



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

**PRACTICES AND PROBLEMS OF DECISION MAKING IN
PREPARATORY SCHOOLS OF SOUTH WEST SHOWA
ZONE**

BY

GENENE ADUGNA

June, 2018

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE EDUCATIONAL
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APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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ABEVERBATION AND ACRONYMS

EdPM Educational Planning and Management

FGD Focus Group Discussion

MoE Ministry of Education

PTA Parents and Teachers Association

PTSA Parents, Teachers and Students Association

SCM Students' Council Members

SDM Shared Decision Making

SSS Secondary School Supervisors

SWSZ South West Showa Zone

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to assess the practices and problems of decision making in selected preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. Descriptive survey method was employed. This is because of the fact that descriptive survey method enables the researcher to obtain pertinent information in line to the recent the practices and problems of decision making in selected preparatory schools of South West Zone. Five woredas were selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. The sample covered five preparatory schools. A total of 165 respondents (10 principals, 70 teachers, 40 department heads, 5 Parent Teachers Association heads, 5 school supervisors and 35 students' council members) were included in the study. Out of 140 Teacher, 70 Teachers respondents were selected by simple random sampling technique and the others were by availability sampling technique. The instruments used to collect data were questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion, document observation and document review. The collected data were interpreting both quantitatively and qualitatively. Besides, the statistical tools used to analyze the data were frequencies and percentages. The findings of the research showed that the school leaders followed fewer steps to make and have low knowledge on how to make decisions; the decisions were smooth to meet the objectives and goals of the school. Most of the school principals were not qualified and didn't take the training which enables them to take participatory decision. The principals didn't encourage and involve stakeholders in decision making. Due to the above reasons, the practices of decision making was poor and had many problems in the preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were forwarded. Thus, it is advised to give awareness and encourage the stakeholders to increase their participation in decision making. Professionally, qualified leaders have to be assigned and given on job training by the concerned body. The school leaders should make the school secular and minimize the interferences of external bodies from school decision making. In addition to this, they have to take time and think over the consequences of the decisions before implementing the decision, follow decision steps and check whether the formulated decision meet the objectives and goals of the school.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the thesis deals with the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and operational definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Educational organization makes different kinds of decisions at national, regional, zonal, woreda and at the school levels. These decisions can be policies, programs, school organizations, finance, training, curriculum and instruction, monitoring and evaluation, discipline and others. In support to this idea, Ivancevich (2005) states that, decision is required for the purposes of planning and practicing and managing instructional process, solving very problems, adjusting unfair situations, classroom management and conflict resolution. It is important for decision makers to look into the objectives and goals of the organization as a whole in pursuing their decision. To support this idea, Walelign and Genet as cited in Mekuria, (2009) explain that, planning compels visualization of the entire organizational work and helps decision makers in their decision making process. The decisions that are made about the organization objectives and means of reaching them are providing the guidelines for making subsequent decisions.

In educational organization the decision maker should bring effect if the resources are mobilized and not to be wasted. If organizational effectiveness is defined as the ability to secure and utilize resources in the pursuit of organizational goals, the decision making processes that determine how these resources are acquired and used emerge as a central topic in organizational analysis (Steers, 1999). Also in support to this idea, Simon (1976) states that, the understanding of the application of administrative principles is to be obtained by analyzing the administrative process in terms of decisions. The rationality or organizational decisions could maximize the effectiveness of organizational decisions. Teaching is an important and a changing process that needs effective and efficient use of human resources, professional commitment, educational materials with a good quality and an ethical decision (Alkine,et al., 1992).

Decision making is the core of everything managers do; consequently, the success and effectiveness of the leader as well as the achievement of the organization depends up on the managerial decision making skills (Kinard 1998). Decision makers should recognize and take

care about the process, quality and acceptance of decision. Besides to this, Wendwessen (2011) suggests that, to make a quality decision, decision makers should apply the scientific steps like defining the problem, developing alternatives, selecting the best alternative and promoting group consensus approach for its implementation. Decision making process should be with the correct series of scientific sequential steps, with valuable quality, consensus oriented and ethical (Hoy and Miskel, 1991).

One of the common factors that make a decision more effective is when the formulated decision satisfies the objectives to be attained and when it achieves acceptance by those who implement it. According to Okumbe (1998) shared decision making process is important to allocate scarce teaching and learning resources, employment of teaching and non-teaching staff since it is necessary to increase students' academic achievement. Matias (2011) also states that, shared decision making enhances student achievements by improving the instructional program and delivery of support services. Accordingly, shared decision making is based on the premise that people function closest to the implementation of the potential decision makers, such as teachers, students and the community to make better decisions if they participate in making the decision process.

Making decisions is the prime function and major responsibility of educational managers. The primary task of managers in different organizations is to make the right decision at the right time to maximize the performance of the organizations. Accordingly, (Glueck as cited in Mekuria, 2009) states that, "Managers make dozens of decisions every day and their success as managers depends on how well they make their decisions". Thus, decision making is a critical part of being an effective manager. Making a good decision is a process of identifying problem and resolving them or identifying opportunities and taking advantages of them. However, making decisions it is necessary to consider the objectives and goals of the organization. This helps to maximize the effectiveness of the organization, to accept and implement the decisions by the implementers. Therefore, to make a quality decisions in preparatory schools decision makers should look into the objectives and goals of the organizations, apply the scientific sequential steps and use shared decision making process.

Considering the importance of participatory decision making in learning institutions, this study tried to identify the practice and problems of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Shoa Zone of Oromia National Regional State.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Educational organizations are complex institutions. Because of this reason they face with many problems while they make different decisions. These include problems on how to carry out different tasks, allocation, use and distribution of different resources. In connection with this idea, Wondwessen (2011) states that prior to making a decision, decision makers should carefully investigate and analyze the problem, consider the problem deeply in relation to the right priorities of the organizational objective as a whole in pursuing their decision.

Decision making is a major problem for all types of managers in any organization. They are always facing with a number of problems when they perform their activities at any given time. Correcting these problems require major decisions to decide about what is wrong and how it can be corrected (Ayalew, 2010). Wrong decisions and ineffective implementation have negative consequences in any organizational life. If one makes wrong decisions in other sectors, the wrong result may be wasting resources, but in education the damage will be far beyond resources. One of the basic essences of educational decisions objective is lost, correcting it will be difficult. Today's mistake cannot be easily seen or noticed today, but only after many years with its devastating out comes (Mekuria, 2009). According to the above idea, Julie, John and Laura (as cited in Mekuria, 2009) conclude as follows:

The impact of incorrect decision may not be tolerable and could be avoided or minimized. Otherwise generations will pay for it. This could happen if decision - makers at all levels do not systematically collect, and analyze various types of data including input, process, outcome and satisfaction, to guide a range of decisions to help and improve the success of an educational system. Decision makers have to look into the objectives and priorities of the organization making important and acceptable decisions in schools is often one of the most difficult tasks for decision makers. It is very important to find answers to different questions before making decisions. Supporting this, Hanson (1996) states that, the process of making rational decisions depends on the linking directly related to activities of the organizational objectives, goals and policies. Their measurement specifies that the goals must be precise enough to give definite direction to organizational objectives and goals.

Most of the time decision makers are unable to consider the correct priorities, to gather enough information, and analyze in order to make the right decisions. The most common source of mistakes in management decision making is the emphasis on finding the right

question (problem). It is not enough to find the right answers; more important and more difficult is to make effective decision in the course of action decided up on (Drucker 1996). Moreover, Thomas and Noel (as cited in Mekuria, 2009) suggest that, decisions at every point are not mutually exclusive; a single decision may affect more than one aspect of the organization. In addition, decisions with in and across categories are interdependent and interwoven. The implementation of these decisions in turn requires another decision with regard to procedures.

To make a quality and acceptable decisions, decision makers need to gather available and relevant information. The most important phases of decision making steps are to know the real nature of the problem; and identify the distinction between the symptoms and the real problem. Many leaders have difficulty to distinguish the symptoms of the problem and the problem itself, (Melaku, 2000). The quality of decision making in an organization depends on to put priorities of problems. Decision makers are unable to consider giving the right priorities, to gather relevant and sufficient data, analyze it thoroughly and sensibly in order to come up with sensible answer to the problems, (Thomas and Noel, as cited in Wondwssen, 2011).

There was failure to carefully and systematically make decisions in the preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone .Because of this the researcher initiated to conduct research on this problem. Among the problems the researcher observed the major ones were: the principals dominated the decision making, low participation of teachers, students, parents and the community in the schools decision making, the decisions lack quality and less accepted by decision implementers, the school leaders lack experience, knowledge and skills to make decisions and the decision making processes lowly improve students' learning and their achievements. In addition the decisions formulated by few individuals and not adequately follow decision making steps, wrong and biased decisions became the reason of conflict and disagreement among decision makers and implementers. Also the students still were not fully became the members of PTSA and they do not fully participate in school decision making. Therefore, it was important to deeply study the practices and problems of decision making in the zone in order to show possible solutions, and to improve the practices of decision making in the preparatory schools of the zone.

The purpose of this study was to assess the current practices and related problems of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone.

Therefore, the study tried to answer the following basic questions:

1. What are the major practices made in decision making in preparatory Schools of South West Showa Zone?
2. To what extent the decision making process in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone is systematic?
3. To what extent teachers, parents, students and community are participating in decision making through their representatives in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone?
4. What are the major factors that affect the process of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone?

2.3 Objectives of the Study

2.3.1 General Objective

The general Objective of this study was to assess the practices and problems of decision making in preparatory schools in South West Showa Zone and to recommend some possible solutions.

2.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study more specifically, were to addressed the following specific objectives:

- To assess the main practices made in decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone.
- To investigate the extent of stakeholders participating in decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone.
- To examine the extent of the decision making systems in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone.
- To identify the major factors that affect the decision making processes in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone.
- To give some suggestions and recommendations based on the findings of the study

1.4. Significance of the Study.

Educational organization composes of different groups of people. Due to this, they face many complex problems day-to-day that requires appropriate decisions. The process of decision making requires a deep investigation and a day-to-day follow up in its application. Therefore, the need to know what the process to be followed in decision making, what the practices made in decision making, how to use the right procedures, in order to make the quality and acceptance of decision is a critical thing in all educational organizations. Accordingly, this study was significant to bring the following contributions in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone, the school stakeholders and the whole surrounding community as groups.

Hence, this study would be significant for the following reasons.

- It will enable the woreda education office, parents (PTA), the school principals, teachers and students to contribute their part through participatory decision making for the achievement of preparatory schools objectives.
- It may initiate teacher, the community, School administrators and all the concerned bodies to participate in issues of school through participatory decision making.
- It may create harmony and cooperation among all the concerned bodies on the accomplishment of school activities.
- It can serve as a bridge for other researchers to conduct further study of a wider scope on the same or related problems.
- It will increase awareness among concerned educational Officials, school principals, and school stakeholder's on school decision making.
- It will provide alternative suggestions and recommendations to the concerned bodies so that they improve decision making in efficient and effective and increase quality control for future activities

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

South West Showa Zone has 11 Woredas and one administrative town. From 11 woredas except Goroo Woreda each has one preparatory school. It was very important to assess the current practices and related problems of decision making in preparatory schools of this Zone. But it was difficult to cover all preparatory schools of the zone, Due to various resource and geographical related constraints. To make the study manageable it was delimited to five selected preparatory schools in the zone, although, decision making in

preparatory schools were study from different angles, the study delimited itself on the current practices and related problems of decision making in the five selected preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. There are many school stakeholders, inside and outside school stakeholders. This study was limited to or focused on inside/school leaders directly or indirectly participative in decision making such as: school principals, teachers, department heads, student councils and PTAS.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The findings of the study cannot be generalized to whole decision-making issues of preparatory schools. Besides, shortage of time and financial constraints may affect the results of the study. However, the result of the study is more meaningful if it incorporates all decision-making issues of all preparatory schools.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Decision making: is the process of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the values and preferences of the decision maker, not only to identify these alternatives but to choose the one that best fits with our goals, objectives, desires and values

Parent, Teachers and Students Association:-an organ which is formed from the coalition of representatives of parents and teachers in preparatory schools. It is a higher organ which has a power on administrative issues and plays facilitation role between schools and the communities (MoE 1994).

Preparatory Schools: - Educational institutions which are second cycle of secondary schools (from 11-12 grades).

Principals: - head teachers those who administer /lead/ preparatory schools for the purpose of the attainment of the goals and objectives of these schools.

School Leaders: - individuals who have power and responsibility to make decisions in the schools

Students' Council:-an elected organ of students' representatives who participate in preparatory schools administration especially by consulting students.

Stakeholders: - school principals, teachers, parents, students and PTA members which to involve in various school decision-making practices.

Woreda: - it is the lower administrative structure next to zonal administrative level.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter is consisted the introduction part: back ground of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, organization of the study and definition of operational terms. Chapter two deals with the review of related literature. The third chapter presents the research design and methodology: research method, sources of data, sample and sampling techniques. Chapter four contains data analysis and presentation. The fifth chapter consists and the summary of major findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations. Finally, references and appendices were attached at the last part of the study report

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with review of various literatures which have relevance to the study

2.1. The Concept of Decision Making

Various authors define decision making differently. While some authors (Newstrom and Pierce, 1990) focus on the process involved in decision-making, other (Hoy and Miskel, 1991) emphasize the problem solved during a decision-making. On the other hand, some other writers (Irwin, 1996) focused on the actors involved in decision-making. Okumbe (1998) define decision-making as the process of specifying the nature of particular problem and selecting among available alternatives in order to solve the problem. This definition of decision-making indicates that a problem precedes any decision and that there must be a number of alternative courses of action from which an optimum course will be selected.

Decision making is a major activity for all types of managers. They require decisions for the problem that face them continually day-to-day. In the management process the manager's must make decisions-many decisions, diverse decisions. The managers' time is spent largely in facing one crisis after another by making one decision after another in a continuous but fragmented manner that accounts for much of the stress experienced by them, (Burton and Thankur, 2008).

Decision making is typically described as "choosing among alternatives". Decision makers make a choice or choices from two or more alternatives to answer some questions or problems, (Ayalew, 2010). In support to this idea, Hammond (1999) explains that, decision making referred as problem solving or the process of recognizing a problem or opportunity and finding a solution to it. In addition, Hoy and Miskel also suggest that, decision making is a process concerned with the discovery and selection of satisfactory alternatives in solving a problem that hinder the achievement of predetermined goals of the organization. Decisions are a composite of values, facts, and assumptions. Each or all of these may be subject to change from time. Decision-making, therefore, is not a one-time activity but rather a continuing enterprise (Okumbe, 1998). Every successful organization must make decision that enable the organization to achieve its goal and which meet the critical needs of members of the organization (Morphet et al., 1982). Moreover, decisions are made always in school to

improve the ways of work is to be done, the allocation of resources, and achievement of immediate goals.

