In the study it was indicated that the decisions in which the majority of respondents participate less are budget preparation, school building and school community relations with mean scores 2.78, 2.75 and 2.77 respectively. Principals show preference and great importance to decisions on budget preparation.

3. In the study, it was revealed that the issue of sequential steps in decision-making process was identified by teachers with mean score 2.98 and students with mean score 2.76 as rarely practiced in preparatory schools.

4. The study also showed that the dominant decision-making models in those preparatory schools of East Shoa Zone were more of autocratic and less participatory model of decision.

5. The finding of the study indicated that the issues such as ineffective communication, lack of transparency, lack of resources unacceptable disciplinary procedure, exercising power sharing and autocratic leadership style are important factors that promote /hinder the implementation of decisions in the school.

6. From the interviews conducted with principal and PTA members both were agreed and suggested on the following as effective mechanisms to enhance decision-making in preparatory schools: delegation of duties and sharing of power, changing of the school structures to become flatter, communication-upward, downward and horizontal, and finally involvement or participation of other people in decision making process.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the major findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn. The finding of this study claimed that participatory models of decision-making were insufficiently used or completely overlooked by the principals. This may imply that a decision is simply made by the principals using whatever information is available. As the result it may have a negative impact on the teaching learning process. Thus, one may conclude that the success of participatory decision-making has much to do the readiness of the principal to share power and his ability to establish the process to make participatory decision-making works. In this regard much needed to be done to change the mind-set of some principals to exercise shared decision making model. Shared decision making enhances student achievements by improving the instructional program and delivery of support services. Shared decision making is based on the premise that people functioning closest to implementation of the potential decision, such as teachers, students and the community, make better decisions if they participate in making the decision.

The process of decision-making can be considered to consist of steps beginning with the problem identification and ending with evaluation of its outcomes. However, in contrary to this fact, the finding of this study disclosed that the process of decision making was not systematic. Hence, it is concluded that decision were made without considering the necessary information, steps, alternative course of actions and factors that affect its implementation.

Empirical studies supporting the argument for teacher participation in the decision-making process suggest that participation in democratic management can be linked to fair outcomes. Mulford et al. (2000) states that "all the stakeholders need to be engaged in real decisions about teaching and learning in the school if real improvement in education is to be achieved. In line with this fact, the findings of this study depicted that the overall present level of participation of stakeholders i.e. teachers, students and parents is below average. Thus, it is concluded that schools do not properly utilize various knowledge and experiences of their potential stakeholders for better either the quality of teaching learning process or schools' Performance.

Effective implementation of any decisions depends largely on the acceptance and support by the other people. It is important to consider other people's concerns because, "if people are angry regarding the way decisions are taken, and their views are not accommodated, such decisions will not proceed smoothly". Their feelings and perceptions account for the success or failure of the decision.

In line with this fact, the findings of this study indicated that, lack of communication, power sharing, lack of resources , lack of transparency and school policy were among the major factors that influences on the implementation of decisions. Hence, it is possible to conclude that the way decisions were taken at the school have a negative impact on the implementation of decisions.

5.3. Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded.

1. There is no one best way that fits to all situations. Therefore it is advisable for school principals to have knowledge and skills in outlining the probable causes of the problem and the alternative courses of action that can fit and satisfy a particular problem for a particular situation at a particular time by consulting and involving the stakeholders in decision-making. Thus, it is recommended that principals need to provide an opportunity to teachers, students and parents to participate in school's decision-making in order to develop a sense of responsibility and ownership.

2. Budget should be prepared on the basis of school needs and plan. However, it seems that higher officials allocate budget without consultation of the stakeholders. Thus, it is recommended that OREB in collaboration with ZED and WEO needs to collect through information from schools about the current needs and design reasonable scheme for allocation of budget.

3. In-service training is seen as an indispensable contribution of MoE towards the empowerment of principals. If principals are not empowered in decision-making

skills, it follows that they cannot practice what they do not know. It is therefore, recommended that MoE in collaboration with OREB should set up training programs that will provide principals with the necessary knowledge and skills to work collaboratively. Courses in leadership, human relations and group process are crucial for empowerment.

