

Full Length Research Paper

Teachers participation in decision making process in secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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This study examined teachers' involvement in decision making process in secondary schools in Ekiti state, and also investigated whether teachers' involvement in decision making process is related to their personal characteristics. An instrument titled teachers decision making questionnaire (TDMQ) was used to collect the data. The instrument was administered in five local government areas of the state out of the sixteen local government areas in the state. The schools were randomly selected through multistage technique. The descriptive analysis of the data was done using frequencies, percentage; t-test ANOVA, Scheffe post hoc were used for data analysis. It was found that secondary school teachers in Ekiti State are significantly involved in decision making processes. Some recommendations were given among which is the inclusion of continuous seminars, talk and workshops for school principals on management of human resources in schools for effective and quality management of the schools.

Key words: Decision making, analysis, secondary schools, Ekiti State.

INTRODUCTION

Decision making has been observed to be the heart of administrative process and leadership in schools. The principals and teachers in Ekiti State secondary schools are faced with myriads of challenges in both teaching and administrative activities which seem to have consistently hampered the realization of the objectives of the school. These problems require unified effort from the principals and the teachers for quality and effective administration. It has been observed that teachers are central in the management of schools and their involvement in decision making process is such a sensitive issue in schools that neglect of it by the principals could cause a lot of rift, conflict, misgiving and hindrance to the realization of the objectives of the school goals.

The success or failure of any school is largely dependent upon the groups that make it up and effective utilization of the intellectual abilities of these group or human resources helps the development of such an organization or school.

Udo and Akpa (2007) asserted that where teachers are Adequately involved in decision making process, there

would be commitment and adequate support with the principal and the realization of school goal will be easy, apathy and opposition within the school will be minimized.

Glew et al. (1995) called the system participative decision making and defined it as "higher level individual's effort to provide those at a lower level with a greater voice in organizational performance. The definition makes it clear that in the intelligence quotient literature, participative decision making represents a deliberate change from traditional management in which minority of upper-level management employees make all of the decisions regarding organizational policies and functioning. Jewell (1998) summed up participative decision making as an effort to avoid the "nobody asked" syndrome. He further explained it to mean soliciting employee's idea for turning the situation in an organization around. He further opined that along with the expectation that asking, will improve the quality of organizational decision making, it is an expectation that people who participate in decisions that affect them will understand the issues better and accept the decisions more readily.

Ndu and Anogbo (2007) noted that where teachers are not involved in governance, result to teachers behaving as if they are strangers within the school

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environment. Thus, most teachers do not put in their best to have full sense of commitment and dedication to the school

Mullins (2005) is of the opinion that many people believed that staff participation in decision making leads to higher performance and which is necessary for survival in an increasingly competitive world. Welfson (1998) reiterated that boredom and frustration at work is often the result of an employee's lack of involvement in decision making processes with the organization's goals and a feeling that their ideas are not wanted or listened to. He further expatiated that staff turnover increases as employee's walkout of the door for more interesting jobs.

Wilkinson (1999) corroborated this fact and saw involvement of employees in decision making as empowerment while a neglect of employees in decision making was seen as an assumption that workers are untapped resources with knowledge and experience and an interest in becoming involved, employers need to provide opportunities and structures for their involvement. He also assumed that participative decision making is likely to lead to job satisfaction and better quality decisions and that gains are available both to employers (increased efficiency) and workers (job satisfaction), in short an everyone-wins scenario.

Staff cooperation is believed to be an indisputable asset to the school principals while involvement in decision making process by the teachers could ease the principal's mounting problems as many heads would be put together to intellectually solve problems that could have remained unsolved by the principals alone.

Administration is sometimes conceptualized as the job of the school principal which include holding together the organization, making progress towards set objectives, and getting things done. It is also the process of organization leadership (Udoh and Akpa, 2007). While other people defined administration as fascinating and frustrating, Shaw (1971) saw it as a function so broad in scope that no one person can or should do. He further said involving teachers in decision making process is like when two men cooperate to roll a stone that neither could have rolled. Many managers express a belief that involvement of workers in decision making will improve the quality of workers decision making in the organization (Collins et al., 1986). In contrast, where teachers lack motivation and involvement in decision making, truancy, excessive excuses, abstention and complaints usually emerge leading to general ineffectiveness, inefficiency, low productivity and non-achievement of goals of organization (Awotua-Efebo, 1999).