Decision-making is a process of making a choice from a number of alternatives to achieve a desired result (Eisenfuhr, 2011). Decision involves policies, resources, and means of execution. In so far as the value content of this type of decision is concerned, the school principal should identify two major values; policy decision that seek purposive action; executing decision that seek coordination of action (Wilson, 1996).

Thus, decision-making is very important and significant in school at large to conduct work, distribute resources, plan short-term and long-term to bring about the future state of affairs as an intention, and activities of the school. Moreover, a school principals' main job is to lead the school through effective. Decision-making, and quite often they have to decide on what is to be done, who to do it, and when and where is to be done.

2.2. The Nature of Decision Making

School principals' major activity is to lead schools through effective decision on what is to be done , who is to do it, when and where is to be done. Decision making is a major responsibility and a major function of all managers. It is the core of everything managers do; consequently, the success and effectiveness of the leaders as well as the achievement of the organization depends up on the managerial decision, (Kinard, 1998). The activity of any organization is related to decision making and the nature of decision making determine the structure of the organization. In order to succeed in today's dynamic organizational environment, school principals must understand their own strength, weakness, the school trends and culture in solving problems through effective decision making process, (Griffiths as cited in Owens, 1998). Also in support to this idea, Hoy and Miskel, (1991) suggest that, "An understanding of decision making process is a very important thing for all school leaders"; because schools like the other organizations have their own decision making structures and principles that ensure the correct decision making and effective action.

It is impossible to make a sound decision for decision makers without knowing the exact nature of the problem. So, it is very important for school principals to know the phases of decision making steps in solving problems. In support to this idea, Simon (1976) states that, the understanding of the application of administrative principles is to be obtained by

analyzing the administrative process interims of decisions. Increasing the rationality of the organizational decisions could maximize the effectiveness of the organizational decisions.

A decision is more effective when the formulated decision satisfies the objectives of the organization to be attained and when it achieves acceptance by those who implement it. To this end, Morphet (1982) suggests that, a decision becomes useful for an organization only when it has been accepted and implemented. When a decision is made it must be communicated (explained) to all the sub systems of the school (school communities). The members of the school community who are affected by that decision must be informed.

2.3. Types of Decisions

Researchers and experts concerning decision-making have developed way of classifying different type of decision based on the nature and purpose they serve. In this regard, writers such as Ivancevich et al. (2005) and Okumbe (1998) classified based on nature of the problem as programmed decision that is repetitive and routine activities and non-programmed decisions that is novel, unstructured, and new problem. Accordingly to the above idea, Burton and Thakur (2008) classify types of decisions in two and stated that, the decisions made by the managers usually fall in to programmed or non- programmed decisions

Programmed Decisions

For Okumbe (1998) “programmed decisions are made on routine problems, whereas, non-programmed decision are in response to problems which are either novel or poorly defined. This means when definite procedures can be worked out, programmed decisions cover the routine problems of an organization that do not need a new response for each recurrence. In contrast, non-programmed decisions encompass novel, unstructured, and consequential issues for which no cut-and dried method can be developed.

From the above point of view, programmed decisions are the easiest for school principals to make a decision. In this case, the nature of the problem is clearly defined and is well understood by them. Moreover, while employing programmed decisions what principals often need to do follow either written or unwritten policies, procedures or rules to make solution for the problems in their school. Supporting this idea, Tripathi and Reddy (2002) have concluded that, programmed decisions are the easiest for educational managers to make. Furthermore, programmed decisions are not time taking and simpler. Instead of thinking to

bring some solution for a problem on their own what principals are required in programmed decision is to implement a policy. It can thus be said that programmed decision has limited opportunity when it comes to exercising creativity and independent judgment

Non-programmed Decisions

Are those applied to non-routine situations that are new and different from situations experienced in the past. They often deal with complex issues that demand data gathering, forecasting and strategic planning. Once implemented, a non-programmed decision is seldom used again.

In different way from the above idea, Melaku et al., (2000) classifies decision types on the basis of their place of origin by time taken to decide, by the focus of the organizational function, by its urgency or priority in relation to the goal or objective as a consequence of the decision taken. Also Gore (as cited in Wendwessen, 2013) classified decision types as: routinely occurring decisions, adapting decision, involving adjustments of existing policies, and innovative decisions which involves the establishment of new policies and goals.

2.4. Decision Making and Managerial Levels

The types of decisions that managers are asked to make are differ, to a large extent, by the managers' level in the organization's hierarchy. In support of this idea, Burton and Thakur (2008) classified decision making and managerial levels as follows:

Top /Higher/ Levels of Management

“Make non-programmed decisions that reflect rare and complex situations with much uncertainty. These are strategic decisions like policy, long term and the proper positioning of the organization in its greater environment.”

Middle Levels of Management

“As the degree of certainty improves, and as the level of complexity declines make managerial (tactical) decisions that articulate how an organization is to integrate its internal environment in the process of achieving the strategic goals established by top management.”

Lower Levels of Management

“Make programmed decisions which are operating and tend to be routine, repetitive, simple and existing in states of relative certainty.”

Generally, in the management process, the managers at different levels make different types of decisions according to their managerial levels (the decisions possible or allowed for their levels).

2.5. Steps /Stages/ in Decision Making

Decision making is a series steps where by one defines, creates, examines and acts up on collected or gathered information. In support to this idea, Burton and Thakur (2008) indicate four decision making steps as: identifying the existence of a problem, generating a set of alternative courses of action, selecting one of the alternatives and implementing the selected course of action. In a different way from this, Griffith (as cited in Burton and Thakur 2008) classify decision making steps in to six as: recognizing and define the decision situation, identify appropriate alternatives evaluate each alternative, select the best alternative , implement the selected alternative and, evaluate the results and follow-up.

In similar to the above idea ,Melaku ,(2009) points out but develops , decision making steps in to six that involved to solve problems through decision making as: identifying the problem (opportunity), gather relevant information, develop as many alternatives as possible ,evaluate alternatives to decide on the best ,decide on and implement the best alternative ,and follow-up. Also, Hoy and Miskel, (1991) suggest that, the steps in decision making process must pass through five sequential steps as: recognizing and defining the problems or issue, analyzing the difficulties in the existing situation, establish criteria for problem resolution, developing a plan or strategy for action (specifying alternatives predicting consequences and selecting the alternatives for action), initiating the plan for action, (programming, communicating, monitoring and appraising).

2.6. Decision Making Environments

There are different decision making environments in which decisions are made. They are categorized interims of the degree of certainty that exists in a situation which managers are required to make the decision. Accordingly, Burton and Thakur, (2008) identified four kinds of decision making environments as follows:

Certainty: - “Exists only when the managers know the available alternatives as well as the conditions and consequences of those actions. Making decisions under certainty assumes that the manager has all the necessary information about the situation”.

Risk: - “exists when the manager is aware of all the alternatives, but he/she is unaware of their consequences. The decision under risk usually involves clear and precise goals and good information, but future outcomes of the alternatives are just not known to a degree of certainty”. However, sufficient information is available to allow the manager to ascribe the probability of successful outcome for each alternative.

Uncertainty: - “exists when there is an unawareness of all the alternatives, and so also the outcomes-even for the known alternatives. Such decisions demand creativity and the willingness to take a chance in the face of such uncertainties. In such situations, managers do not even have enough information to calculate the degrees of risk”.

Ambiguity:-“exists in which the decision is the most difficult and the problem to be resolved or the goals to be reached are not clear. Alternative courses of action are difficult to identify, and information about consequences is not available. It can be said that decision making under ambiguity means that virtually nothing is known for sure”.

However, Ayalew (2010) supports the above idea; he classifies decision making environments in to three as: certainty, risk and uncertainty only. Certainty is the ideal situation for making decisions in which a manager can make accurate decisions, because the outcomes of the alternatives are known. Risk is one of the more common situation in which condition the decision-maker is able to estimate the likelihood of certain outcomes. Managers have historical data that let them assign probabilities to different alternatives. Uncertainty is a condition in which decision-makers are not certain about the outcomes and they cannot even make reasonable probability estimates.

2.7. Models of Decision Making

There are different kinds of decision making models. Different authors state many decision making models in different ways. Accordingly, Murphy and Beck (as cited in Mekuria, 2009) suggest that, there are three main models of decision making at secondary schools level: the administrative control, the professional control model, and the community control model. In the administrative control model schools have administrative authority over the key decision areas of budget, personnel, and curriculum in order to enhance the efficient expenditure of resources for directing students' services. The professional control model is the one in which teachers are involved in school decision making. The community control model is the one in which parents and community members are given key roles in school governance so that the values and preferences of parents along with the community are reflected in school functioning.

In the contrary to the above idea, Burton and Thakur (2008) explain that, two decision making models as: classical model of decision making and administrative model of decision making. The classical model becomes an ideal that is not always useful to real managers with real problems in real organizations. It can be probably be most helpful when used for programmed decisions or for decisions made in a state of risk, where the necessary information is available and outcome probabilities can be calculated. Administrative models of decision making deal with the conditions that managers usually face. It is a normative approach in that it does not prescribe how decisions should be made. Instead, it describes how decisions are actually made.

2.8. Individual versus Group Decision Making

Individual and group decisions are kind of decision based on a number of people involved in decision-making process. Based on the nature of the problem and the situation, some decisions may be made better by group, while others may be handled by individuals. According to Newstrom and Pierce (1990) the question of decision-making by individuals or involving other should not be determined by leader personal preference, but by the nature of the problem and the situation.

Group decision-making is sometimes referred to by other terminologies: participative decision-making, collective judgment management or plural management (McEwan, 1997). Today important decisions are made by group than individuals. This is because there is great deal of information available in a participative decision-making process. Supporting this idea,

Chanda (cited in Legesse, 2008) stated that, “group decision would become particularly appropriate for non-programmed decisions because these decisions are complex and few individuals have all knowledge and skills necessary to make the best decisions”. This implies that groups can make higher quality decision than individuals because different ideas come together from different groups and select the best from the given alternatives.

Thus, in school context, the school principals are not the only person that makes decision and the other people like teachers implement the decision without involving on the issues; and also the others should to accept the decision to agree with the action to be chosen. School principals must participate other stakeholders to make decisions. That is because they need information and advice from several sources especially teachers and pupils to act rationally.

Generally, decisions may be taken either by an individual or groups. Even if the group decision-making may have its own limited disadvantage in school organizations making the decisions by group is preferable than one individuals. As argued by McEwan (1997), group decision can bring more resource to many decisions than a single individual. Different people bring a variety of information, ideas, and viewpoints. Moreover, group decision helps to facilitate the identification of creative and innovative solution to the problems through participating staff members.

Decisions can be made either individually or by groups based on the nature of the problem and the situation. Whether decision is made by individual manager or by group its type is determined by the nature of the problem and the impact of the decision, (Kinard 1998). In support of this idea, Newstrom (1990) suggests that, the question of decision making by individuals or involving others should not determined by the leader’s personal choice, but by the nature of the problem and the situation.

The type of problem and the situation are the determinant factors by whom the decision is made (by an individual manager or by the groups). In support to this idea, Gray (2008) has developed a model to keep administrator’s decision, when to make the decision only by the individual leader (manager) and when to it is best making the decision by the group in the process of decision-making. Therefore, school leaders (decision makers) should have to identify the type of problems and situations which are require individual decision or group decision.

Individual Decision Making

In an organization everyone makes decisions. An individual manager also does involve making decisions and much of a manager's decision making is routine, (Ayalew, 2010). In support of this idea, Asefa (1995) states that, individual (one-man) decision made only in small organizations in the context of routine decisions in line of policies made at higher level regarding to the specific rules and procedures.

Often the manager will make a decision alone, with the information already at hand and without further consultation with others. This technique presumes that additional information processing and /or consultation would not be cost-effective/ or within a given time constraints. It also presumes that the manager in question has both the authority and expertise to make a quality decision in this situation, (Burton and Thakur, 2008).

Group Decision Making

Always, the manager is not the only one who makes the decision. Other peoples those often implement the decision should involve in the making decision. Since in the recent years, more attention has been directed toward group decision-making, managers call together a group of people to make the decision. Ayalew (2010) indicates that, group decision making includes decisions made through informal participation between managers and employees. The basis for the popular approach of participative management is a sharing of decision making between managers and workers.

Decision can be more effective and reach high standard, where there is group participation on decision-making. The commitment to implement a decision comes from being involved in the process of making the decision. In support of this, Negesse (2007) explains that, one of the common factors that make a decision more effective is when the formulated decision satisfies the objectives to be attained and when it achieves acceptance by those who implement it. Decision can be more effective and reach high standard, where there is group participation.

In support of the above idea, Burton and Thakur (2008) indicate that, the group decision making process calls for the manager to seek informational inputs from the group and to get the group to participate in the decision making process itself. This participative approach is designed to secure creative decisions and to improve human relations at the same time. In the

group decision making the quality of the decision improves. Each successive method involves a higher level of mutual influence by group members. A complex problem requiring pooled knowledge, the quality of decision is likely to be as the group moves towards achieving consensus.

Advantages of Group Decision Making

Group decision making has some advantages. According to Burton and Thakur (2008) groups are usually better than individuals at collecting information, developing creative ideas and nurturing commitment to the group decision. Group decision making is more advantageous than individual decision making. To support this idea, Ayalew (2010) suggests that, in group decision making different people bring a variety of information, ideas and viewpoints. If these resources are used effectively; the group should be able to come up with a better decision than could any individual within the group. Group decision-making can also lead to increased acceptance of the decision and consequently to more effective implementation. If people participate in making a decision, they tend to be more committed to the decision and more motivated to put the decision in to action.

Also in support of the above idea, Burton and Thakur (2008) list the advantages of group decision making as: a great sum total of knowledge information, a great number of approaches to the problem are generated, a broader perspective for problem definition and analysis, clarifies ambiguous problems and reduces uncertainty about alternatives, more alternatives are identified tend to be more creative, increases understanding of the solution, and satisfaction with the process.