4. Research has shown that participative decision-making has the potential to improve the quality of decisions. However, participatory decision-making does not materialize within the framework of an autocratic decision-making style. Therefore, it should be in the interest of the administrators to encourage participation in planning and policy formulation, which will facilitate and commit stakeholders to effective implementation of school decisions.

5. Ineffective communication, lack of transparency lack of power sharing, autocratic leadership style and school policy are found to be among the major factors that negatively affect the implementation of decisions in the school. It is therefore, recommended that , the school principals should promote participatory decision – making to alleviate these problems

6. In a democratically managed school, lines of communication between the different systems should be as open (transparent) as possible, to facilitate maximum participation in the life of the school. It is therefore, recommended that gatherings, circular letters and minutes of meetings be used effectively so that people should be kept informed about issues that affect the school and their lives.

7. Decision-making practices still adhere to formal lines of authority with the principal largely retaining final authority over decision-making process. Democratizing schools implies that school structures need to change to allow for greater participation. It is therefore, recommended that the school organization should be structured in such a way that hierarchical differences are diminished and that teachers are given professional autonomy and collegial involvement in decision-making process.

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Appendix A

Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Faculty of Education and Behavioral Studies Department of Educational Planning and Management

FORM 1

Quest

Questionnaire to Be Filled By Teachers

Purpose:-The main objective of this questionnaire is to collect primary data for the study on **"Educational decision making practices in preparatory** schools

in East **Shoa Zone".** This questionnaire is to be useful and accurate, it is important that you answer each question as thoroughly and frankly as possible. Your individual views and opinions shall remain confidential.

Instruction

a) No need to write your name
b) Please complete this part of the questionnaire by putting an "X" sign against your response.
c) For items that require open answer write down in the blank spaces corresponding to the question.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Part I: General Information

1. Name of the school _____
2. Sex: a)Male ( ) b)Female ( )
3. Age range: a)20-25 ( ) b)26-30( ) c)31-35 ( ) d)36-40( ) e)Above40 ( )
4. Academic qualification

a) certificate ( ) b) diploma ( ) c) bachelor degree ( ) d) masters ( )

e) Other_____

5/ Total years of service

a) 5 years and below ( ) b) 6-10 years ( ) c) 11-15 years ( )

d) 16-20 years ( ) e) 21-25 years ( )f) over 25 years ( )

Part II: Direction 2= Please read each item carefully and indicate to what extent teachers, student councils and PTA members participate in decision making at your school by making 'X' in the box against the choice (i.e., very high, high, moderate, low and very low)

N.B VH= very High. H= High. MO= Moderate, L= Low, VL= very Low

No	Items	Rating scale				
	A. General school governance /decision on administration areas/	**VH5**	**H4**	**Mo3**	**L2**	**V L**
2.1.	School rules and regulations					
2.2.	School planning (strategic /operational/annual …					
2.3.	Discipline of students					
2.4.	Discipline of staff					
2.5.	School fees					
	B. Decision on preparation of budget					
2.6.	Financial decision of the school throughout the year					
2.7.	Determining means of income generation					
2.8.	Utilization of school generated income					
2.9.	Planning and develop physical facilities and educational materials					

	C. Decision on curriculum and instruction					
2.10	Evaluation of contents and syllabus for improvement					
2.11	Text book preparation and selection					
2.12	Text book provision					
2.13	Procedures in obtaining instructional supplies					
2.14	Selection of supplementary texts and materials					
2.15	Allocation of teaching aids and teachers teaching load					
2.16	Appraising teachers performance					
	D. Decision on school building					
2.17	School building expansion					
2.18	School building maintenance					
2.19	Maintenance of school compound					
2.20	Maintenance of school supplies and materials					
2.15	Allocation of teaching aids and teachers teaching load					

Part III: Direction please read each item carefully and indicate your opinion regarding to teachers, student councils and PTA members participate in decision making of your school by making 'x' in the box against the choice (i,e, strongly agree=5, somewhat agree=4, somewhat disagree=3, strongly disagree=2, No Opinion=