Okoye (1999) in his view said that workers should be involved in decision that concern them like general working conditions, fringe benefits and staff development programs as this adds to the attractiveness of the organization climate.

Short et al. (1991) said the kind of school climate that encourages involvement in decision making is characterized by openness and risk taking. This environment encourages

teachers to try new ideas and approaches. However, it should be noted that teachers were less willing to participate in decision making if they perceive that their principals sought their opinions but want to make the final decision rather than allowing teachers that opportunity.

Luthans (2005) supported this view that if managers claim to want participation from their people but never let them become intellectually and emotionally involved and never use their suggestions, the result may be negative. Still in line with the view, Emeneke (2004) buttressed the fact that when people are part of decision making process, there is greater opportunity of the expression of mind, ideas, existing disputes and more occasions for disagreements and agreements. In some establishments, they are gender biased that women are marginalised in decision making process.

United Nations Department of Public information (2006) reported in international women's day that women's participation in high-level economic decision making remains low even in the developed countries, despite educational advances for women in many parts of the world, while women participation in decisions in parliament was said to be 10.99%. It was further reported by the international federation of journalist that although a third of journalists today are women, less than 3% of senior media executives and decision makers are women. Ashton and Webb (1986) found out that those teachers (both male and female) expressed dismay and frustration over their inability to influence the process of decision making. They felt that they were not consulted, irrespective of their ages experience and qualifications and they were made to feel that they could not make good decision. They further reiterated that teachers' self esteem grows when they feel they are involved in decision making which is something worthwhile and they doing it in a competent manner and that they are recognized for their accomplishment.

Ibukun (1989) observed that teachers in Nigeria expressed a desire for more involvement in decision making process irrespective of age, experience and qualifications. He further said that agitation by the teachers could reduce conflict in school administration and cause harmony to reign. Teachers feel ownership and commitment of the process when involved in decision making process (Rosenholtz, 1985).

The problem of the study therefore is to investigate the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making process which could engender effective and quality administration.

Purpose of the study

This study was to achieve two purposes namely:

1. To examine the extent of teachers involvement in decision making process in schools.

Table 1. Teachers' involvement in decision making process.

S/N		Agree		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%
1	I am involved in making rules and regulations in my school	161	80.5	39	19.5
2	I contribute to school development in no small measure	180	90.0	20	10.0
3	I take active part in staff development	182	91.0	18	9.0
4	I am involved in disciplining the students	187	93.5	13	6.5
5	My suggestion counts in vital issues in the school	174	87.0	26	13.0
6	I am involved in planning the school examinations	144	72.0	56	28.0
7	I am involved in the coordination of the school examinations	171	85.5	29	14.5
8	I also take part in staff welfare schemes	172	86.0	28	14.0
9	I am involved in identifying problem areas in the school	176	88.0	24	12.0
10	My suggestion counts on how to move the school forward	180	90.0	20	10.0
11	I take active part in the supervision of the students	187	93.5	13	6.5
12	I am actively involved in bringing sanity to the school system	188	94.0	12	6.0

2. To determine if teachers involvement in decision making is related to their personal characteristics.

Research hypotheses

The following Hypotheses were raised for the study.

1. There is no significant difference between the sex of teachers and their involvement in decision making.
2. There is no significant relationship between age of teachers and their involvement in decision making.
3. There is no significant relationship between teacher's educational qualification and their involvement in decision making.
4. There is no significant relationship between teachers' years of experience and their involvement in decision making.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The study population comprised of all teachers in Ekiti state secondary schools. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select 200 teachers from five different local government areas of the state. The local governments were selected randomly, and four schools were selected from each of the five local governments while ten teachers were given the questionnaire in each of the schools.

The research instrument for the study was a questionnaire titled teachers decision making questionnaire (TDMQ) was designed by the researchers. The questionnaire was in two parts, A and B. Section A sought information on respondents personal data like name of school, sex, age, educational qualification and experience while section B contained items in four point rating scale of strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), and strongly agree (4) The face and content validity of the instrument were certified by experts in educational management and experts in test and measurement department.

The reliability of the instrument was established using test-retest method.

RESULTS

Research question

What is the extent of teachers' involvement in decision making process? From Table 1, it is evident that teachers in Ekiti State secondary schools are actively involved in decision making process. As could be observed from the table, the items were rated very high with maximum of 93.5% and the minimum was 72.0%. This further suggests that there is maximum co-operation between the principals and their teachers; this also shows that quality and effective management will be enhanced in these schools which will also show in the tone of the school.

The principal can rest and still believe that things would work out well even when he is unavoidably absent from the school for few days. The rest of the teachers would still uphold the good image of the school in all facts since it was a course they both planned, they will be ready to execute it without any problems, and little wonder Ekiti State is known to be a fountain of knowledge; as quality and effective management of schools contribute largely or in no small measure to academic excellence of the students.

Items 4, 5, 8, and 11 were rated so high by the teachers and this is a symbol that the teachers were actively involved and carried along in the school matters by the principal to enhance qualitative education which is the major aim and policy of education in Nigeria.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the sex of the teachers and their involvement in decision making process.

Table 2. Test summary of sex and teachers involvement in decision making processes.

Group	N	X	SD	T-cal	T-table
Male	57	41.33	5.07	2.250	1.960
Female	143	39.34	5.89		

P<0.05.

Table 3. ANOVA summary of teachers' age and involvement in decision making processes.

Source	SS	Df	MS	F-cal	F-table
Between groups	161.425	2	80.713	2.499	3.000
Within groups	6363.770	197	32.303		
Total	6525.195	199			

Table 2 shows that there is significant different between sex and their involvement in decision making processes (1.960 < 2.250, P<0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected.

The finding affirmed that sex of teachers was an important factor in decision making process. Involvement of teachers in decision making differs in sex. The table shows that male teachers were more involved in decision making process. The mean score of male teachers-was 41.33 while that of female teachers was 39.34.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between the age of teachers and their involvement in decision making processes.

The result in Table 3 reveals that f-cal (2.499) is less than f-table (3.000) at 0.005 level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between the ages of the teachers and their involvement in decision making processes.

The result shows that age of the teachers has nothing to do with their involvement in decision making. Older teachers could not be said to be more involved than younger teachers in decision making process. It is equity for all.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between the teachers' educational qualification and their involvement in decision making process.

The null hypothesis in Table 4 is accepted since f-ca1 (2.017) is less than f-table (2.60) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore teachers' educational qualification is not significantly related to their involvement in decision making processes. The table shows that teachers' involvement in decision making was not dependent on their qualification. It also affirmed that involvement in

decision making is free to all teachers irrespective of their basic qualifications.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant relationship between teachers' years of experience and their involvement in decision making processes.

One way ANOVA results in Table 5 clearly showed that F-cal (2.796) is greater than Table (2.60) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant relationship between teachers' years of experience and their involvement in decision making processes" is rejected. The scheffe post hoc analysis is shown in Table 6.

The result of post hoc analysis shows that those who had spent between 30 and 35 years in teaching are significantly different from teachers whose teaching experience is below 10 years at 0.05 level of significance in their involvement in decision making processes.

Table 6 showed that teachers who have spent 30 to 35years in teaching are more involved in decision making process than teachers who have below 10 years of experience. Experience can not be bought with money hence the older teachers in experience have seen more days than those whose experience are below 10 years.

There is no gain saying then if one says that the experience of teachers between 30 to 35 years could better help the administration of the school to enhance quality and effectiveness in decision making.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that teachers involvement in decision making processes was very high in the secondary schools in Ekiti State as could be seen in Table 1. The items were rated very high with maximum of 93.5% and the minimum was 72%.

Table 4. ANOVA summary of teachers' qualification and involvement in decision making processes.

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-cal	F-table
Between groups	195.396	3	65.132	2.017	2.60
Within groups	6329.799	196	32.295		
Total	6525.195	199			

P>0.05.

Table 5. ANOVA summary of teachers years of experience and their involvement in decision making process.

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-cal	F-table
Between groups	267.800	3	89.267	2.796	2.600
Within groups	6257.395	196	31.925		
Total	6525.195	199			

P< 0.05.

Table 6. Scheffe post hoc analysis of teachers experience and their involvement in decision making process.

Experience (years)	1	2	3	4	X
30-35				*	40.80
20-30					41.00
10-20					41.12
Below 10					38.75

*Mean difference is significant at 0.05 levels.

This is in line with the submission of Okoye (1991) who opined that workers should be involved in decisions that concern them like the general working conditions, fringe benefits and even staff development programs as this adds to the attractiveness of the organization climate. Staff involvement in welfare schemes was rated high as 85.5%.

Udo and Akpa (2007) also corroborated this fact that where teachers are adequately involved in decision making process, there would be commitment and adequate support with the principal and the realization of the school goal will be easy, apathy and opposition within the school will be minimized. Table 1 shows that teachers suggestions in the schools was rated high as 87% even in bringing sanity to the school was rated 94%. Short et al. (1991) opined that the kind of school climate that encourages involvement in decision making is characterised by openness. It is possible to infer that there is openness in the administration of these schools with the way the items in Table 1 are rated.

Teachers are actively involved in making rules and regulations and contributed to school development in no small measure and teachers take active part in the supervision of students. This practice is summed up by

Wilkinson (1991) which saw involvement of teachers in decision making as empowerment which could lead to job satisfaction and better quality decisions and that gains are available to employers and workers.

It was revealed in the study that there was disparity in the involvement of male and female teachers in decision making processes. Male teachers are more involved in decision making in schools than their female counterparts. This was supported by United Nations Department of public information (2006) as reported in international women's day that women participation in high level economic decision making remains low even in the developed countries despite educational advances for women in many parts of the world. Also reported was the low participation of women in parliament which was said to be 10.9%. It was further reported by the international federation of journalists that although a third of journalist today are women, less than 3% of senior media executives and decision makers are women. This is just to show that marginalisation of women in decision making is not only peculiar to teaching profession. It was also revealed in the study that age of teachers was not significant in their involvement in decision making. This is to say that older teachers were not involved more in

decision making than the younger teachers. This is in contrast to the findings of Ashton and Webb (1986) that teachers both male and female expressed dismay and over their inability to influence the process of decision making. They felt they were never consulted irrespective of their ages, experience and qualifications and they were made to feel that they could not make good decisions. The findings in the study well complement the later part of his finding that teachers self esteem grows when they feel they are involved in decision making and they are recognised for their accomplishment. Age of teachers was found to be no barrier to decision making processes in Ekiti State Secondary Schools as knowledge was tapped from both old and younger teachers to achieve educational goals.

Also revealed in the study was that educational qualification and teacher's years of experience were not found to be hindrances to their involvement in decision making processes in Ekiti State secondary schools. This was rightly observed by Ibukun (1989) that teachers in Nigeria expressed a desire for more involvement in decision making irrespective of qualification and years of experience. When educational qualification and experience of teachers are not seen as hindrances to decision making in schools, all the teachers were well involved in decision making irrespective of their qualification and experience to move the schools forward to achieve educational goals. Ibukun (1989) further said agitation by the teachers could reduce conflict in school administration and cause harmony to prevail in schools.

On the contrary, the post hoc analysis showed that those teachers who had spent between 30 and 35 years on the job are significantly different from teachers whose experiences are below 10 years in their involvement in decision making. This means that teachers who have been on the job for a long period have greater opportunity to be involved in decision making than other teachers with fewer years of experience. The finding from post hoc analysis is in discord with the findings of Ashton and Webb (1986) that teachers expressed dismay and frustration over their inability to influence the process of decision making. They felt they were not consulted, irrespective of experience, age and qualification and that they were made to feel that they could not make good decisions.

Conclusions

It was concluded from the findings of this study that Ekiti State secondary school teachers enjoyed active participation in decision making processes. Sex, age and educational qualifications of teachers did not hinder teachers' participation in decision making processes.

Involvement of teachers in decision making shows that they are well empowered and they are seen as resources with knowledge and experience that are tapped. This is in line with Wilkinson (1999). This is also in consonance

with Collins et al. (1989) and that says many managers express a belief that involvement of workers in decision making will improve the quality of decision making in the organization.

The day to day participation of teachers in the administrative activities enhances teachers to gain a lot of experience, remove boredom, frustration and increases workers commitment, efficiency and job satisfaction.

Willingness of the principal and conscious efforts to train the younger teachers by involving them in decision making will enhance development and educational goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made to enhance development on the job:

1. Continuous involvement of teachers in decision making by the principals will further enhance teachers' development on the job
2. The principals should not totally neglect the less experienced teachers in decision making as they also need to be developed on the job
3. Principals should also attend more workshops and seminars to know how to manage the younger teachers so as to build them up since they will eventually take up the mantle from them later.

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