In contrary to the above ideas (in the opposition of group decision making is more advantageous than individual decision making), Ivancevich (2005) states that, group decision making is not always practical, and no t guaranteed in some situation. Group decision is more effective under some circumstances and individual decision is under other circumstances. According to him there is a condition when it becomes necessary to make a decision individually and at another condition it becomes better to make a decision in a group.

2.9. Decision Making Approaches

There are different approaches to decision making in an organization. Different authors classify decision making approaches in different ways. For example, Mekuria (2009:16)

categorizes decision making approaches in two as: “the authoritarian method in which executive figure makes a decision for the group and the group method in which the group decides.” He further explains them as: authoritarian decision, expert decision, consultative decision, and decision by minority, group decision, decision by majority, decision through consensus and participatory decision. In different from this, Ayalew (2010) identifies four different decision making approaches as:

Directive Approach

“The manger collects information, analyzes the problem, and makes the decision. It is then communicated (explained) to those who implement the decision”.

Consultative Approach

“The manager shares the problem with subordinates. He/she gets their ideas and suggestions. The manager then makes the decision and communicates (explains) it to the subordinates”.

Participative Approach

“The manager shares the problem with subordinates. Together they analyze the problem, generate alternatives and make the decision.”

Delegate Approach

“The manager delegates the authority to make the decision to one or more subordinates. The manager still has the responsibility, of course, but allows the subordinates to make the decision. The manager is informed of the decision”.

2.10. Shared Decision making /SDM/

Shared decision making advocates of teachers, students and parents empowerment and school restructuring urged principals to develop leadership responsibilities, develop collaborative decision making processes, and share authority. Its purpose is to improve school effectiveness and student learning by increasing staff commitment and ensuring that schools are more responsive to the needs of their students and community, John, and Land (1993).

In support of the above idea, Matias (2007) states that, 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.

Shared decision making /SDM/ encourages people to release their own resource of initiative and creativity towards the objectives of the organization. It is viewed that shared decision making is considered as a social process that improves motivation by helping participants understanding and clarify their path towards the organizational goal, (owns as cited in Asefa, 1995). In support to this idea, Armstrong (as cited in Wondwessen, 2011) states that, the involvement of the key stakeholders (teachers, students and parents) in decision-making helps to improve the quality and acceptance of the decision and enhance the effectiveness of the organization to achieve its goal and in turn this provides a better chance for the leaders (decision makers) to communicate easily and for delegation of authority.

Shared decision making is a powerful force for modifying the behavior of a group. In support of this, Lucio and McNeil, (1962) suggest that, shared decision making is a change that brought about by participation; the stakeholders (teachers, students, parents and the whole community) see themselves and their activities in new light participating groups and they improve communication within the school organization. Generally; shared decision making help's as a means to shift accountability or abolish a "top-heavy central office staff". Everyone who helps in making decisions must be held accountable for the results.

2.11. Factors that Affect the Process of Decision.

Simone (1965) considers decision making as a synonym for management and believes that organizational activity and behavior is a complicated network of decision making processes. In fact, decision making acts as the key for understanding the complications of organization and management's performance. Simone believes that management's duty is to provide such organizational conditions that people reach a logical decision as much as possible and the criteria for judging about its logic is its consistency with organization's goal.

Quality of Decision Making: quality of decision making is considered as a dependent variant. Decision making is a broad concept and have direct and indirect effects on all organizational matters. This feature has made it a very interesting subject for experts. But we should clarify how a decision is measured and what is considered as a "better" decision. Quality of decision means the degree and level of success in reaching a goal and "better decision" is the decision

that in opinion of the person who decides will lead the system (group or organization) faster and better toward its goal (Saadat,E. 1993).

Decision making is defined as: a combination of science, thought, sense and imagination in a way that the resulting complex can be implemented. In other words, decision making is an action that cannot be shown or defined by any kind of formula or relation, but one of the recognized features of decision making in management is the fact that certainty and trust is present and evident in it. Thus, we can suggest that decision making is the process of choosing the most ideal or the most logical way for solving a problem or reaching a goal (John and Netsky, 1991).

True and Timely Information: The people who make decisions often are in lack of required information and statistics for making decisions and because the value and importance of decisions for them is the same as gathered information, it can be easily understood that how much the lack of true and correct information can cause problem in decision making process. The most important problem in this is the lack of a central and creditable database that can help people in making decisions. Available information is usually incomplete and out of date and you can trust their credibility. Large number of authorities and organizational positions in most governmental organizations is another problem in way of delivering information to people. Because this information has to go through many departments, groups and people and it usually cause a lot of changes in it and reduce its credibility (Alvani, 2001 **Personal Ideas and Knowledge:** Sometimes managers make their decision in their minds without paying attention to phases of decision making and for confirming and justifying their opinion, they try to find information that confirms their decision and will ignore other facts and truths that are in contradiction with their opinion. Extensive focus on personal experience and ignoring other people's opinions is another aspect of personal influence on decision making. However, personal experience of people who are going to make decisions can be useful as one of information sources in making decisions; but whenever these experiences are used as the only guide and basis for making decisions, it cannot guarantee a successful outcome (Alvani, 2001).

Environmental Factors: Decision making problems are related to ruling conditions and situations of society and the impacts of environments surrounding the system on decision making process can be very effective. This environment includes effective factors such as

cultural, social, economic, regional, technical and political factors. So it can be assumed that the meaning of effective environmental factors is forces and factors that have close relation with organization's activities and operations and have some effects on the decision making process of that organization's managers (Daft, 1998).

The process of decision making is affected by many factors. Different researchers identified different factors that affect the process of decision making in different organizations. To this end, Mekuria, (2009) lists factors that affecting decision making as: decision-making environments, quality of information, acceptance, decision steams, leaders' competence experience, research and analysis, sex and age.

Decision Environment

“Every decision is made within a decision environment which is defined as the collection of information, alternatives, values, and preferences available at the time of decision. Information and alternatives continue to grow as time passes, so to have access to the most information and to the best alternatives, do not make the decision too soon for the following three benefits:”

1. Decision environment will be larger, to provide more information and time for more thoughtful and extended analysis.
2. New alternatives might be recognized or created.

The decision maker's preferences might change. With further thought, wisdom and maturity preferences could be changed.

Quantity of Information

“Many decision makers have a tendency to seek more information than required to make a good decision. When too much information is sought and obtained, one or more of several problems can arise. Delay in the decision, because of the time required to obtain and process this information. This delay could impair the effectiveness of the decision or solution. In addition, if so much information is available decision making ability actually declines because the information in its entirety cannot longer be managed or assessed appropriately.”

Acceptance

“Acceptance is a critical factor because it occasionally conflicts with quality criterion for standard decision. In such cases, the best thing to do may be to choose a lesser quality solution that has greater acceptance. One of the most important considerations in decision making, then, is the people factor. Therefore, it is always advisable to consider a decision in light of the implementing people. Only decisions that are implemented, and implemented with thoroughness (and preferably enthusiasm) will work the way they are intended to.”

Decision Streams

“A common misconception about decision making is that decisions are made in isolation from each other: gather information, explore alternatives, and make a choice, without regard anything that has gone before. The fact is decisions are made in a context of other decisions. There is a stream of decisions surrounding a given decision, many decisions made earlier have led up to this decision and made it both possible and limited.”

Leaders' Competence

“The ability to take timely, clear and firm decisions is an essential quality of leader ship, but the type of decision needed, varies according to the circumstances. True leader approaches the decisions confidently; being aware of consequences and fully in command of the entire decision makes process.”

Experience

“Experience is not the number of years one spent on a given job, but access to research analysis and experimentation. Reliance on the past mistakes prevails on most school leaders and managers. It is strongly believed that if a manager or a school leader carefully analyzes his/her experience and thinks in a biased manner, the cause for success or failure together with experience becomes the basis for decision analysis”.

Research and Analysis

“Experiments are one way of testing a given method. It is probably the most expensive one. One should be encouraged to do experiments and try the various alternatives to see which

alternative is the best, because there is no guarantee of repetition of the results. When a major decision has to be taken research and analysis is the most effective technique.”

Sex and Age in decision making practice

“Despite the fact that society is progressing towards social and labor equality between men and women, it is necessary to continue to examine from psychological perspective whether there are sex differences in the importance that people allocate to factors that determine the decision process. Till now, the results of research are somewhat ambiguous because, some significant differences identified, most of them are minimal”.” It seems that women are more affected by the environment; they look for more information and dedicated more time to the decision process”.

“On the contrary, men are more dominant, assertive, objective, and realistic”. Regarding age, many studies with in the naturalistic approach have been carried out with adults and, to a lesser extent with youths and retired persons. Therefore, it would be interesting to analyze these three groups conjointly. As with sex, researchers debate, without much conviction, about whether there are differences in the quality of process used by youths, adults and retired persons. “Some authors believe there are differences and others disagree”. Also Markos, (1997) in his way state factors that affect teachers’ participation in school decision making as: leadership factors (leadership behavior, styles of leadership), delegation and other variables (sex, teaching experience and academic qualification).

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design, data sources, population sample, sampling techniques, and data gathering tools and methods of data analysis in brief.

3.1. Research Method

The main objective of this study was to investigate the practices and related problems of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone in Oromiya Regional State. The study employed descriptive was survey method, because it is appropriate in describing what is happening currently and to draw valid general conclusions from those facts discovered.

Descriptive survey research design helps to describe and interpret the current condition (Best and Kahn 2003). As to the authors, it is also concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing. Moreover, in order to collect all valuable data from respondents and to come up with valid findings, qualitative data gathering methods were used as supplementary to the descriptive survey method so as to enrich the data that was obtained through questionnaires. Accordingly, interview and FGD were used to obtain the qualitative information from respondents

3.2. Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data for this study to get sufficient information about the practices and problems of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. The primary sources of data are principals, teachers, PTSA heads and department heads, supervisors and students council members of sample in five selected preparatory schools in south West Showa Zone. In order to have the background information about the practices and problems of decision making in preparatory schools the secondary data sources used were school documents on which decisions were formulated.

3.3. Sample and sampling Technique

There are 11 woredas and one administrative town in South West Showa Zone of Oromia regional State. From 11 woredas, except, Goroo woreda the rest 10 Woredas each has one preparatory school. In the study, the target populations were 10 woredas, 10 Preparatory Schools, 225 teachers, 17 principals, 10 secondary school supervisors, 2466 students, 10

PTSA heads, 80 department heads and 70 students' council members (South West Showa Zone Education bureau, 2017). Since it was difficult to manage and conduct the study in all the preparatory schools of the zone, it was important to determine and identify the number of sample woredas, preparatory schools and respondents. Accordingly, out of the total 10 woredas of the zone, 5(50%) woredas were selected by using simple random sampling technique/lottery method/. Simple random technique was chosen, because it gives an independent and equal chance for each of schools. The five woredas which were selected as samples were: Kersa Mallima. Soddo Dachi, Tole, Ilu and Bacho Woredas .Also the five preparatory schools which were taken as the samples from those woredas were Leman, Taree, Bantu, Taji and Yibrat Firee preparatory schools respectively since each woreda has only one preparatory school.

Table 1: Total Number of Population and Samples

No	Name of the preparatory School	Total number of population						Number of Samples					
		T	DH	P	PTAS	SCM	Sup	T	DH	P	PTAS	SCM	Sup
1	Leman P	32	8	2	1	7	1	16	8	2	1	7	1
2	Tare P	30	8	2	1	7	1	15	8	2	1	7	1
3	Bantu	26	8	2	1	7	1	13	8	2	1	7	1
4	Taji	28	8	2	1	7	1	14	8	2	1	7	1
5	Yibret Fire	24	8	2	1	7	1	12	8	2	1	7	1
	Total	140	40	10	5	35	5	70	40	10	5	35	5

Key: T=Teachers; DH=Department Heads; P=Principals; PTSAH=PTSA Heads;

SSS=Secondary School Supervisors; SCM=Students' Council Members

In the five selected sample preparatory schools, there were total of 140 teachers, 1470 students, 10 principals, 5 PTSA heads, 5 SSS, and 35 students' council members. Out of these 70(50%) teachers (to collect available data from large population), 10(100%) principals, 5(100%) PTSA heads, 5(100%) SSS and 35(100%) students' council members were selected as the samples for the study.

The 5(50%) preparatory schools were selected by using simple random sampling technique/lottery method for the reason of each sample woredas has only a single preparatory school. To collect available data from large samples among 140 total teachers, 70 (50%) of them were selected by using simple random sampling technique/lottery method/. Simple random technique was chosen, because it gives an independent and equal chance for each of them. With regard to this, Cress Well, (2005), states that, in a simple random sampling technique, every individual has equal chance of being and the chance of one individual does not affect the chance of another individual. For the purpose of this study, all available 10(100%), principals, 40(100%) department heads, 35(100%) students' council members, 5(100%) school supervisors, and 5(100%) PTA heads were included because of their involvement in school decision making directly or indirectly.

In general, a total of 165 respondents participated in the study. Out of 165 respondents, 70 teachers and 40 department heads were selected to fill in the questionnaires. 10 principals, 5PTSA heads and 5 school supervisors were selected to participate in interview. Besides to this, 35 students' council members were treated through FGD.

3. 4. Instruments of Data Collection

This research was conducted by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gather adequate and appropriate data. Accordingly, a set of questionnaires, semi structured interview; document analysis and focus group discussion were employed. The questionnaire were prepared in English language because it was believed that the respondents this study can understand English, but, interview for all respondents were conducted in Afan Oromo to make the questions/ communications/clear. The interviews were containing semi-structured questions. Before distributing all data gathering instruments for the target group pilot testing of the instruments were conducted for checking clarity and relevance.

3.4.1. Questionnaires:

The main reason to used questionnaires was for obtaining factual information, opinions and attitudes from large number of subjects with-in a short period of time. Questionnaires were prepared for teachers and department heads. Questionnaires include both types of items that are, opened and closed ended. Both open and closed ended items were used to collect data from the above respondents in assessing the practices and problems of decision making and the possible mechanisms that can improve decision making in school. The closed ended items

were arranged in five point likert scale (Strongly disagree= 1, Disagree =2, Undecided =3, Agree= 4, and strongly agree=5 and Key: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Very Good, 3= Good, 2 = Poor, 1 = Very poor). Open ended items were also prepared for respondents to give their opinion, comment, suggestions and possible solution for the study. The questionnaires were having two categories: the respondents' personal characteristics and items related to decision making in preparatory schools of West Showa Zone. In Kersa woredas sampled a selected preparatory schools were used for pilot testing. Thus, the result were examined and checked for reliability of the questionnaires.