No	Items	Rating scale				
	A. Decision about personnel affairs	5	4	3	2	
3. 1	Recruiting, selecting and hiring teachers					
3.2	Teachers transfer					
3.3	Taking part in staff welfare schemes					
3.4	Delegating responsibility and authority to personnel					
3.5	Taking active part in staff development					
	B/ Decision on student affairs					
3.6	Adoption of promotion policy for students					
3.7	Setting objective for student's guidance and					
3.8	Setting governing rules and regulations for students					
3.9	Setting standard admission procedures for students					
3.10	Allocation of students in classroom (class size)					
3.11	The decision to suspend or expel a student					
	C. Decision about school and community relations					
3.12	Establishing favorable conditions for the school					
3.13	Increasing participation level of parents in school's					

Part IV: How rational is a Decision Making Process

Direction 3: All the end of each s there are response patterns number from number "1-5" in which each represent as 5= almost always,. 4=usually, 3=sometimes, 2=Rarely and 1= Not at all. Thus, depending on your possible choice, put the symbol "X" under the number you are going to select.

No	Items	Rating scale				
		5	4	3	2	
3.1.	Identification and definition of the problem					
3.2.	Outline the probable causes of the problem					
3.3.	Developing alternative solutions to deal with the problem					
3.4.	Follow up and make corrective actions					
3.5.	Selection and decide the best alternative					
3.6.	Implement the decision					
3.7.	Provide feedback on the decision outcome					

Part V: The Dominant Decision Making Styles

Direction 4. Below in the table the commonly dominant decision making styles were given please rank them orderly according to the degree of practice in your school. The decision making styles which were very dominant in your school will be ranked as 1,2,3,4 and 5 arrangement orders.

No	Items	Ranks				
		1	2	3	4	5
4.1.	Leader makes the decision by using the information supplied by subordinates or other stakeholders (Decision making by authority rule)					
4.2.	Every individual is consulted before the group takes a decision (Decision making by consensus rule)					
4.3.	All parties agreeing to the decision (decision by majority rule)					
4.4.	A few members are experts on the topic and dominate the deliberations on the decision needed (Decision making by minority rule)					
4.5.	Participants leave the decision in the hands of the leader and do not discuss or make any contributions to the solution of the problem (Decision making by lack of response)					
4.6.	The leader deliberately asks and encourages others to participate by giving their ideas, perceptions, knowledge and information concerning the decision (Decision making by participatory rule)					
4.7.	Every member enthusiastically supports a decision (Decision making by unanimous rule)					

Part VI: Factors that Influences on the implementation of Decisions

Direction 5= Below in the table there are response patterns which are represented by numbers from number 1 to number 5: so that depending on your possible response please, put the symbol "X" under the number you are going to select.

N.B. 5=very high, Low 4= High 3= Moderate 2= Low 1= Very

No	Items	Ranks				
		5	4	3	2	1
5.1.	Exercising power and control					
5.2.	Ineffective communication					
5.3.	Lack of resources such as physical financial and human.					
5.4.	school policy issues such as rules and regulation					

Appendix B

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Faculty of Education and Behavioral Studies Department of Educational Planning and Management

FORM 2

Quest

Questionnaire to Be Filled By the student councils

Purpose:-The main objective of this questionnaire is to collect primary data for the study on **"Educational decision making practices in preparatory** schools

in East **Shoa Zone".** This questionnaire is to be useful and accurate, it is important that you answer each question as thoroughly and frankly as possible. Your individual views and opinions shall remain confidential.