3.4.2. Interview

Interview was used to collect data from school principals, PTSA heads and secondary school supervisors. The reason for using interview was that it could permit the exploration of issues, which might be too complex to investigate through questionnaires and also justified as it allows better chance to explain more explicitly what the respondent knows on the issue, (Best and Kahn 2004).The interviews for all respondents were conducted in Afan Oromo to make the questions /communications / clear. The interview contained semi-structured questions

3.4.3. Focus Group Discussion

It was a more advantageous than any other instruments in that it does not only disclose what was important to individual respondents, but it also attempt to provide situations where the synergy of the group adds to the depth and insight. Thus, the group strives to provide in-depth qualitative information which could not be obtained as efficiently by any other way (Anderson, 1990).

Hence, this instrument was employed to gather detail information from 35 student's council members Of the sample schools on the extended that the decision making practices, problems and the factors that affect it. Semi-structured questions/FGD guide lines/ were translated and conducted in Afan Oromo to initiate the discussion / to make the communication easier/.The data were recorder in Afan Oromo and latter translated in to English language by the student researcher. 35 students' council members were treated through FGD.

3.4.4 Document Analysis

According to Kumar (2005), analysis of content of records, documents and other printed materials constituted the second used for survey to collect facts for the research study. Therefore, it was used to check the systematic and participative of decision making process in

the five selected preparatory schools of south West Showa Zone. Documents of PTSA, school management, departments, school board, staff and curriculum committee in these schools were also analyze and reviewed.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

Before collecting data from respondents pilot test was conducted in Lemana Preparatory School Kaersa Malima woreda, which was included in the main study. This was with the intention to make the necessary corrections and improvements on the questionnaire items and to avoid ambiguous questions. Also typographical error correction and instructional amendments were made. In this regard, among 15 respondents 10 teachers and 5 department heads were selected for pilot testing. After necessary corrections were made (correcting letters, words, sentences and language), the questionnaires were distributed for respondents who were selected from those selected five preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. Then after the questionnaires were collected in one month from respondents by the student researchers

Interview and FGD were also treated by adjusting the convenient time and place for respondents. Before conducting interviews, appropriate arrangements were made with the interviews. Moreover, the respondents were assured that their responses would be kept confidential. They were also assured that they would not be held responsible for the research outcomes. The data that were collected through interview and FGD registered and organized for analysis and interpretation. Initially, the data through Interview and FGD gathered from respondents.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

After the data were collected from the respondents, data collecting instruments were checked, classified, arranged and organized according to their characteristics and items, and prepared in a well manner for analysis. Then after the data were analyzed and interpreted by using quantitative and qualitative research analysis. The data that were obtained through questionnaires from teachers and department heads were tallied, analyzed and interpreted quantitatively by using frequencies and percentages. The chi-square test was also applied in addition to interpreting close ended questions to test whether there was any significance differences happened in the response of teachers and department heads.

But the data that were gathered through open-ended questions, interviews from principals, PTSA heads and Secondary School Supervisors and FGD from Students' Council Members and document review were analyzed and interpreted qualitatively by descriptive narration.

Accordingly, to present and interpret the raw data, frequencies and percentage values were used to analyze various characteristics such as: sex, age, qualification, work experience and the practices of decision making.

1.7 Ethical Consideration

Attempts were made to formulate the research process professional and ethical. To this end, the researcher had tried to clearly inform to the respondents about the purpose of the study that is purely for academic reason. As it is introduced its purpose in the introduction section of the questionnaire and interview guide to the respondents, the researcher confirmed that subjects, confidentiality will be protected. In general, the researcher did not try to personalize any of the reaction of the respondents during data presentations, analysis and interpretations. Besides, all the resources used for this research have been appropriately acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the sample preparatory schools by using data gathering tools (questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion, and document observation and review) to search for appropriate solutions to the basic questions of the study. This section of the research report was categorized in two major parts. The first part presents personal information (characteristics) of the respondents and the second part deals with the analysis and interpretation of the practices and related problems of decision making based on the data collected from them.

Accordingly, analysis and presentation was made by using the data gathered from teachers, department heads, principals, supervisors, PTSA heads and Students' Council Members of five sample preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. In order to collect the data questionnaires were distributed to five sample preparatory school teachers and department heads. From a total of 110 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 104(94.5%) were properly filled and returned. In order to validate the data from questionnaire, interview was conducted with school principals, PTSA heads and school supervisors and focus group discussion (FGD) were held with Students' Council members.

In addition to these documents, observation and review check-lists were employed as supplementary data gathering tool in this study. Generally, the data gathered through questionnaires were tallied, tabulated and quantified. Along with the number of frequencies and percentages of the respondents has been used to indicate the characteristics of the study population.

4.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Description of the characteristics of the respondents gives some basic information about the sample population. The following tables show the general characteristics (sex, age, qualification, work experience and field of study) of the respondent's participated in the study.

Table 2: Characteristics of the Respondents by Sex and Age

Variables	Categories	T		DH		P		S		PTAS		SCM	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sex	M	65	92.9	34	100	10	100	5	100	5	100	24	68.6
	F	5	7.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	31.4
	Total	70	100	34	100	10	100	5	100	5	100	35	100
Age In Years	<20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	88.6
	21-25	13	18.6	2	5.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	11.4
	26-30	35	50	21	61.8	2	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
	31-35	8	11.4	6	17.6	3	30	2	40	-	-	-	-
	36-40	11	15.7	2	5.9	2	20	-	-	2	40	-	-
	41-45	1	1.4	1	2.9	2	20	3	60	2	40	-	-
	>45	2	2.9	2	5.9	1	10	-	-	1	20	-	-
	Total	70	100	34	100	10	100	5	100	5	100	35	100

Key: T=Teachers, DH=Department Heads, P=Principals, S=Supervisors, PTSAH=PTSA Heads SCM=Students' Council Members

As it can be seen from table 2, the teacher respondents consisted of 65 (92.9%) males and 5(7.1%) females. All department heads, principals, supervisors and PTSA Heads were males. Regarding Students' Council Members (FGD participants) 24(68.6%) males and 11 (31.4%) were females. Thus, the data indicated that there are a small number of female teachers in the preparatory schools of the zone. But there is no female's assigned as principals and department heads. This implies that there is male domination of principals and teachers in the preparatory schools of the zone under study.

Age is another general characteristics of the respondents considered. Accordingly, as shown in the same Table 31(88.6%) of the students' council members were <20 years of age. But all teachers, department heads, principals, supervisors and PTSA heads were above 20 years age. 13 (18.6%) teachers, 2(5.9%) department heads, 4(11.4%) SCM were 21-25 years age. 35(50.0%) teachers, 21(61.8%) of departments heads, 2 (20%) principals were 26-30 years age. 8(11.4%) teachers, 6(17.6%) department heads 3(30%) principals and 2(40%) supervisors were 31-35 years age. 11(15.7%) of the teacher, 3(7.5%) of the department head and 2(20%) of the principal respondents were 36-40 years of age. 1(1.4%) teachers, 1(2.5%) department heads, 2(20%) principal ,2(40%)PTSA heads were 41-45 years age. Lastly, 2(2.9%) of the teacher, 3(7.5%) of the department head, 1(10%) of the principal, 3(60%) of the supervisor and 2(40%) of the PTSA head respondents were over 45 years of age. This may show that there was very little number of matured teachers in the preparatory schools.

Table 3: Qualification and Work Experience of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	T		DH		P		S		PTAS		SCM	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
		Academic qualification	< grade 12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20
DIPLOMA	4		5.7	1	2.9	-	-	-	-	1	20	-	-
BA/BED/BSC	60		85.7	27	79.4	7	70	4	80	3	60	-	-
MA/MCD/MSC	6		8.6	6	17.7	3	30	1	20	-	-	-	-
Total	70		100	34	100	10	100	5	100	5	100	35	100
Work experience in years	< 5	24	34.3	4	11.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	6-10	28	40	15	44.1	6	60	2	40	-	-	-	-
	11-15	6	8.6	9	26.5	1	10	-	-	2	40	-	-
	16-20	5	7.1	2	5.9	1	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
	21-25	3	4.3	2	5.9	1	10	2	40	1	20	-	-
	26-30	2	2.9	1	2.9	1	10	1	20	2	40	-	-
	>30	2	2.9	1	2.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	70	100	34	100	10	100	5	100	5	100	35	100

Key: T=Teachers, DH=Department Heads, P=Principals, S=Supervisors, PTSAH=PTSA Heads SCM = Students' Council Members

The qualification and work experience of teachers, department heads, principals, PTSA heads and students' council members are important factors that help to facilitate favorable conditions for schools decision making. Accordingly, as shown in Table 3 above 35(100%) students' council members were < 12 grade. 4(5.7%) of the teacher, 1(2.9%) of the department head, 1(20%) of the PTSA head respondents were diploma holders. 60(85.7%) teachers, 27(79.4%) department heads 7(70%) principals 4(80%) supervisors and 3(60%) PTSA heads were first degree. 6(8.6%) teachers, 6(17.6%) department heads 3(30%) principals and 1(20%) supervisors were second degree holders.

In the case of work experience 24(34.3%) of the teacher and 4(11.8%) of the department head respondents were < 5 service years. 28(40%) teachers, 15(44.1%) department heads 6(60%) principals and 2(40%) supervisors were 6-10 service years. 6(8.6%) teachers, 9(26.5%) department heads, 1(10%) principals and 2(40%) PTSA heads were 11-15 service years. 5(7.1%) of the teacher, 2(5.9%) of the department head and 1(10%) of the principal respondents were 16- 20 service years. 3(4.3%) teachers, 2(6%) department heads, 1(10%) principals, 1(20%) supervisor and 1(20%) PTSA heads were 21-25 service years. 2(2.8%) teachers, 1(2.9%) department head, 1(10%) principal, 2(40%) supervisors and 2(40%) of the PTSA heads were 26- 30 service years. Lastly, 2(2.9%) of the teacher, and 1(2.9%) of the department head respondents were > 31 service years. This indicates that the majority of them were adult's ages. So, in the researcher's view school leaders, teachers, and PTAs were in the active age range to participate in school decision-making. This easily shows that in the zone were led largely by younger teachers.

The academic qualifications of respondents' profile show that 60(85.7%) of respondents had BA/ BSc /BEd degree and 16(15.4%) of them had MA/MSc/MEd degree and other qualification. This indicates that there was no much variation in qualifications between school principals and staff members. According to guideline of MoE (2009) the recruitment and assignment criteria indicated in the document of preparatory school principals and supervisors are required to have second degree in the required field study like educational administration, educational management, and educational leadership.

Table 4: Areas of Specialization of the Respondent

Areas of specialization	T		DH		P		S		PTAS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Languages	17	24.3	6	17.6	1	10	3	60	-	-
Natural science and math	28	40	21	61.7	3	30	1	20	1	20
Social science	16	22.9	7	20.6	2	20	-	-	1	20
EdPM	-	-	-	-	4	40	1	20	1	20
Other(non- teach)	9	12.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	40
Total	70	100	34	100	10	100	5	100	5	100

Key: T=Teachers; DH= Department Heads; P=Principals; S=Supervisors; PTSAH=PTSA Heads; SCM = Students' Council Members

As indicated in table 4, 17(24.3%) teachers, 6(17.6%) of department heads 1(10%) principal and 3(60%) supervisors were specialized in Languages. 28(40%) teachers, 21(61.8%) department heads, 3(30%) principals and 1(20%) PTSA head were specialized in Natural Sciences and Mathematics. 16(22.9%) of the teacher, 8(23.5%) of the department head, 2(20%) of the principal and 1(20%) of the PTSA head respondents were specialized in Social Sciences. 4(40%) principals, 1(20 %) supervisor and 1(20%) PTSA head were specialized in EdPM. Finally, 9(12.8%) of the teacher and 1(20%) of the PTSA head respondents were specialized in others (non-teaching) areas. The respondents specialized in different subject areas and only few principals specialized in school leadership (EdPM).

4.2.1. Steps of Decision Making Processes

In decision making one of the most important things is following the steps of decision making processes. Following such steps helps minimize errors and correct the mistakes that come while making decisions. Decision making processes should be with the correct series of scientific sequential steps, with valuable quality, consensus oriented and ethical (Hoy and Miskel, 1991).

Table 5: Steps of Decision Making Processes by School Leaders

No	Items	Arrangement of Scale										
		Resp onde nts.	5		4		3		2		1	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Carefully gather relevant information to the problems	T	1	1.4	19	27.1	6	8.6	30	43	15	21
		DH		0	11	32.4	4	12	16	47	3	8.8
2	Develop alternative solutions to the problem	T	4	5.7	15	21.4	7	10	39	56	7	10
		DH		0	5	14.7	9	26	17	50	3	8.8
3	Select one of the alternatives to the problem	T		0	20	28.6	10	14	32	46	8	11
		DH	4	12	4	11.8	5	15	13	38	8	24
4	Put the decisions in to action	T	7	10	30	42.9	13	19	37	53	3	4.3
		DH	2	5.9	21	70.6	6	18	3	8.8	2	5.9
5	Follow-up implementation of the decisions	T	9	13	30	42.9	9	13	22	31		0
		DH	3	8.8	14	41.2	11	32	5	15	1	2.9

Key: T=Teachers; N=70, DH= Department Heads, N=34, 5= strongly agree; 4=Agree; 3=Undecided; 2=Disagree; 1=strongly Disagree

In the item 1 of Table 5, 1(1.4%) of the teacher strongly agree, 19(27.1%) of the teachers and 11(32.4%) of the department head respondents agreed on that the school leaders/decision makers/ carefully gather relevant information to the problems. 6(8.6%) teachers and 4(11.7%) department heads were not decided. But, 30(42.9%) teachers and 16(47.1%) department heads did not agree on the issue. Also 15 (21.4%) of the teacher and 3(8.8%) department heads did not strongly disagreed.

The data corresponding to item 2 of the same Table also indicate that, 15(21.4%) teachers and 5(14.7%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders develop alternative solutions to the problems. But, 46(65.7%) teachers and 20(54.8%) of department heads were disagreed on the issue. While 7(10%) of the teacher and 9(26.5%) of the department head respondents did not decide on the development of alternative solutions to the problems.

Regarding the data in item 3 of Table 5 also indicate that only 20(28.6%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders select one of the alternative solutions to the problems. 10(14.3%) teachers and 5(14.7%) of department heads did not

decide. But 40(57.1%) of the teacher and 21(61.8%) of the department head respondents showed their disagreement on the issue. The data in item 4 of the same Table, indicated that 37(52.8%) of teachers and 23(67.7%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders put the formulated decisions in to actions. 13(18.6%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads did not decide, 30 while 20(28.6%) of the teacher and 5(14.7%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue.

The data in item 5 of Table 5 on that the school leaders follow-up the implementation of the formulated decisions, 39(55.7%) teachers and 17(50%) department heads agreed. 22(31.4%) of teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads were not agreed. 9(12.9%) of the teacher and 11(32.4%) of the department head respondents did not decide on the issue. However, the principals through interview responded as prior to make decisions they gather enough information, develop alternative solutions and at the end select one of the alternatives to the problems but, the data gathered from PTSA heads and secondary school supervisors through interview and students' council members through focus group discussion /FGD/ in the contrary to the above idea, the school principals revealed that prior to making decisions the habit and practices of gathering relevant information, developing alternative solutions to the problems and selecting one of the alternatives to the problems is low in their schools. They underlined that the decisions were formulated haste /rashly/without taking time and thinking over it.

Similarly, the data gathered through document observation and review revealed that such decision making steps were not observed by the researcher in school documents. Therefore, based on the data gathered through questionnaire, interview, FGD and document observation and review, we can conclude that the habit and practices of making decisions by following the required steps is poor in preparatory schools of the zone under study.

Accordingly, Melaku (2009) stated that to solve problems decision making steps involved six steps as: identifying the problem (opportunity), gather relevant information, develop as many alternatives as possible evaluate alternatives to decide on the best, decide on and implement the best alternative and follow-up. Therefore, there was significant difference among the steps which were followed to solve problems.

4.2.2. The Decisions meet the Objectives and Goals of the School

The major purpose of the decision making in schools is to meet the objectives and goals the school in particular and the educational system in general. The quality of decision making in

an organization depends on selecting proper goals and identifying means of achieving them, (Ivancevich and Matteson 1990). The decisions which can be formulated in schools should satisfy educational needs of the students, mobilize resources, and improve students' achievements and the like.

Table 6. The Decisions meet the Objectives and Goals of the School

		Arrangement of Scale										
No.	Items	Res p ond ents	5		4		3		2		1	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	The decisions fulfill personal interests of the school leaders	T	4	5.7	35	50	11	15.7	20	28.6	-	-
		DH	5	14.7	15	44.2	8	23.5	3	8.8	3	8.8
2	The decisions satisfy the needs and interests of the school community	T	5	7.1	17	24.3	6	8.6	31	44.3	1	15.7
		DH	3	8.8	9	26.5	7	20.6	11	32.4	4	11.7
3	The decisions formulated in the right priorities of the school objectives	T	-	-	27	58.6	4	5.7	33	47.1	6	8.6
		DH	-	-	9	26.5	3	8.8	18	52.9	4	11.8
4	The decisions formulated to maximize the effectiveness of decision	T	3	4.3	22	31.4	7	10	38	54.3	-	-
		DH	4	11.8	6	17.6	6	17.6	15	44.1	3	8.8
5	The decision making processes mobilize different resources for educational objectives	T	9	12.9	28	40	11	15.7	17	24.3	5	7.1
		DH	5	14.7	16	47.1	4	11.7	7	20.6	2	5.9
6	The school has its own decision making structures and principles	T	6	8.6	35	50	5	7.1	20	28.6	4	5.7
		DH	8	23.6	13	38.2	6	17.6	5	14.7	2	5.9
7	The decisions improve the students' achievements	T	-	-	21	30	8	11.4	34	48.6	7	10
		DH	2	5.9	9	26.5	6	17.6	9	26.5	9	26.5

Key: T= Teachers; DH=Department Heads 5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Undecided; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

As indicated in item 1 of Table 6, 39(55.7%) teachers and 20(58.9%) department heads agreed on that the decisions fulfill personal interests of the school leaders. But 20(28.6%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads did not agree on the issue. While 11(15.7%) of then teacher and 8(23.5%) of the department head respondents did not decide. The data in item 2 of the same Table revealed that 22(31.4%) teachers and 12 (35.3%) department heads agreed

on that the decisions satisfy the needs and interests of the school community. 42(60%) teachers and 15 (44.1%) department heads did not agree. 6(8.6%) of the teacher and 7(20.6%) of the department head respondents remained undecided. The data corresponding to item 3 of Table 6, 17(27%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads agreed on that the decisions formulated in the right priorities of the objectives of the school. But 33(52.4%) teachers and 22(64.7%) department heads did not agree. While 13(20.6%) of the teacher and 3(8.8%) of the department head respondents did not decide on the issue.

As it can be seen in item 4 of Table 6 on that the decisions maximize the effectiveness of the school 25(35.7%) teachers and 10(29.4%) department heads agreed. 38(54.3%) of teachers and 18 (52.91%) department heads did not agree on the issue. 7(10%) of the teacher and 6(17.6%) of the department head respondents did not decide. Concerning to item 5 of the same Table on that the decision making processes mobilize different resources for educational objectives, 37(52.9%) teachers and 7(20.5%) department heads agreed. But 22(31.4%) of the teacher and 18(53%) of the department head respondents were not agreed. While 11(15.7%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads did not decide on the issue.

The data in item 6 of Table 6 on that the school has its own decision making structures and principles, 41(58.6%) teachers and 21(61.8%) department did not agree. 5(7.1%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads remained undecided. As the data that can be seen in item 7 of the same Table 21(30%) teachers and 11(32.4%) department heads agreed on that the decisions improve the students' achievements. But 8(11.4%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads did not decide. While 41(58.6%) of the teacher and 18(53%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue.

However, the majority of (7) principals responded that more of the decisions in schools meet the objectives and goals of the schools in particular and the educational system in general, on the other hand, the data gathered through interview, open ended questions, FGD from PTSA heads, school supervisors and students' council members revealed that the school leaders dominated and guided other school decision making organs and divert decisions on the behave of their personal interests. The respondents also responded that most of the decisions formulated in the schools are political rather than educational. They indicated that because of the school decisions are unable to meet the educational needs and interests of the students in their academic achievements where decreased from year to year.

Also the researcher observed that there were no disciplinary committees except the PTSA /but the PTSA are not active and effective in decision making especially on issues concerning disciplinary problems/ in all five sample schools. This affected the decision making processes especially in disciplinary cases. The power and responsibility are given to the PTSA by MoE (1994). But the school leaders also confirmed that PTSA is inactive and lacks self confidence and commitment to decide on disciplinary cases for an illegal and in disciplinary acts. In all sample schools, there was no promotion policy guide line for the preparatory level. The respondents indicated that these and other factors complicated the decision making processes in these preparatory school. The process of making rational decisions depends on the linking directly related to activities of the organizational objectives, goals and policies (Hanson, 1996). Ivancevich (2005) explained that, decision makers have to look into the objectives and goals of the organization as a whole in pursuing their decision. The decisions that are made about the organizations objectives and means of reaching them are providing the guidelines for making subsequent decisions.

4.2.3. Knowledge of the School Leaders in Decision Making

School leaders necessarily have to possess deep knowledge to formulate good decisions and apply to systematic decision makers. The knowledge of school leaders is one of the factors that affect decision making processes and determine the quality of decisions. School leaders could have particular expertise in the area within which they lead and manage. Besides, school leaders must possess an awareness of leadership and managerial concepts and best practices that enable them conceptualize, to question and to understand the leadership and manage (David, 2006).

Table 7: The Knowledge of School Leaders in Decision Making

		Arrangement of Scale										
No.	Items	Re sp on dents.	5		4		3		2		1	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	They have knowledge how to formulate decision and seek it as inputs for decision making	T	1	1.4	19	21.1	12	17.1	34	48.6	4	5.7
		DH	-	-	10	29.4	6	17.6	11	32.4	7	20.6
2	They are professionalized in school based management, qualified, trained and expertise in leadership	T	5	7.1	15	21.4	9	12.9	32	45.7	9	12.9
		DH	3	8.8	9	26.5	7	20.6	10	29.4	5	14.7
3	They have necessary knowledge whether a given problem needs individual or group decision	T	9	12.9	27	38.6	13	18.5	14	20	7	10
		DH	1	2.9	16	47.1	5	14.7	7	20.6	5	14.7
4	They are skilled enough in preparing participatory decision making and develop collaborative decision making processes	T	7	10	12	17.1	6	8.6	37	52.9	8	11.4
		DH	2	5.9	7	20.5	9	26.5	11	32.4	5	14.7
5	They have technical, interpersonal and conceptual skill to formulate decisions	T	-	-	23	32.9	7	10	39	55.7	1	1.4
		DH	-	-	16	47.1	8	23.5	6	17.6	4	11.8
6	School leaders at different levels formulate different decisions /the decisions allowed for their levels/	T	14	20	31	44.3	8	11.4	17	24.3	-	-
		DH	1	2.9	13	38.2	10	29.4	5	14.7	5	14.7
7	The school leaders always formulate decisions completely individually by themselves	T	2	2.9	20	28.6	12	17.1	25	35.7	11	15.7
		DH	4	11.8	7	20.6	8	23.5	9	26.5	6	17.6

Key: T= Teachers; DH=Department Heads 5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Undecided; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

As it can be seen the data in item 1 of Table 7 on that the school leaders have the knowledge how to formulate decisions and seek it as inputs for decision making 20(28.5%) teachers and 10(29.4%) department heads agreed. But 38(54.3%) of the teacher and 18(53%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue. While 12(17.1%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads did not decide. Regarding the data on item 2 of the same Table 20(28.5%) teachers and 12(35.3%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders are professionalized in school based management, qualified, trained and expertise in leadership.

9(12.9%) of the teacher and 7(20.6%) of the department heads did not decide on the issue. 41(58.6%) teachers and 15(44.1%) department heads did not agree.

The data in the item 3 of Table 7 on that the school leaders have necessary knowledge whether a given problem needs individual or group decision 36(51.5%) teachers and 17(50%) depart heads agreed. But 21(30%) of the teacher and 12(35.3%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue. While 13(18.5%) teachers and 5(14.7%) department heads remained undecided.

Concerning the data on item 4 of Table 7, 19(27.1%) teachers and 9(26.4%) department heads agreed on that school leaders are skilled enough in preparing participatory decision making and develop collaborative decision making processes. 6(8.6%) of the teacher and 9(26.5%) of the department head respondents were not decided. 45(64.3%) teachers and 16(47.1%) department heads did not agree on the issue. The data in item 5 of the same Table on that the school leaders have technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills to formulate decisions 23(32.9%) teachers and 16(47.1%) department heads agreed. But 7(10%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads did not decide on the issue. While 33(57.1%) of the teacher and 10(29.4%) of the department head respondents did not agree. From the data of this item it can be seen that the majority of the teacher respondents responded by showing their disagreement. This showed that the school leaders lacked enough technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills. The data in item 6 of Table 7, 45(64.3%) teachers and 14(41.2%) department heads agreed that school leaders at different levels formulate different decisions/ the decisions allowed for their levels/. 8(11.4%) teachers and 10(29.4%) department heads did not decide. 17(24.3%) of the teacher and 10(29.4%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue.

The data in item 7 of the same Table on that the school leaders always formulate decisions completely individually by themselves while 22(31.5%) teachers and 11(32.4%) department heads agreed. But 12(17.1%) of the teacher and 8(23.5%) of department head respondents were not decided on the issue. While 36(51.4%) teachers and 15(44.1%) department heads did not agree.

In addition, the data gathered from principals, PTSA heads, secondary school supervisors, students' council members and open ended questions through interview and FGD revealed that majority of school leaders were not trained in school leadership and their earlier areas of specialization were not related to management or leadership. Also seminars, workshops and

trainings given to the principals by the MoE, Oromia Education Bureau, Zone and Woreda Education Offices were not enough. These and other related factors school leaders lacked managerial skills to plan, organize, and coordinate activities.

According to Kinard (1998), the success and effectiveness of the organization its achievements depend up on the knowledge and skills of the managers. Their knowledge and skills also affect the activity of organization and the nature of decision making. Also Hoy and Miskel (1991) explained that an understanding of decision making process is a very important thing for all school leaders, because schools like the other organizations have their own decision making structures and principles that ensure the correct decision making and effective action.

4.2.4. The Effectiveness of School Leaders in Decision Making

The effectiveness of school leaders is crucial for making quality and acceptable decisions in schools. Effective leadership, commitment and the leaders, who provide a vision for organization, involve organizational members in decision making, (Reyes 1994). Effective school leaders act as organizers, advisors, and consensus builders. They are expected to give clear direction for the school and lead the school by formulating effective decisions. Also Fentahun (2009) explained that, it is generally agreed upon that when schools become successful and their achievement in the overall teaching and learning activities is high, much of the credit goes to the school leaders' efficiency and effectiveness.

Table 8: The Effectiveness of School Leaders in Decision Making

No.	Items	Arrangement of Scale										
		Respondents.	5		4		3		2		1	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Effective in their leadership activities lead the school by unmaking effective decisions	T	9	12.9	15	21.4	14	20	25	35.7	7	10
		DH	4	11.7	9	26.5	6	17.6	14	47.2	1	3
2	Ensure the correct decision making process and make effective actions	T	4	5.7	13	18.6	17	24.3	32	45.7	4	5.7
		DH	-	-	11	32.4	5	14.7	13	38.2	5	14.7
3	Take care about the process of decisions	T	--	--	22	31.4	10	14.3	31	44.3	7	10
		DH	3	8.8	9	26.5	3	8.8	14	41.2	5	14.7
4	Decide on what is to be done, when to be done and where is to be done	T	5	7.2	28	40	11	15.7	26	23.1	-	-
		DH	5	14.7	11	32.3	8	23.5	9	26.5	1	3
5	Play their facilitator role to make good decision for the school community	T	8	11.4	12	17.1	18	25.7	30	42.9	2	2.9
		DH	-	-	10	29.4	8	23.5	12	35.4	4	11.8
6	Act as organizers, advisors and consensus builders of the groups in decision making	T	9	12.9	21	30	6	8.6	31.4	48.6	1	1.4
		DH	3	8.8	8	23.5	7	20.5	14	45.2	2	6
7	Play a critical role in establishing and maintaining group decision making	T	13	18.6	15	21.4	14	20	26	37.1	2	2.9
		DH	5	14.7	10	29.4	5	14.7	12	35.2	2	6
8	Formulate decisions based on the intuition/past practices	T	3	4.3	21	30	13	18.6	26	31.7	7	10
		DH	1	3	12	35.3	3	8.8	13	38.2	5	14.7
9	Formulate decisions on scientific and systematic analysis	T	-	0	20	28.6	15	21.4	29	41.4	6	8.6
		DH	2	5.9	7	20.6	9	26.5	11	32.3	5	14.7

Key: T= Teachers; DH=Department Heads 5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Undecided; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

As it can be seen, the data in item 1 of Table 8 on that the school leaders are effective in their leadership activities and lead the school by making effective decisions, 24(34.3%) teachers and 13(38.2%) department heads agreed. 32(45.7%) teachers and 15(44.2%) department heads did not agree. 14(20%) of the teacher and 6(17.6%) of the department head respondents did not decide on the issue. In item 2 of the same Table, on that school leaders ensure the correct decision making processes and formulate effective decisions 17(24.3%) teachers and

11(32.4%) department heads agreed. But 36(51.4%) of the teacher and 18(52.9%) of the department head respondents did not agree. While 17(24.3%) teachers and 5(14.7%) department heads were not decided on the issue. The data in item 3 of Table 8 on that the school leaders take care about the processes of decisions, 22(31.4%) of teachers and 12(35.3%) department heads agreed. But 38(54.3%) of the teacher and 19(55.9%) of the department head respondents did not agree. While 10(14.3%) teachers and 3(8.8%) department heads did not decide on the issue. Concerning the data in item 4 of the same Table, 33(47.2%) teachers and 16(47%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders decide on what is to be done, when to be done and where to be done. 26(37.1%) of the teacher and 10(29.5%) of the department head respondents did not agree. 11(15.7%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads did not decide on the issue.

Regarding the data in item 5 of Table 8 on that the school leaders play their facilitator role to formulate good decisions for the school and school community, 20(28.5%) teachers and 10(29.4%) department heads agreed. But 18(25.7%) of the teacher and 8(23.5%) of the department head respondents did not decide on the issue. While 32(45.8%) teachers and 16(47.1%) department heads did not agree. The data in item 6 of the same Table 30(42.9%) teachers and 11(32.3%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders' act as organizers, advisors and consensus builders of the groups in making decisions. But 35(50%) teachers and 16(47.2%) department heads did not agree on the issue. While 6(8.6%) of the teacher and 7(20.5%) of the department head respondents did not decide.

The data in item 7 of Table 8 on that, the school leaders play a critical role in establishing and maintaining group decision making, 28(40%) teachers and 15(44.1%) department heads agreed. 14(20%) of the teacher and 5(14.7%) of the department head respondents did not decide on the issue. But 28(40%) teachers and 14(41.2%) department heads did not agree.

The result of item 7 which responded by teachers was equal in both agreement and disagreement 28(40%). So we can conclude that this item is moderate. Concerning to the data in item 8 of the same Table, on that the school leaders formulate decisions based on the intuition/ past practices/, 24(34.3%) teachers and 13(38.3%) department heads agreed on the issue. But 33(47.1%) of the teacher and 18 (52.9%) of the department head respondents did not agree. While 13(18.6%) teachers and 3(8.8%) department heads did not decide.

The data in item 9 of Table 8 on that, the school leaders formulate decisions based on the scientific and systematic analysis, 20(28.6%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads

agreed. But 35(50%) of the teacher and 16(47%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue. While 15(21.4%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads did not decide. Additionally, the data gathered from PTSA, secondary school supervisors, students' council members through interview, FGD and from open ended questions support the above data. They responded that school leaders lacked effectiveness to ensure the decision making processes, formulate effective decisions, did not care about the processes of decision making, to organize ,advise and build consensus of the group in making decisions. Also they indicated that the school leaders lacked self confidence and most of the time they were influenced by external organs forced to formulate decisions against to the school rules, regulations and principles.

Fentahun (2009) once stated that the need to have professional development in leadership and management of educational institutions like schools have paramount importance for school leaders in making effective decisions, developing appropriate school culture, establishing good communication system with teachers and students, and developing confidence to confront new challenges and performing their role well.

4.2.5. The Practice of Participatory /Group/ Decision Making

Participation in decision making encourages people to release their own resource of initiative and creativity towards the objectives of the organization. In line of the above idea, Owens, (1998) states that, participative decision making has two major potential benefits : arriving at better decision, enhancing the growth and development of the organization's participant in sharing of goals, improve motivation ,communicating and developed group skills.

Table 9: The Practice of Participatory /Group/ Decision Making

No.	Items	Arrangement of Scale										
		Respondents.	5		4		3		2		1	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Teachers, students, parents and community are encouraged to participate in decision making	T	3	4.3	18	25.7	13	18.5	27	38.6	9	12.9
		DH	2	5.9	7	20.6	9	26.5	10	29.4	6	17.6
2	Decisions are formulated based on the popular concept and by bringing different ideas by group members	T	-	--	24	34.3	6	8.6	39	55.7	1	1.4
		DH	-	--	8	23.5	7	20.6	12	35.3	7	20.6
3	Group members are free and truly involve in decision making	T	6	8.6	14	20	5	7.1	37	52.9	8	11.4
		DH	3	8.8	5	14.7	2	5.9	24	70.6	-	-
4	Teachers, students, parents and community are given trust and confidence to participate in decision making	T	8	11.4	33	47.1	9	12.9	20	28.6	-	-
		DH	7	20.6	15	44.2	3	8.8	8	23.5	1	2.9
5	School leaders are consulted by group members to gather information in making decision	T	-	-	22	31.1	7	10	35	50	6	8.6
		DH	2	5.9	5	14.7	5	14.7	18	53	4	11.7
6	School leaders share power and responsibility for teachers and students	T	7	10	36	51.4	4	5.7	21	30	2	2.9
		DH	5	14.7	12	35.3	3	8.8	9	26.5	5	14.7

Key: T=Teachers; DH=Department Heads

Key: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Very Good, 3= Good, 2 = Poor, 1 = Very poor

As it can be seen the data in item 1 of Table 9 on that the school leaders encourage teachers, students, parents and community to participate in decision making 21(30%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads were very good. But 36(51.5%) of the teacher and 16(47%) of the department head respondents did not well on the issue. While 13(18.5%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads remained good. The data in item 2 of the same table 24(34.4%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads were very good on that the decisions are formulated

based on the popular concept and by bringing different ideas by group members. 6(8.6%) teachers and 7(20.6%) department heads were good on the issue. 40(57.1%) of the teacher and 19(55.9%) of the department head respondents were poor.

Concerning the data in item 3 of Table 9 on that the group members are free and truly /heartily/ involve in decision making, while 20(28.6%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads were good on the issue. But 45(64.3%) of the teacher and 24(70.6%) of the department head respondents were poor. While 5(7.1%) teachers and 2(5.9%) department heads were very poor. The data in item 4 of the same Table, 41(58.5%) teachers and 22(64.8%) department heads were very good on that the teachers, students, parents and community are given trust and confidence to participate in decision making. 20(28.6%) teachers and 9(26.4%) department heads were very poor on the issue. 9(12.9%) of the teacher and 3(8.8%) of the department head respondents were not good on the issue.

Regarding the data in item 5 of Table 9 on that the school leaders are consulted by group members to gather information in making decisions, 24(31.4%) teachers and 7(20.6%) department heads were very good. But 7(10%) of the teacher and 5(14.7%) of the department head respondents were remain poor. While 41(58.6%) teachers and 22(64.7%) department heads were very poor on the issue. The data in item 6 of the same Table, 43(61.4%) teachers and 17(50%) department heads were very good on that the school leaders share power and responsibility for teachers and students. But 23(32.9%) of the teacher and 14(41.2%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue. While 4(5.7%) teachers and 3(8.8%) of department heads were not poor. Also the data gathered through interview, FGD and open ended questions also supported the above data. However, the school principals responded that teachers and students participated in decision making, but the data gathered through open ended questions, through interview from PTSA heads and secondary school supervisors and through FGD from students' council members revealed in the contrary to the response of the principals. The PTSA participates only to decide on some financial and disciplinary issues. The students' council members did not participate in any decision making in all sample schools. They were selected for symbolic and they were without any functioning in participation of school making decisions.

Also the data gathered from document observation and review revealed that the teachers formulated few decisions on academic and exam related issues. It could not be seen that the students' council members formulated /participated/ any decisions from observed and

reviewed school documents in all sample schools. Still the students were not represented in PTSA /that latter improved and said to be PTSA by including the representatives of students/. The parents and the community did not participate in the school decision making except they were called once or twice a year at the end of semesters to hear the exam results of students. The participation of teachers, students, parents and community in the formulation of school decision was too low and they were less encouraged by school leaders in the preparatory schools of the zone under study.

In this regard, Burton and Thakur (2008) suggested that, participatory decision making processes calls for the manager to seek informational inputs from the group and to get the group to participate in the decision making process itself. This participative approach designed to secure /improve/ quality of the decision and human relations at the same time. Decisions can be more effective and reach high standard, where there is group participation.

4.2.6. The Quality, Acceptance and Implementation of the School Decisions

The quality of decision is very important for its acceptance and implementation. The quality of decision making in an organization depends on selecting proper goals and identifying the means of achieving them, (Ivancevich and Matteson 1990). Before formulating hasty decisions, educational managers have to collect detail information on issues that can affect the quality of decisions and involve stakeholders /teachers, students, parents and community/ depending on the situations. Decision becomes more effective when the formulation of decision satisfies the objectives to be attained and when it achieves acceptance by those who implement it.

Table 10: The Quality, Acceptance and Implementation of the Decisions

No.	Items	Respondents.	Arrangement of scales									
			5		4		3		2		1	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	The formulated decisions explained to school community to gain acceptance from them	T	3	4.3	19	27.1	10	14.3	32	45.7	6	8.6
		DH	1	2.9	5	14.7	7	20.6	18	53	3	8.8
2	School leaders take about the quality of decisions	T	5	7.1	19	27.1	6	8.6	27	38.6	13	18.6
		DH	1	2.9	9	26.5	9	26.5	7	20.6	8	23.5
3	School leaders recognize the acceptance of the decisions by others	T	6	8.6	32	45.7	9	12.9	22	31.4	1	14
		DH	-	-	12	35.3	12	35.3	6	17.6	4	11.8
4	The decisions maximize smooth communication among decision makers and implementers	T	3	4.3	42	58.6	4	5.7	19	27.1	3	4.3
		DH	5	14.7	11	32.4	8	23.5	7	20.6	3	8.8
5	The decisions bring smooth relationship and trust among school communities	T	2	2.9	22	31.4	8	11.4	29	41.4	9	12.9
		DH	6	17.6	9	26.5	5	14.7	8	23.5	6	17.6
6	Teachers, students, parents and community work hard to implement their own decisions	T	5	7.1	30	42.9	12	17.1	23	32.9	-	-
		DH		17.6	9	26.5	11	32.4	6	17.6	2	5.9
	Teachers, students, parents and community involve in decision making to improve the quality and acceptance of the decisions	T	9	12.9	14	20	10	14.3	28	40	11	15.7
		DH	4	11.8	11	32.4	9	26.5	6	17.6	4	11.8
8	Teachers, students, parents and community are more initiated to implement the decisions which formulated by others and imposed on them	T	-	-	26	37.1	7	10	35	50	2	22.9
		DH	-	-	5	14.7	9	26.4	11	32.4	9	26.5
9	School community share ideas, analyze and agree up on the decisions to implement it	T	3	4.3	16	22.9	11	15.7	33	47.1	7	10
		DH	3	8.8	7	20.6	6	17.6	15	44.1	3	8.8
10	The existence of biased and wrong decision cause conflict with decision implementers	T	-	-	26	31.4	15	21.4	24	34.3	9	12.9
		DH	4	11.7	6	17.6	5	14.7	6	17.6	13	32.2

Key: T= Teachers; DH=Department Heads 5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Undecided; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

As it can be shown the data in item 1 of Table 10 on that the school leaders explain the formulated decisions to the school community to gain acceptance from them, 22(31.4%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department heads agreed. But 38(54.3%) of the teacher and 21(61.8%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue. While 10(14.3%) teachers and 7(20.6%) department heads did not decide. The data in item 2 of the same Table 24(34.2%) teachers and 10(29.4%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders take care for the quality of decisions. 40(57.2%) teachers and 15(44.1%) department heads did not agree. 6(8.6%) teachers and 9(26.5%) department heads did not decide on the issue. Concerning the data in item 3 of Table 10 on that the school leaders recognize /understand/ the acceptance of the decisions by others, 38(54.3%) teachers and 12(35.3%) department heads agreed. But 23(32.8%) of the teacher and 10(29.4%) of the department head respondents did not agree. While 9(12.9%) teachers and 12(35.3%) department heads did not decide on the issue. The data in item 4 of Table 10, 44(62.9%) teachers and 16(47.1%) department heads agreed on that the formulated decisions maximize smooth communication between decision makers and implementers. 4(5.7%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads did not decide on the issue. 22(31.4%) of the teacher and 10(29.4%) of the department head respondents did not agree. The data in item 5 of the same Table 24(34.3%) teachers and 15(44.1%) department heads agreed on that the decisions bring smooth relationships and trust among school communities. 8(11.4%) teachers and 5(14.7%) department heads did not decide on the issue. 38(54.3%) of the teacher and 14(41.1%) of the department head respondents did not agree. Concerning the data in item 6 of Table 10 on that the teachers, students, parents and community work hard to implement their own ideas / decisions/ 35(50%) teachers and 15(44.1%) department heads agreed. But 23(32.9%) teachers and 8(23.5%) department heads did not agree. While 12(17.1%) of the teacher and 11(32.4%) of the department respondents did not decide on the issue.

The data in item 7 of Table 10, 23(32.9%) teachers and 15(44.2%) department heads agreed on that the teachers, students, parents and community participate in decision making to improve the quality and acceptance of decisions. But 10(14.3%) of the teacher and 6(17.6%) of the department head respondents remained undecided on the issue. While 39(55.7%) teachers and 10(29.4%) departments did not agree. The data in item 8 of the same Table on that teachers, students, parents and community are more energetically /initiated/ to implement the decisions which formulated by others and imposed on them, 26(37.1%) teachers and

5(14.7%) department heads agreed. But 37(52.9%) of the teacher and 20(58.9%) of the department head respondents did not agree on the issue. While 7(10%) teachers and 9(26.4%) department heads did not decide. Concerning the data in item 9 of Table 10, 19(27.2%) teachers and 10(29.4%) department heads agreed on that the school community share ideas analyze and agree up on the decision to implementers. But 40(57.1%) of the teacher and 18(52.9%) of the department head respondents did not agree. While 11(15.7%) teachers and 6(17.6%) department did not decide on the issue. The data in item 10 of the same Table on that the existence of biased and wrong decisions of school leaders cause conflict with decision implementers 22(31.4%) teachers and 10(29.3%) department heads agreed. 15(21.4%) of the teacher and 5(14.7%) of the department head respondents did not decide. 33(47.2%) teachers and 19(55.8%) department heads did not agree on the issue.

In addition the data gathered from secondary school supervisors, PTSA heads and students' council members through interview, FGD and open ended questions revealed that because of low participation of teachers, students, parents and community, lack of gathering enough information and the decisions formulated hasty /rashly/ without taking time and thinking over it the decisions in all sample schools lack quality and acceptance from implementers and most of them remained without implementation. All school principals of the sample schools also did not denied that some decisions remained without implementation. However, they stated the reasons as lack of time, lack of resources and large number of school community. Especially, the data gathered through open ended questions revealed that due to some wrong and biased decisions formulated by school leaders, most of the time there were conflicts, disagreement and disciplinary problems in all sample schools. Also most of the decisions did not explain to school community on the responsibilities required from them. Because of these reasons the decisions in sample schools lacked quality and acceptance and also lowly implemented by decision implementers.

In this regard, Kinard (1998) stated that decision makers should recognize and take care about the process, quality and acceptance of decision. In support to this, Wondwessen (2011) discussed that to make a sound, quality and acceptable decision, prior to make a decision, decision makers should carefully investigate and analyze the problem, consider the problem deeply in relation to the right priorities of the organizational objectives as a whole in pursuing their decisions.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter of the study deals with the summary of the major findings, conclusions drawn and recommendations forwarded that are assumed to improve the practices and problems of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. Hence, based on the identified problems possible solutions were forwarded.

5.1. Summary

The purpose of this study was to access the practices and related problems of decision making in selected government preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone of Oromia National Regional State.

In order to meet the objectives of this study, an attempt was made to provide answers for the following basic questions of the research.

1. What are the major practices made in decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone?
2. To what extent the decision making processes in preparatory schools South West Showa Zone is systematic?
3. To what extent teachers, parents, students and community are participating in decision making in preparatory schools Of South West Showa Zone?
4. What are the major factors that affect the process of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone?

In this research, descriptive survey method was used. Both quantitative and qualitative data were generated. The data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included preparatory school principals, teachers, department heads, PTA heads, students' council members and secondary school supervisors. Beside these documents were observed and reviewed. Accordingly, out of the total 10 woredas of the zone, 5(50%) woredas were selected by using simple random sampling technique/lottery method/. Simple random technique was chosen, because it gives an independent and equal chance for each of schools. 70 preparatory school teachers, 40 department heads, 10 school principals, 5 PTSA heads, 5 school supervisors and 35 students' council members were involved in the study.

Questionnaires consisting of closed and open ended items interview and focus group discussion /FGD/ guides, document review check lists were employed to gather sufficient

information from different respondents. The data collected were analyzed by using frequencies and percentages and interpreted. Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the researcher came up with the following major findings.

- With regard to characteristics, the respondents of this study were selected from different positions (teachers, department heads, school principals, students' council, and PTSA and school supervisors). From the findings of the study on the data of sex composition, it was found those 10(100%) male school principals, 34(100%) male department heads, 67(95.7%) male teachers, only 3(4.3%) female teachers, 5(100%) male PTSA heads, 5(100%) male supervisors, 22(62.9%) male and 13(37.1%) female students' council members. This implies that there is male domination of principals and teachers in the preparatory schools of the zone under study.
- Concerning the age characteristics of the respondents, 29(82.9%) of SCM were < 20 years age. 6(17.1%) SCM, 15(21.4%) teachers and 2(5.9%) department heads were 21-25 years age. 36(45.7%) teachers, 21(61.8%) department heads, 2(40%) supervisors 2(40%) principals were 26-30 years age. 9(12.9%) Of the teacher, 6(17.6%) of them department head, 2(20%) of the principal and 2(20%) of the supervisor respondents were 31-35 years age. 9(12.9%) teachers, 1(2.9%) department head and 4(40%) principals were 36-40 years age. 2(2.9%) teachers, 2(5.9%) department heads, 1(10%) principal and 2(40%) PTSA heads were 41-45 years age. Finally, 3(4.2%) of the teacher, 2(5.9%) of the department head, 1(10%) of the principal, 1(20%) of the supervisor and 2(40%) of the PTA head respondents were > 45 years ages.
- With respect to educational background, all (100%) of students' council members were < 12 grade. 4(5.7%) of the teacher, 1(2.9%) of the department head, 1(20%) of the PTSA head respondents were diploma holders. 58(82.9%) teachers, 26(76.5%) department heads, 7(70%) principals, 4(80%) supervisors and 3(60%) PTSA heads had first degree. But 8(11.4%) of the teacher, 7(20.6%) of the department head, 3(30%) of the principal and 1(20%) of the supervisor respondents had second degree.
- Concerning work experience 23(32.9%) teachers and 5(14.7%) department heads served < 5 years. 29(41.4%) teachers, 14(41.2%) department heads, 5(50%) principals and 2(40%) supervisors served 6-10 years. 5(7.1%) of the teacher, 10(29.4%) of the department head, 1(10%) of the principal and 1(20%) of the PTSA head respondents served 11-15 tears. 6(8.6%) teachers, 1(2.9%) department heads and 1(10%) principals

served 16-20 years. 3(4.3%) teachers, 2(6%) department heads, 2(20%) principals 1(20%) supervisors and 1(20%) PTA heads served 21-25 years. 3(4.3%) teachers, 1(2.9%) department heads, 1(10%) principals, 2(40%) supervisors and 2(40%) PTA heads served 26-30 years. Finally, 1(1.4%) teacher and 1(2.9%) department head served > 31 years.

- With regard to the areas of specialization 19(27.1%) of the teacher, 5(14.7%) of the department head, 1(10%) of the principal and 3(60%) of the supervisor respondents specialized in Languages. 26(37.1%) teachers, 21(61.8%) department heads, 3(30%) principals, 1(20%) supervisors and 1(20%) PTSA heads specialized in Natural Sciences and Mathematics. 17(24.3%) teachers, 8(23.5%) department heads, 2(20%) principals and 1(20%) PTSA heads specialized in Social Sciences. 4(40%) of the principal, 1(20%) of the supervisor and 1(20%) of the PTA head respondents specialized in EdPM. Finally, 8(11.5%) teachers and 1(20%) PTSA head specialized in others /non-teaching/ professions.
- Following up the steps of decision making processes as the frequency counts and percentage values revealed that 37(52.8%) of the teacher and 23(67.7%) of the department head respondents reported that the school leaders put the formulated decision in to actions and 39(57.7%) teachers and 17(50%) department heads agreed on that the school leaders follow up the implementation of the formulated decisions was high. But as to the extent to which prior to make decisions school leaders carefully gather relevant information, develop alternative solutions to the problems and select one of the alternative to the problem, the result of the study showed that the practice was poor. In addition, the data gathered through interview, FGD, open ended questions and document observation and review was strengthened the above result. The study revealed that the practice of gathering information, developing alternative solutions and selecting one of the alternatives to the problem was low. Also the data from document observation and review the researcher could not see the stated information and listed alternatives to the problems in all sample schools.
- With respect to the formulated decisions meeting the objectives and goals of the school only item 5 and 6 that the decision making processes mobilize different resources for educational objectives 37(52.9%) of the teacher and 21(61.8%) of the department head respondents showed agreement. Also 41(58.6%) teachers and

21(61.8%) department heads disagreed on that the school has its own decision making structures and principles. The results of the study on these two items were high. But as the extent to which the decisions satisfy the needs and interests of the school community, formulated in the right priorities of the school objectives, maximize the effectiveness of the school and improve the students' achievement the result of the study was low. Also the data gathered through interview, FGD and open ended questions revealed that the school leaders centralize their personal interests rather than organizational interests while making decisions. The students' academic achievements also decreased from year to year instead of increasing. This showed that the decisions formulated in the sample preparatory schools of the zone under the study did not meet the objectives and goals of the schools and that of educational system in general.

- In relation to the knowledge of school leaders in decision making, the study revealed on that the knowledge of school leaders on how to make decisions and seek it as inputs for decision making low. They are not professionalized in school based management, qualified and trained in leadership, and did not skill enough in preparing participatory decision making. Their technical, interpersonal and conceptual skill to make decisions showed poor results. Also the data that was indicated in personal characteristics of the respondents in Table 4 showed that among 10 preparatory school principals of the sample population only 3(30%) of them had second /MA/ degree and 4(40%) of them specialized in school leadership. Also secondary school supervisors, PTSA heads and students' council members responded that the school leaders lacked self confidence and most of the time they influenced by external organs while making school decisions.
- Concerning the effectiveness of school leaders in making decisions, the study revealed on that the school leaders play a critical role in establishing and maintaining group decision making. The result on that the school leaders decided on what is to be done, when to be done and where to be done was showed high result, that 33(47.2%) teachers and 16(47%) department heads agreed on the issue. But on the rest items that the school leaders effective in their leadership activities and lead the schools by formulating effective decisions, ensure the correct decision making process and make effective decisions, take care about the process of decisions, play their facilitator role,

act as organizers, advisors and consensus builders of the group, formulate decisions based on the scientific and systematic analysis the study was revealed poor results. However, what the school leaders responded was that they are taking care for decisions, the decisions formulated based on systematic ways and the decision makers were effective, but the data gathered from supervisors, PTSA heads and students' council members was in the contrary to this. It was revealed that since the decision makers did not followed the necessary decision making steps, they did not take care for the decisions. Also they formulated decisions based on their past practices rather than systematic and scientific way of decision making.

- With regard to the practice of participatory /group/ decision making processes, the study revealed that such items as, teachers, students, parents and community give trust and confidence to participate in decision making, and school leaders share power and responsibility for teachers and students were found to be high results. In the contrary, the result of such items as school leaders encourage and participate teachers, students, parents and community in decision making, decisions formulated based on the popular concept and by bringing different ideas by group members, group members are free and truly /heartily/ involve or participate in decision making and school leaders are consulted by group members to gather information in making school decisions showed low result.
- Majority (8) of the school principals responded that stakeholder's encouraged and participated in school decision making and decisions are formulated based on the popular concept. But the data gathered from PTSA heads, supervisors, students' council members and open ended questions revealed that there was low encouragement and participation of teachers, students, parents and community in decision making. Also they did not truly and freely involve in the formulation of decisions. The researcher also observed from documents that the participation of stakeholders were low in all sample schools. Teachers formulated few decisions concerning curriculum and exam related issues. The PTSA also formulated few decisions concerning financial and some other issues. But the decisions that formulated by students could not found in the documents of all sample schools. Their representatives also did not participating in PTSA / now improved to PTSA/.

- With respect to the quality, acceptance and implementation of the school decisions, the result of the study revealed that such items as the school leaders explain the decisions to the group to gain acceptance, take care about the quality of decisions, the decision bring smooth relationship and trust among school community decision, and school community share ideas, analyzes and agrees up on the decisions to implement it was poor. In most cases the formulated decisions explained to the stakeholders. On the other hand, the data gathered from supervisors, PTA heads, students' council members and open ended questions showed that only the decisions required responsibilities to be fulfilled by stakeholders explained to them. Since most decisions formulated without concrete evidence/real information/, being subjected, ignoring others ideas and suggestions decreased the quality and acceptance of decisions. As a result their implementation was low. Most of the school principals also agreed on that some decisions remained without implementation because of different factors.
- In general, although decisions formulated to meet the objectives and goals of the schools in particular and that of educational system in general, based on the gathered data the researcher observed that, the school leaders had not exerted much efforts to encourage and involve the stakeholders /teachers, students, parents and community/. Since the data gathered through different tools revealed that there lack of follow the steps of decision making like prior to make decisions: gather relevant information, develop alternative solutions and select one of the alternative solution to the problem, lack of taking care for the decisions, low knowledge of school leaders to make decisions, the school decisions influenced by external organs, the schools lacked some decision making structures like discipline committee rather than PTA and some guide lines /promotion policy for preparatory level/, assigning un trained and un qualified school principals to lead schools, /about 2/3 of the school leaders did not trained and qualified in school leadership/ affected the decision making processes in the sample preparatory schools of the zone under study.

5.2 Conclusions

From the results of the study, it was shown that there were many factors that challenged decision making processes in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone. In order to make the quality and acceptance decisions and to involve actively in decision making encouraging and awareness giving to the stakeholders (teachers, students, parents and

community) is a crucial one. Accordingly, the result of the finding indicated that following decision making steps (prior to make decisions: gather relevant information developing alternative solutions to the problem, select one of the alternatives to the problem) was poor and not consistent.

It was also observed that the participation of teachers, students, parents and the community in school decision making was very low. The students' council established for symbolic and it was without any functioning in all sample schools. There was also lack/absence/ of discipline committee to make decision on disciplinary problems in the preparatory schools of the zone under the study. The sample preparatory schools have large school community and many activities carried out in them. Due to these many disciplinary problems were observed among such school community. Power and responsibility were given in to PTSA to solve such disciplinary problem. But the PTSA is not active to solve disciplinary problems on time. This resulted in the serious disciplinary problems in all sample schools of the zone under the study. Furthermore, the result of the study revealed that the knowledge of school leaders on how to formulate decisions, seeking knowledge as input for decision making, preparing participatory decision making and developing collaborative decision making processes and having technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills to formulate decisions was poor result. The study also showed that the majority of school leaders (6 of them) did not trained and qualified in school leadership. Also only 3 school principals fit for the preparatory level since the area required second/ MA/ degree. The rest (7) of them did not fit for the level since they had not MA degree.

Also their earlier areas of specialization did not management/leadership/ or related fields. These conditions more aggravated the problems of decision making in the sample preparatory schools of the zone under study. Therefore, based on the above findings, we can concluded that the practices of decision making were poor and with many problems in line with the school decision making principles in the sample preparatory schools of zone under study. As a result of this, consequently, it was clearly indicated that the schools are not in the position to effectively meet the needs and interest of the school community and the goals and objectives of the schools.

Generally, it can be concluded that the practice of decision making in preparatory schools of South West Showa Zone was less than satisfactory. They did not follow the steps of decision making processes; the decisions lowly meet the objectives and goals of the schools, the

school leaders were less effective and have low a skill in decision making, poor practice of participatory decision making and the decisions lack quality and poorly accepted by decision implementers.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are suggested:

- 1.** To formulate decisions in line with the goals and objectives of the school, it is better to increase the awareness of teachers, students, parents and community in decision making processes. It is also advisable, that training be arranged by concerned body for them in school decision making so as help them adequately recognize their roles (responsibilities) and to involve actively in the school decision making processes.
- 2.** The task of decision making involves different decision making steps like prior to formulate decision, gathering relevant information, developing alternative solutions to the problems, select one of the alternative solution to the problem, put the decision in to action and follow up the implementation of the decision. It is very important for school leaders to follow these steps in formulating good decisions. Thus, it is recommended that South West Showa Zone and the woreda education offices to provide short trainings through professional seminars and workshops on resolving problems and decision making processes.
- 3.** The study revealed that majority (7) of the school leaders were not professionalized in school based leadership and they do not fit the qualification (MA degree) that is required for preparatory level. This resulted in the lacking of their technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills to practice participatory decision making and develop collaborative decision making processes. It is also advisable for Woredas and Zone Education Offices by contacting and asking sponsorship the from Oromia Education Bureau and the Federal Ministry of Education need to provide the necessary on job training in the area of school leadership and management to make them effective and efficient leaders.
- 4.** As the study showed, large number of students through open ended questions responded that, one of the factors that negatively affect the decision making processes in the sample preparatory schools was the interference of external bodies. Most of the time this resulted in the school decisions felt to in the contrary to the school rules and regulations in particular and the educational system in general. Hence it is advised to the school leaders to make the

schools secular and minimize the interference of external bodies from school decision making processes.

5. Also the study revealed that the school leaders lacked self confidence, self reliance and commitment while formulating decisions. This resulted in the interruption and changing different kinds of solutions for a single problem again and again. This affected the quality, acceptance and implementation of the decisions. Again this also resulted in rough and negative relationship between decision makers and implementers. Therefore, it is advisable to the school leaders need to have self confidence and self reliance when formulating school decisions.

6. As the study showed school leaders use their past practices and make decisions hasty/rashly/.This affected the quality of decision and against the modern decision making processes. Therefore, it is advisable to school leaders while making decisions need take to time to think over the problem and through systematic of decision making and also guess/think/ the result (the positive and negative consequences) of the formulated decision before its popularization and implementation

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Appendix-A

Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management

**Questionnaire to be filled by Preparatory School Teachers and
Department Heads**

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to collect necessary information on the practice and Problems of decision making in preparatory schools of south west showa zone.

It is believed that you are the right person who knows the issue in detail and who can give the relevant information. The success of the study entirely depends on your genuine, sincere and timely response to each question. Therefore, you are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire honestly and responsibly; I would be most grateful if you would answer all the questions in the questionnaire. The study is purely academic and hence all the information will be kept confidential. You do not need to write your name on the questionnaire.

N.B.

For questions with alternative choices put a “✓” mark inside the box.

Write your opinion briefly for open ended questions on the space provided

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Section I. Personal Information

The researcher hopes you will answer all the questions as best as you can. Answer the questions putting“✓” mark in the box.

1. Sex: A. Male () B. Female ()
2. Age: A. below 20 years () B. 21-25 years () C. 36-40years () D. 26-30 years ()
F.41-45years () E. 31-35years () G. Above 45years ()
3. Marital status A. married () C. divorced ()
B .single () D. widowed ()
4. Qualifications A. Diploma () B. BA/BSC ()
C. MA//MSC () D. Any other ()
5. Work Experience in years A. As a teacher A. 1-5 () B. 6-10 () C. 11-15 ()
D. 16-20() E. 21-25 () F. 26-30 () G. 31& above ()
- B. As non teaching /other/ professions A. 1-5 () B. 6-10 () C. 11-15 () D. 16-20()
E. 21-25 () F. 26 and above ()
- Total work experience in years A. 1-5 () C. 11-15 () e) 21-25 ()
B. 6-10 () D. 16-20 () F. 26 and above ()
6. Area of Specialization
Major_____ Minor_____ Other _____
7. Any special training taken (short term) _____

Section II. School leaders /Decision Makers/ follow steps of decision making

The following are statements about school leaders/decision makers/ follow steps of decision making. Please rate each from strongly to strongly disagree and mark “✓” the number which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scale.

Key: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1

No.	Items	Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
2.1	Prior to formulate decision, school leaders carefully gather relevant information to the problem					
2.2	They develop alternative solutions to the problem					
2.3	They Select one of the alternative solutions to the problem					
2.4	They put the decisions in to actions					
2.5	They follow-up the implementation of the decision					

4. If any other please specifies.

Section III. Decisions meet the objectives and the goals of the school

The following are items about Decisions meet the objectives and the goals of the school. Please rate each from strongly to strongly disagree and mark “✓” the number which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scale.

Key: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1

No.	Items	Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
3.1	The decisions made to fulfill personal interests of the school leaders					
3.2	The decisions satisfy the needs and interests of the school communities					
3.3	The decisions made in the right priorities of the objectives of the school					
3.4	The decisions made to maximize the effectiveness of the school					
3.5	The decision making processes mobilize different resources for educational objectives					
3.6	The school has its own decision making structures and principles					
3.7	The decisions improve the students' achievements					

3. If any other please specifies.

Part IV. Knowledge of the School Leaders in making decisions

The following are statements about the knowledge of the school leaders in making decisions. Please rate each from strongly to strongly disagree and mark “✓” the number which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scale.

Key: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1

No.	Items	Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
4.1	They have knowledge how to formulate decision and seek it as inputs for decision making					
4.2	They are professionalized in school based management, qualified, trained and expertise in leadership					
4.3	They have necessary knowledge whether a given problem needs individual or group decision					
4.4	They are skilled enough in preparing participatory decision making and develop collaborative decision making processes					
4.5	They have technical, interpersonal and conceptual skill to formulate decisions					
4.6	6 School leaders at different levels formulate different decisions /the decisions allowed for their levels/					
4.7	The school leaders always formulate decisions completely individually by themselves					

8. If any other please specify.

Part V. The school leaders are effective in decision making

The following are assumed to be the school leaders are effective in decision making. Please rate each from strongly to strongly disagree and mark “✓” the number which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scale.

Key: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1

No.	Items	Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
5.1	The school leaders are effective in their leadership activities and lead the school by formulating effective decisions					
5.2	School leaders ensure the correct decision-making process and take effective actions					
5.3	School leaders take care about the process of decisions					
5.4	They decide on what is to be done, when to be done and where is to be done					
5.5	They play their facilitator role to formulate good decisions for the school and school communities					
5.6	They act as organizers, advisors and consensus builders of the groups in decision making					
5.7	They play a critical role in establishing and maintaining group decision making					
5.8	They formulate decisions based on the intuition/ past practices/					
5.9	They formulate decisions based on the scientific and systematic analysis					

10. If any other please specify

Part VI. The practice of participatory /Group/ Decision making processes

The following are statements about the practice of participatory /Group/ Decision making processes. Please rate each items from Excellent to Very poor and tick “✓” the number which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scale.

Key: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Very Good, 3= Good, 2 = Poor, 1 = Very poor

No.	Items	Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
6.1	School leaders encourage teachers, students, parents and the whole community to make decisions					
6.2	Decisions are formulated based on the popular concept and by bringing different ideas by group members					
6.3	Group members are freely and truly /heartily/ involve in decision making					
6.4	Teachers, students, parents and the whole community given trust and confidence to participate in decision making					
6.5	School leaders are consulted by group members to gather information in formulating decisions					
6.6	School leaders delegate /share/ power and responsibility for teachers and parent					

7. If any other please specifies.

Part VII. The Quality, Acceptance and Implementation of the School Decisions

The following are items about the Quality, Acceptance and Implementation of the School Decisions. Please rate each from strongly to strongly disagree and mark “✓” the number which most closely represents your opinion using the following 5 point scale. Key: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1

No.	Items	Scales				
		5	4	3	2	1
7.1	The school leaders explain the formulated decisions to the school community to gain acceptance from them					
7.2	The school leaders take care for the quality of decisions					
7.3	School leaders recognize the acceptance of the decisions by others					
7.4	The formulated decisions maximize smooth communication among decision makers and decision implementers					
7.5	The decisions bring smooth relationships and trust among school communities					
7.6	Teachers, students, parents and community work hard to implement their own decisions					
7.7	Teachers, students, parents and community participate in decision making to improve the quality and acceptance of the decisions					
7.8	Teachers, students, parents and community are more initiated to implement the decisions which formulated by others and imposed on them/					
7.9	The school community share ideas, analyzes and agrees up on the decisions to implement it					
7.10	The existence of biased and wrong decisions formulated by school leader cause conflict with decision implementers					

7.11 Please, list the factors that affect /hinder/ decision making processes in your school/preparatoryschools/_____

7.12 What do you think the measures to be taken to tackle /avoid/ such hindering factors of decision makers in the preparatory schools?

7.13 What is your suggestion the role expected from the school leaders concerning the decisions they made in your school?

7.14 What is expected from teachers, students, parents and the whole community in the making and implementing school decisions?

7.15 Please, if you have any more comments and suggestions forward.

Appendix-B

Addis Ababa University College of Education

Department of Educational Planning and Management
Interview Guide /Questions/ for Preparatory school Principals,
School
Supervisors and PTA Heads and FGD for Students’ council
Members

The purpose of this study is to collect relevant data on the practices and related problems of decision making in preparatory schools. The information that you will provide determines the quality of the study. In confirming that the information you provide will be used only for academic purpose. You are kindly asked to contribute your own response, and your idea is kept honestly.

1. Background Information

1.1 Name of the woreda_____

1.2 Name of the school_____

1.3 Sex_____1.4 Age_____ 1.5 Total service in years_____

1.6 Qualification_____1.7 Area of specialization_____

1.8 Work experience in the current position_____

2. What type of steps preparatory school leaders follow to make decision? Do they evaluate its implementation? How do you judge their follow-up mechanism?

3. Would you mention the purposes, objectives and goals of decisions that preparatory school leaders are performing?

4. Do you think that preparatory school leaders implement their decisions effectively? If not what are the problems that affect their effectiveness?

5. How do you judge the knowledge and perception of preparatory schools leaders toward decision making?

6. What are the major activities that preparatory school leaders perform while they are making a decision? How do you perceive the comprehensiveness of their decision?

7. What do you comment about shared decision-making practices of preparatory school leaders?

8. What can you say about the quality, acceptance and implementation of preparatory school leaders’ decisions?

Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management

Interview and FGD Questions Translated in to Afan Oromo

Af-gaaffii Dura Bu'oota GMB fi Gaaffii Miseensota Mana Maree Barattootaaf Qophaa'e. Fayidaa yookiin kaayyoon Af-gaaffii fi mare kana mana barumsaa Qophaa'inaa keessatti amaleeffannaa fi rakkoolee murtoo dabarsuu irratti jiruuf raga funaanuufidha. Ragaa isin kennitanis bu'aa qorannoo kanaaf qofaa kan oolu dha. Yaadni isin kennitan hundi icciitiin isaa ni eegama. Kanaafuu, as irratti yaada qabdan hundaa otoo hin qusatiin akka kennitan kabajaa fi jaalalaan ni gaafatamtu.

1.1 Maqaa Aanaa_____

1.2 Maqaa mana barumsaa_____

1.3 Saala_____

1.4 Umurii_____

1.5 Tajaajila waggaadhaan_____

1.6 Sadarkaa barnootaa_____

1.7 Gosa barnoota baratan_____

1.8 Iddoo amma irra jiranitti tajaajila waggaadhaan_____

Gaaffilee

1. Gaggeessitootni mana barumsa qophaa'inaa murtoo yeroo dabarsan duraa duubaawwan

akkammii faa hordofaa jiru? Hojjiirra oolmaa murtoo mataa isaanii ni madaalu? Hordoffii fi madaalli iisaan godhan akkamitti ilaaltu?

2. Faayidaa, kaayyoo fi galmawwan murtoo gaggeessitootn mana barumsa qophaa'inaa dabarsan ibsuu ni danddeessuu?

3. Gaggeessitootni mana barumsa qophaa'inaa murtoo ofii isaanii dabarsan sirriitti hojii irra oolchaa jiru jettanii ni amantuu? Yoo sirriitti hojii irra oolchaa hin jiran ta'e waantotni isaan irratti rakkoo uuman /gufuu ta'an/ maal maal fa'i dha?

4. Gaggeessitootni mana barumsa qophaa'inaa murtoo kennuu /dabarsuu/ irratti waa'ee beekumsaa fi danddeettii isaan qaban maal jettu?

5. Gaggeessitootni mana barumsa qophaa'inaa murtoo yeroo dabarsan /kennan/ gochaawwan gurguddoo isaan raawwatan maal maal fa'i dha?

Murtoo isaan dabarsan guutuu ykn quubsaa dha jettaniini amantu?

6. Gaggeessitootni mana barumsaa qophaa'inaa amaleeffannaa murtoo hirmaachisaa ta'een dabarsuu isaanii irratti yaada maalq abdu?

7. Qulqullina, fudhatamaa fi hojii irra oolmaa murtoo gaggeessitootni mana barumsaa qophaa'inaa dabarsan irratti maal jechuu dandeessu.

GALATOMAA!

Appendix-C
Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management
Document Analysis Check-List

The purpose of this check list is to collect data from the document to cross check the data collected from questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion. Therefore, you are kindly requested to provide me the necessary document related to the practice and problems in decision making. The data will be used only for the purpose of the study.

Woreda _____ School _____

1. Number of stakeholders participating in decision making _____
 2. Types of issues on which decisions have made _____
 3. Participatory decision making plan was prepared. Yes _____ No _____
 4. Written document indicates that there are
 - a. Discussion minute on different school issues. Yes _____ No _____
 - b. Discussion minute on periodic evaluation on implementation of school plan
Yes _____ No _____
 - c. Activities conducted by different stakeholders. Yes _____ No _____
 - d. Evidences of the school leaders' commitment on shared decision making Yes _____ No _____
 5. Written document indicate that
 - a. All school issues have their own records. Yes _____
No _____
 - b. All records contain samples of
- ❖ Feedback on continuous monitoring and evaluation of all decision _____