Instruction

d) No need to write your name
e) Please complete this part of the questionnaire by putting an "X" sign against your response.
f) For items that require open answer write down in the blank spaces corresponding to the question.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Part I: General Information

1. Name of the school _____
2. Sex: a) Male ( ) b) Female ( )

Part II: Direction 2= Please read each item carefully and indicate to what extent teachers, student councils and PTA members participate in decision making at your school by making 'X' in the box against the choice (i.e., very high, high, moderate, low and very low)

N.B VH= very High. H= High. MO= Moderate, L= Low, VL= very Low

No	Items	Rating scale				
	A. General school governance /decision on administration areas/	**VH5**	**H4**	**Mo 3**	**L2**	**VL1**
2.1.	School rules and regulations					
2.2.	School planning (strategic /operational/annual ...					
2.3.	Discipline of students					
2.4.	Discipline of staff					
2.5.	School fees					
	B. Decision on curriculum and instruction					
2.6.	Evaluation of contents and syllabus for improvement					
2.7.	Text book preparation and selection					
2.8.	Text book provision					
2.9.	Procedures in obtaining instructional supplies					
2.10.	Selection of supplementary texts and materials					
2.11.	Allocation of teaching aids and teachers teaching load					
2.12.	Appraising teachers performance					
	C. Decision on student affairs					
2.13.	Adoption of promotion policy for students					
2.14.	Setting objective for student's guidance					
2.15.	Setting governing rules and regulations for students					
2.16.	Setting standard admission procedures for students					
2.17.	Allocation of students in classroom (class size)					
2.18.	The decision to suspend or expel a student					
	D. Decision about school and community relations					
2.19.	Establishing favorable conditions for the school					
2.20.	Increasing participation level of parents in school's					
2.21.	Establishing a program for community service					

Part III: How rational is a Decision Making Process

Direction 3: All the end of each statement there are response patterns number from number "1-5" in which each represent as 5= almost always,. 4=usually, 3=sometimes, 2=Rarely and 1= Not at all. Thus, depending on your possible choice, put the symbol "X" under the number you are going to select.

No	Items	5	4	3	2	1
3.1.	Identification and definition of the problem					
3.2.	Outline the probable causes of the problem					
3.3.	Developing alternative solutions to deal with the problem					
3.4.	Follow up and make corrective actions					
3.5.	Selection and decide the best alternative					
3.6.	Implement the decision					
3.7.	Provide feedback on the decision outcome					

Part IV: The Dominant Decision Making Styles

Direction 4. Below in the table the commonly dominant decision making styles were given please rank them orderly according to the degree of practice in your school. The decision making styles which were very dominant in your school will be ranked as 1,2,3,4 and 5 arrangement orders.

No	Items	Ranks				
		1	2	3	4	5
4.1.	Leader makes the decision by using the information supplied by subordinates or other stakeholders (Decision making by authority rule)					
4.2.	Every individual is consulted before the group takes a decision (Decision making by consensus rule)					
4.3.	All parties agreeing to the decision (decision by majority rule)					
4.4.	A few members are experts on the topic and dominate the deliberations on the decision needed (Decision making by minority rule)					
4.5.	Participants leave the decision in the hands of the leader and do not discuss or make any contributions to the solution of the problem (Decision making by lack of response)					
4.6.	The leader deliberately asks and encourages others to participate by giving their ideas, perceptions, knowledge and information concerning the decision (Decision making by participatory rule)					
4.7.	Every member enthusiastically supports a decision (Decision making by unanimous rule)					

Part V: Factors that Influences on the implementation of Decisions

Direction 5= Below in the table there are response patterns which are represented by numbers from number 1 to number 5: so that depending on your possible response please, put the symbol "X" under the number you are going to select.

N.B. 5= very high, 4= High 3= Moderate 2= Low1= Very Low

No	Items	Ranks				
		5	4	3	2	1
5.1.	Exercising power and control					
5.2.	Ineffective communication					
5.3.	Lack of resources such as physical financial and human.					
5.4.	school policy issues such as rules and regulation					

Appendix C

Interview Guide Questions for Principals and PTA Members

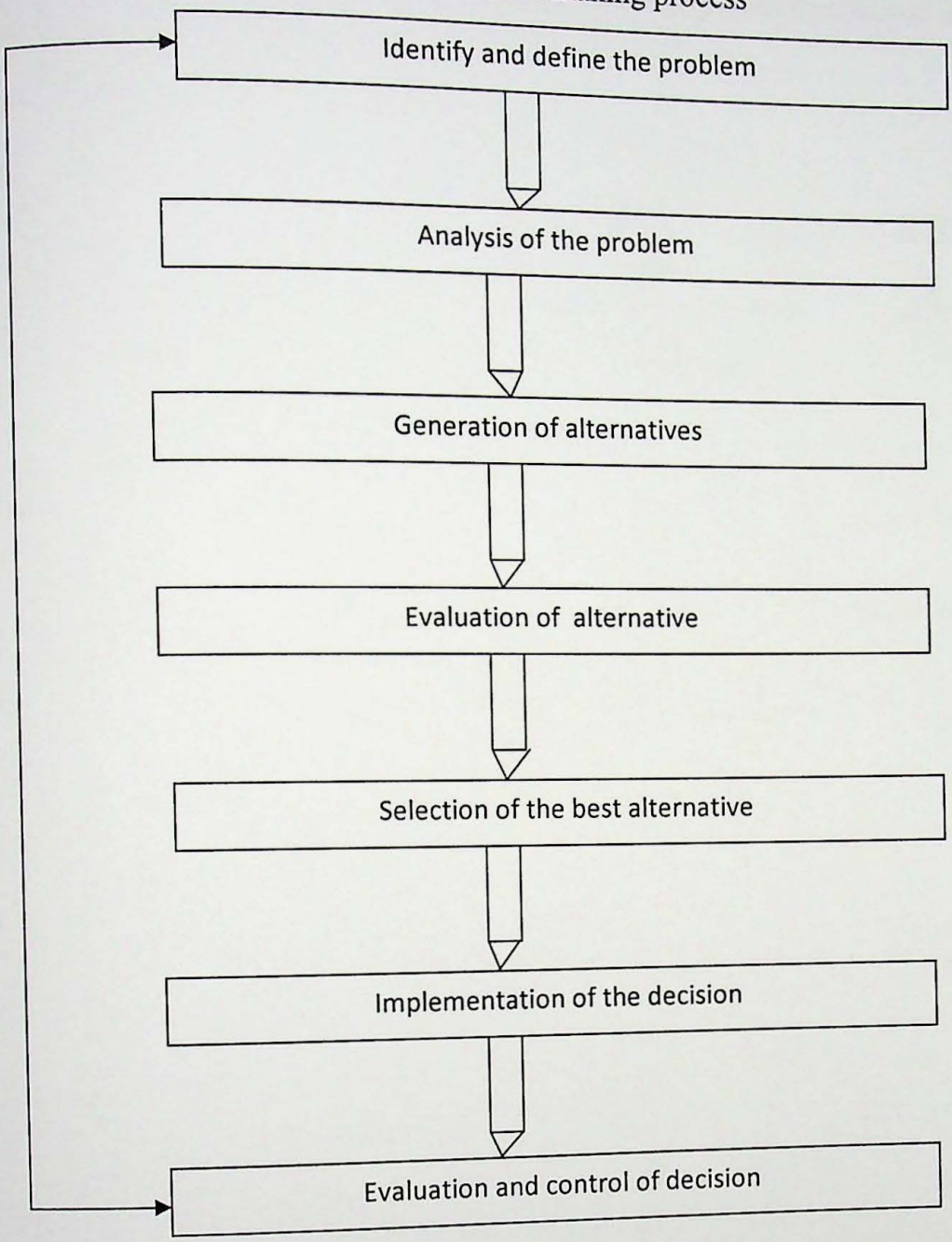
1. What is your understanding of the concept of shared decision making?
2. Could you tell me how decisions are taken in this school?
3. Could you tell me about a management problem or any incident that has occurred recently in this school and how you dealt with it?
4. What strategies would you recommend regarding the implementation of effective decision-making in preparatory schools?
5. What are the benefits of participation in decision making?
6. What are the problems of not participating in decision -making?

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Appendix D

Figure 2.1 illustrates the six step in the decision-making process.

Figure 2.1: The steps in the decision-making process



(Smit and de J Cronje, 1992: 146)

Declaration

I, the undersigned declare that this Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name	Signature	Date
Hora Roba		27/06/2013
Zenebe Baraki (PhD)		27/06/2013
Advisor's name	Signature	Date

Place:

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia