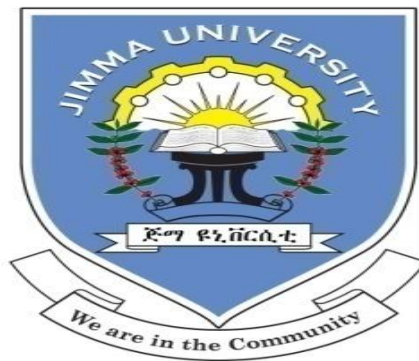


**TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF BUNO BEDELE  
ZONE**

**BY**

**ATNAFU LEGESSE**



**JIMMA UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

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**NOVEMBER, 2021  
JIMMA, ETHIOPIA**

**TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
OF BUNNO BEDDELLE**

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE JIMMA  
UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
MASTER'S DEGREE OF ARTS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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**NOVEMBER, 2021**

**JIMMA, ETHIOPIA**

## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis titled **Teachers' participation in decision making secondary schools of Buno Bedele zone** is my original work, and all sources that have been referred to and quoted have been dully indicated and acknowledged with complete reference.

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As members of the Board of examiners of the final MA thesis open defence, we hereby certify that we have read and evaluated the thesis prepared by Atnafu Legesse titled "**Teachers' participation in decision-making secondary schools of Buno Bedele zone**" and recommend that the thesis be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in school leadership.

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### **FINAL APPROVAL**

This thesis is approved by:

<b>Head, Research and post-Graduate Office</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
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I, as Head of Research and Post-Graduate Office, hereby approve that all the corrections and recommendations suggested by the board of examiners be incorporated into the final thesis titled "**Teachers' participation in decision-making in secondary schools of Buno Bedele zone**" by Atnafu Legesse.

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## ABSTRACT

*This research was conducted on an assessment of teachers' participation in decision-making in some selected schools in the Buno beadle zone. A descriptive survey was conducted. The data were collected from 7 secondary schools, which cover 30% of the target population, by using a simple random sampling method. Data was collected from teachers, department heads, and school principals of the schools. Out of 139 respondents, 81 teachers, 52 department heads, and all 7 secondary school principals responded. The analyzed result shows the response of teachers was given a grand mean of 1.41 with a standard deviation of 0.54. Thus, this shows that teachers disagree that they are participating in the DM of the school. The grand result t-value was 59.98 and the mean difference result was 1.38. Whereas, the minimum and maximum values were 3.21 and 3.58, respectively. Most teachers disagreed with the teacher's participation in decisions on rules and regulations of the school, student discipline guidelines, school budgeting and income-generating, on the teacher's career structure and development, as well as on planning and time allocation for school activities. The grand mean result of department heads is 1.36, with a standard deviation of 0.56. Thus, this shows that the department heads agree that they are participating in the decision on the rules and regulations of the school. The grade t-value was 56.72 and the mean difference result was 1.318. Whereas, the minimum and maximum values were 1.18 and 3.87, respectively. Most department heads disagreed on the teacher's participation in decisions on rules and regulations of the school, student discipline guidelines, school budgeting and income-generating, on the teacher's career structure and development, as well as on planning and time allocation for school activities. The response was shown to show the grand mean result is 3.48 with a standard deviation of 0.54. Thus, this shows that teachers agree that they are participating in the decision on rules and regulations of the school. The average t-value was 56.72 and the mean difference result was 3.45. Whereas, the minimum and maximum values were 3.21 and 3.58, respectively. Thus, the findings of this part indicated that the low extent of teachers' participation in setting criteria for the enrolment of new students; developing disciplinary policies; establishing a program for community service; deciding on rules or procedures to be followed in evaluating school performance; and determining promotion policies. Thus, there is a difference in perception among the respondents about the extent of teachers' participation in deciding school policy, rules, and regulations.*

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Participative decision-making is conceived as an aspect of shared leadership, and the idea of involving teachers in school-level decision-making is known by many names. Several scholars, including Kahrs (1996), Marks and Louis (1997), Reitzug (1994), Rice and Schneider (1994, cited in Lydia Cheruto Kipkoech, 2011), have studied teacher empowerment as a concept that is related to teacher participation in decision-making. While participative decision-making is a system or structure, teacher empowerment represents an internal perception by teachers of having increased authority in their positions. According to Rinehart and Short (1998), primarily, empowerment has been defined as a process whereby school participants develop the competence to take charge of their growth and resolve their problems.

Among other things, the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (MoE, 1994) gave special attention and action priority to the change of educational organisation and management in the country. The concept of a policy is the evolution of a decentralized, efficient, and professional, coordinated participatory system concerning the administration and management of the education system. Accordingly, the educational management of the school was set up for democratic leadership by the school board and a parent-teacher association committee consisting of members from the community, teachers, and students. The implementation strategy of the policy created a mechanism by which teachers participate in the preparation, implementation, evaluation, and decision of the curriculum (MoE, 2010).

According to Owens (1998), for example, participatory decision-making requires the interaction of power and influence from two faces: the administrator on the one hand, and the teacher, students, and community members on the other hand. Owens further explains that participative decision-making is believed to have two potential benefits: arriving at a better decision and enhancing the growth and development of the school in sharing goals, improving motivation, communicating, and better developing group organization's participants' skills.

Because of the growing recognition of the importance of valid, knowledgeable inputs in administrative decision-making from various organisational levels, involving stakeholders in decision-making is critical (Wekesa, cited in Mualuko et al., 2009). Among other groups, teachers are a very important group that needs to be involved in decision-making in schools. Teachers are the custodians of instruction, implementers of school policies, and co-organizers

of school activities. Further, the decisions made in schools affect them, and as professionals and specialists in different subject areas, they are better suited to making the correct decisions, having in mind what is required of them as teachers (Mualuko, 2009).

A participatory approach in school management has been acknowledged as an essential ingredient in the quest for better schools (Blase, 2001). In schools, effective teacher involvement in decision-making can be an approach to practising participatory management. According to Mueller and Gokturk (2010), teachers can play a greater role in the overall success of the school when they commit to being active participants in the decision-making process. Teachers are the key figures in implementing the curriculum decisions, which at the school level involve taking decisions on what to teach, how to teach it and who to teach. The entire system will benefit when teachers play an active role in controlling their work environment (Pashiardis, 1994). It is therefore imperative that setbacks to a teacher's inclusion in decision-making be addressed if school goals and objectives are to be attained.

In the school system, like in any other organization, decisions are made towards solving problems aimed at achieving the stated goals of the schools effectively and efficiently. These decisions may be related to planning, student or staff discipline, curriculum implementation, resource utilization, school policy, or extracurricular activities. Good schools depend on administrators' recognizing that teachers are capable of being responsible for their students' learning. Such schools also give teachers the authority to make decisions about how to achieve success (Raudonis, 2011). This implies that school leaders should involve teachers in the decision-making processes, as they are the ones closest to student achievement.

The United Nations Education, Science, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) document asserts that without the participation of teachers, changes in education are impossible (UNESCO, 2005). This proposition confirms that teachers are the cornerstone of school activities. Moreover, it can be said that the quality of school performance largely depends on the teachers, who occupy the most important place in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, the involvement of teachers in decision-making is likely to motivate them to exert their mental and emotional energy in a group situation that may contribute to group goals and shared responsibilities.

Teachers play a crucial role in the teaching and learning process. They are the guardians of instruction, implementers of school policies, and co-organizers of school activities. Thus, the decisions made in schools directly or indirectly affect teachers. This implies that "teachers are

suited to make better decisions by having in mind what is required of them as professionals" (Mualuko et al., 2009).

The advantages of involving teachers in decision-making are not limited to giving them a sense of ownership over the decision's consequences. Chinelo (2007) stated that teachers' adequate participation in decision-making in schools is not only crucial to accepting, accommodating, and implementing decisions, but also contributes a great deal to the maintenance of internal discipline in schools, a positive attitude towards school work, as well as improving the quality of future decisions. This involvement might further promote teachers' commitment to these school policies and increase their motivation to implement them as well (Hassen, 2017). As far as the researcher's knowledge is concerned, the search efforts led the researcher to find three previous works geared towards teachers' participation in secondary school decision-making processes. Balcha (2012), Gebeyehu (2014), and Berhanu (2014) conducted research on teachers' participation in secondary schools in the Bale zone, Horro Guduru zone, Wollega zone, and Jimma zone, respectively, in Oromia Regional State.

In sum, the involvement of teachers in decision-making pertinent to any aspect of school operation has a positive impact on school performance. School principals are, therefore, expected to encourage teachers to actively participate in decision-making so that an informed decision can be made at the school level. It is against this background that this study therefore assessed teachers' participation in the decision-making process in secondary schools in Bunno Bedele Zone, Oromia National Regional State, Southwest Ethiopia from November 2021.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Teachers are the cornerstone of school activities. It can also be noted that the quality of a school's performance largely depends on the teachers who occupy the most important places in teaching-learning activities. Thus, the decision that is made without teachers' involvement may not have efficient and effective implementation or realisation because the participation of teachers in the school's decision-making may motivate teachers to exert their mental and emotional involvement in group situations that may enable them to contribute to group goals and share responsibilities. In addition, if they do not participate and the decision is made independently by principals, teachers' commitment and initiation to effective implementation as well as proper utilisation of resources in decision-making activities could be questionable in many cases. According to Pashiardis (1994), teachers have a greater role in the overall success of the school when they commit to being active participants in the decision-making process.



Studies (Asefa, 2003; Legesse, 2008; Wondesen, 2011) have been conducted in Ethiopia. The studies, however, did not include the role of principals in facilitating the environment for more teachers' participation in decision-making. For instance, Asefa (2003) focused his study on teachers' participation in decision-making. His study, however, was (1) done 10 years ago, (2) did not consider the role of principals, and (3) simply showed that teachers' desire to be involved was low, even failing to explain the reason for the low desire. A more recent study in the area was done by Wondesen (2011). He tried to assess the practise and problems of decision-making in the secondary school of Nekemte Town, in which he examined the overall assessment of decision-making in schools. He, however, did not take care of teachers' participation in decision-making in school.

As the review of the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy and Implementation outlines (MoE. 2008: P. 24), leadership in secondary education was found to be less satisfactory in performing technical management, instituting participatory decision-making, and decision-making for teachers. Teachers' participation in decision-making is very poor. Based on the above facts, this study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are teachers involved in decision-making in secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele zone?
2. To what extent do school principals' facilitate an environment for more teachers' involvement in the school decision-making process?
3. What are te factors that affect teachers' participation in decision-making in secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele zone?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### ***1.3.1 General Objective***

To assess teachers' participation in decision-making in secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele Zone.

#### ***1.3.2 Specific Objectives***

1. To explore the extent to which teachers are involved in decision-making in secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele zone.
2. To investigate the extent to which school principals facilitate an environment teachers' participation in the school's decision-making in secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele zone.

3. To identify factors that affect teachers' participation in decision-making in secondary schools in the Buno Bedele zone.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The participation of teachers in decision-making is related to teachers' moral job satisfaction, individual growth, and development, as well as an increase in productivity and efficiency of the educational organization, so the finding of this research is important for the MoE to solve problems related to schools and teachers in general. Moreover, teachers' participation in decision-making increases trust between teachers and principal. It is also noted that when teachers participate in decision-making and their contribution is considered important, resistance to change and conflict in school can be minimized.

Thus, this finding is aimed at increasing the awareness of such critical issues among school principals, teachers, and students. In general, the result of this finding may have the following contributions:

1. The study may increase awareness of school principals, teachers, students, and educational offices about the importance of participatory decision-making so that schools can better utilise teachers' potential and experience for better problem-solving skills.
2. It helps the school to minimize those factors that hinder decision-making among teachers and school communities.
3. The finding may provide a recommendation to the MoE and to the stakeholder that enhances teachers' participation in decision-making, so the school's performance might be effective and efficient.
4. Help policy-makers and planners to facilitate strategies for producing school leaders that are skilful in the implementation of participatory decision-making and seek a solution for changing the existing system.
5. This finding may serve as an initial basis for policymakers and those who are interested in carrying out further study in this area.

### **1.5 Delimitation of the Study/Scope of the Study**

The study was conducted in Bunno Bedele, Zone Oromia National Regional State, Southwest Ethiopia on teachers' participation in decision-making. The Buno Bedele zone is located in western Oromia and is bordered in the south by the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State, in the west by the Ilu Ababora zone, in the north by the East Wollega

zone and West Wollega zone, and in the east by the East Jimma zone. Its administrative centre is Bedele. The Buno Bedele zone was created by nine (9) districts and one (1) town in March 2016. The zone covers 5,856.5030 km<sup>2</sup>. This zone has 24 secondary schools and 1654 secondary school teachers (Bunno Bedele Zone Communication Office, 2018). It would be more essential if the study were conducted in all secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele zone. However, such a study requires a lot of resources and time. Geographically, the study was limited to Gechi, Bedele (Ingbi), Dembi, Sinesso, and Chello secondary schools. Conceptually, many decision-making areas call for teachers' participation. Yet, to make the study manageable, the researcher focused on the following decision-making areas: participation in planning, curriculum and instruction, school policy, rules and procedures, school budgets and income generation, student disciplinary problems, and decisions concerning school teachers' career structure and time allocation.

## **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

It is obvious that no research work can be completely free of limitations. Accordingly, this study also had its own limitations. For instance, respondents' lack of willingness to give their opinion, time constraints, as well as budget constraints, might have limited the finding to some extent.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

**Decision-making:** is a sequential process that results in a single decision or series of decisions (choices) that stimulates movements or actions (Knezevich, 1969: 32).

**The extent of participation:** is the magnitude to which teachers take part with others with specified rights and obligations in school decision-making (Alkin, K. 1992).

**Secondary school:** In this context, an educational level consisting of grades 9–12, which includes both the first and second cycles (MoE, 1994).

**A teacher:** is a person employed in an official capacity and who directly participates in the teaching activities of the schools (Alkin, K. 1992).

**Teachers' participation:** is a process of engaging and involving teachers in the school's decision-making process (Alkin, K. 1992).

## **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This paper was structured as follows: The first chapter contains the introductory part of the study, which consists of the background of the research, the statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, their significance, and the delimitation of the study. The second chapter deals with a comprehensive review of the literature pertinent to the research. The third chapter discusses the data collection methods, procedures, instrumentation, and data analysis techniques. In chapter four, the collected data was carefully analyzed and interpreted. The fifth and final chapter deals with the summary, conclusion, and recommendation of the study.

# **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**

## **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the findings from a comprehensive review of literature conducted to explore concepts, types, areas, and teachers' participative decision-making in schools. This review also emphasizes the role of principals in participative decision-making and considers the factors that affect teachers' involvement in school decision-making.

## **2.1 Decision Making: Concept**

Decision-making is a process that consists of several steps to uncover what to do and why for a decision (Nutt, 2008, p.425). According to Shahzad et al. (2010), p.400, a decision is a choice between two or more selected alternatives according to criteria. Among the selected alternatives, a decision-maker has to choose the one that best fits the criteria to achieve organizational goals, minimize uncertainty, and manage risks.

A decision-maker should consider a wide range of inputs from other people in the process of decision-making. It is assumed that including more people, who may have different amounts of information, would result in more effective decision-making. For example, a principal wants to decide whether or not to recruit a teacher. He/she should listen to the opinions of other staff to consider the advantages and disadvantages of having the new teacher, what skills and personality he/she should have, identify candidates that fit the criteria, evaluate each candidate, and decide on the one that best fits the criteria. Effective decision-making, according to Rausch (2005, p.989), involves the following steps: defining issues to be addressed, identifying alternatives, finding relevant information, evaluating the alternatives, selecting the most desirable alternative, implementing the alternative, and monitoring the progress of the implementation toward the desired outcome.

## **2.2 Importance of Decision Making**

Decision-making, like leadership, is important in organizations, including schools. Griffin (2004) argues that decision-making is an integral part of all managerial functions. These functions are the decisional function, the interpersonal function, and the informational function. The decisional function refers to making appropriate decisions based on the information obtained from others. The interpersonal function refers to building relationships with stakeholders such as subordinates, superiors, co-workers, and customers. The

informational function refers to giving and receiving information from others to know what is going on inside and outside the organization.

The success of an organisation depends on the quality of the decisions made by managers (Robbins, 2009). Decisions are effectively made in an organisation by relying on managers because they are the ones who are in charge of setting up the decision-making process. This process is essential to accommodate inputs from subordinates to make desirable decisions for goal attainment, job satisfaction, fulfilment, performance, and overall effectiveness. Therefore, managers need to follow a few guidelines to make better decisions; the steps in the decision-making process should be clear and precise, particularly when facing complex decisions in today's competitive business (DuBrin 1989).

Leaders and managers are judged by their decisions—decisions that lead to success, decisions that create failure, and especially decisions that have far-ranging ethical and moral consequences (Eberlin, 2008, p.311). Thus, a leader should understand decision-making concepts, decision types, decision-making processes, and decision-making styles to function well in making a decision.

### **2.3 Types of Decision Making Process**

Shahzad et al. (2010) argue that there are two types of decisions: programmed and non-programmed. Programmed decisions are those that routinely occur so that a decision-maker can have elaborated procedures on how to face them. Programmed decisions are relatively clear-cut and apt to depend on previous solutions because the problems faced are the structured ones that are straightforward, familiar, and easily defined. Structured concerns commonly confront organisations in three forms: procedure rules, policies, and procedures. A procedure refers to a series of interrelated sequential steps a decision-maker can use to respond to a structured issue. A rule refers to an explicit statement that tells a decision-maker what he or she can and cannot do. In contrast to a rule, a policy refers to a guideline that establishes general parameters for a decision-maker rather than stating what should or should not be done. Appositely, when organisations face unstructured difficulties, a decision-maker addresses non-programmed decisions with judgement and creativity. Non-programmed decisions are those that do not occur routinely enough that a decision-maker has not elaborated on procedures on how to face them, but the novel non-programmed decisions need customised procedures. Both decision types are not distinct but exist as a continuum; highly non-programmed decisions are

at one end and highly programmed decisions are at the other end (Robbins et al. 2009, pp.226-227).

## **2.4 Decision-Making Styles**

Decision-making styles vary from leader to leader. However, a leader needs to choose an appropriate decision-making style that suits followers and situations in the school. According to the style theory assumption, it is the style of decision-making that matters. These are the participative style, the consultative style, the directive style, and the delegating style. When principals adopted these fully, they shared management decisions with teachers and other constituents (Malen, et al., 1990).

### ***2.4.1. Directive Style***

Directive-style decision-making is an extreme form of autocratic decision-making, where leaders have absolute power over their workers or teams. Staff and team members have little opportunity to make suggestions, even if they would be in the team's or organization's best interest. The leader or manager using this style operates like a dictator. He or she makes all the decisions on what, where, when, why, how things are done and who will do them. The dictatorial leader traits are: all decision-making power is theirs, unrealistic in demands, uses excessive discipline and punishment, and does not allow others to question decisions or authority (O'Hair, et al., 2000). A more passive style of this is: all decision-making power is theirs; unrealistic demands are clouded in humour; subtle forms of discipline and punishment allow questions about decisions.

### ***2.4.2 Consultative Style***

Supplying conceptual grounding for consultative leadership, Spillane (2005) focused on the relationship between the leader and the "followers." It plays a pivotal role in precipitating change. Followers and leaders are bound together in the consultative process. Leithwood and colleagues (2004) have described and assessed the effectiveness of transformational leadership in schools, creating structures for participation in school decisions. By seeking to foster collaboration and to activate a process of continuous inquiry in teaching and learning, transformational leaders attempt to shape a positive organizational culture and contribute to organizational effectiveness (Fullan, 2002). But even in collaborative cultures where principals' transformational efforts encourage teachers to contribute leadership and expertise in teaching and learning, principals have a central and explicit role in instruction (Sebring and

Bryk, 2000). When principals who are transformational leaders accept their instructional role and exercise it in collaboration with teachers, they practice an integrated form of leadership.

### ***2.4.3 Participative Style***

Participative style decision-making is a democratic type of decision-making that is implemented through subordinate and management. Leaders invite other members of the team to contribute to the decision-making process. This increases job satisfaction by involving team members, but it also helps to develop people's skills. Team members feel in control of their own destiny, so they're motivated to work hard by more than just a financial reward. The democratic manager keeps his or her employees informed about everything that affects their work and shares decision-making and problem-solving responsibilities (O'Hair et al., 2000). This style requires the leader to be a coach who has the final say but gathers information from staff members before making a decision. Democratic leadership can produce high quality and high quantity of work for long periods of time. Many employees like the trust they receive and respond with cooperation, team spirit, and high morale.

### ***2.4.4 Delegate Style***

Decisions are a driver of performance. They involve decision-makers and individuals who possess critical information. This is in agreement with MacDonald's (2007) study of delegate style decision-making, which shows that it is associated with the highest rates of truancy and the slowest modifications in performance, which leads to unproductive attitudes and disempowerment of subordinates. This means "leave it is," and it's used to describe leaders who leave their team members to work on their own. It can be effective if the leader monitors what's being achieved and communicates with the team regularly. Most often, laissez-faire leadership is effective when individual team members are very experienced and skilled self-starters. Unfortunately, this type of leadership can also occur when managers don't exert sufficient control. They are frequently denied opportunities to use or exhibit their skills in decision-making venues.

## **2.5 THE CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT**

The review of selected sources is specifically intended to develop a logical argument to justify the purpose of this study. The development of this literature review attempts to show the progression of pertinent literature in this field, including some of the areas that are in need of further research. Much of the research relating to education in Ethiopia, however, has focused



on administrative issues, leaving a relatively sparse literature on empowering secondary school principals to increase the effectiveness of their instructional leadership role performance.

Principal empowerment is a strategy and philosophy that enables school leaders to make decisions about their jobs, own their work and take responsibility for their results as well as to serve customers at the level of the school where the customer interface exists. While the concept of principal participation has been a topic for research and of interest to education leaders for a couple of years, the concept of empowerment involves the school leader being provided with a greater degree of flexibility and more freedom to make decisions relating to principal role. This contrasts markedly with traditional management techniques that have emphasised control, hierarchy and rigidity. The meaning of empowerment has tended to be associated with the concept of power, thereby implying that power is redistributed by those in a senior position to those in more subordinate positions (Kim, 2013). So, what is empowerment and how can it be effectively implemented in educational organisations are questions presently of concern to the researcher who is convinced that it is one of the central keys to increase the effectiveness of secondary school principal performance in instructional leadership role.

### ***2.5.1 What is Empowerment?***

In recent years the topic of empowerment has been given a great deal of attention due to its influence on effective performance of leadership. Despite the fact that many scholars have agreed on the vital role played by secondary school principals in both developed and developing countries, limited attention has been given to providing principals with the opportunity, training, and support which are needed to become more autonomous and empowered in assuming their professional responsibilities. Too often, secondary school principals seem to be disempowered

due to the lack of required opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders in taking on the effective performance of the instructional leadership role. For this juncture, Gordon (2004, p. 15) indicated the level of disempowerment as a major factor in the alarming shift of principals' roles to the extent that "Most principals spend a great deal of each workday dealing with student

discipline, parental complaints, personnel issues, and bureaucratic paperwork". This is very obvious among top leaders, and contrasts with the sense of empowerment that principals need

to possess if they are to facilitate the empowerment of other members of the school community.

Thus, what is empowerment and how can it be effectively implemented in public secondary school principals in order for them to perform their instructional leadership roles so as to reverse

the feeling of disempowerment? Or, what is empowerment and what are the sources of empowering instructional leadership? These questions are presently becoming the concern of an

increasing number of people who are concerned about the effects of empowerment to increase the effectiveness of the instructional leadership role performance by principals (Leithwood, 2005; Srivastava, Bartol & Locke, 2006; Burke, 1986; Burpitt & Bigoness, 1997; Spreitzer & Doneson, in press).

The word empowerment has various roots since it has been employed in the middle of the twentieth century in various public and other development programmes (Rose, 2000). The general theory of empowerment was evolved from Kanter's qualitative study of work environments in a large American corporation (Kanter, 1993). Accordingly, Kanter (1993) defines empowerment as the ability of an individual to independently make decisions and utilize available resources to realise the necessary goals. Likewise, the works of various scholars (e.g.

Burke, 1986; Burpitt & Bigoness, 1997; Spreitzer & Doneson, in press) were reviewed to show how the concept of empowerment has evolved. Accordingly, the authors confirmed that empowerment was first 'conceptualised' as a feature of collaborating or as a view of shared authority and responsibility.

However, the definition of empowerment is apart from the above descriptions. This is because empowerment is one of the most difficult and essential elements to develop better commitment on the effective performance of school principals. It is difficult because it requires allocating responsibility by releasing some portion of control to the instructional leadership of secondary school. On the other hand, it is essential because it is a verified way of engaging principals in their respective schools. Gordon (2004, p. 11), defines empowerment in a comprehensive manner as "the ability to confront oppression, a sense of efficacy, a positive identity,

autonomy, participation in decision making, motivation, and recognising and maximising inherent strengths". The general meaning of empowerment in the context of secondary school principal is, therefore, the authority and the capability to take autonomous action, within well-defined standards, which will actively influence the performance of instructional leadership roles. Psychologists also define empowerment using their empowerment process model stating that, it is built on prior work in taking the following steps: "articulating empowerment as an iterative process, identifying core elements of that process, and defining the process in a way that is practically useful to both researchers and practitioners with terms that are easily communicated and applied" (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010, p. 647). Moreover, a series of significant statements are incorporated in defining empowerment as stated hereunder: In general, scholars view power as embedded in social interactions; these interactions are not limited to struggles for dominance but include the wide range of ways in which people exert influence. Thus, an increase in power is an increase in one's influence in social relations at any level of human interaction, from dyadic interactions to the interaction between a person and a system. Keeping this understanding of power in mind, we define empowerment as an iterative process in which a person who lacks power sets a personally meaningful goal oriented toward increasing power, takes action toward that goal, and observes and reflects on the impact of this action, drawing on his or her evolving self-efficacy, knowledge, and competence related to the goal. (Cattaneo, Aliya & Chapman, 2010, p. 647). This definition notifies that the context of school leadership today is different from any other time in history. It is essential that contemporary issues and processes including self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, capable of fighting for one's rights, independence, own decision making, being free, awakening, and capability to be understood if instructional leadership is to result in relevant action (Cattaneo et al, 2010). Such descriptions are, therefore, embedded in schools' value and their work culture.

Consequently, empowerment could be defined as augmenting personal self-efficacy by sharing power and authority within the organisational hierarchy through the use of a set of managerial functions and techniques.

Principals greatly influence student achievement by working with teachers to shape a school environment that is conducive to learning. This would also be possible if principals are empowered and must be provided with the support needed to lead their schools to success. So, empowerment by and large, is defined as the development of gaining of power to make decision independently (Gutiérrez, 1991; Kara et al., 1999; Masterson & Owen, 2006; Speer

& Hughey, 1995). It is observed that to some extent empowerment has been widely adopted and implemented in both public and private organizations, but relatively little research has been done on the conditions under which empowerment can be associated with enhanced instructional leadership role performance. To be successful in today's global competitive environment, education leaders need the knowledge, ideas, energy, and creativity of every instructional leader, from teachers to the top leader of the school, the principal. The best schools accomplish this by empowering their instructional leadership to take the initiative without pushing, to serve the collective interests of all stakeholders.

Over the last ten years, two complementary perspectives on empowerment at work have emerged. These perspectives provide us with a full feature for the definition of empowerment. Therefore, while the first perspective focuses on the social structural conditions that enable empowerment in the workplace, the second one focuses on the psychological experience of empowerment at work. Each perspective plays an important role in empowering principals and is briefly described in the sections below.

### ***2.5.2 Structural Empowerment***

It is indicated that the basis of the structural perspective on empowerment stems from theories of social relation and social power (Kanter, 1977, 1993). The emphasis is on building more distributed leadership through the sharing of power between followers and leaders with the objective of pushing power down the ladder of the educational chain of command. In this perspective, power means having official right or regulation over essential resources and the capability to make judgments pertinent to an individual's role and responsibility (Laschinger, Finegan, & Wilk, 2009; Armstrong & Laschinger, 2006). So, structural empowerment is about subordinates' involvement through increased delegation of responsibility throughout the education organisational hierarchy.

According to Kanter's (1993) and Laschinger et al.'s (2001, 2004) views and definitions of empowerment, at least four conditions are required for structural empowerment to take place in a school organisation. These are:

- Access to opportunity refers to the possibility for growth and movement within the organisation as well as the opportunity to increase knowledge and skills.
- Access to resources denotes one's ability to acquire the financial means, materials, time, and supplies required to do the work.

- Access to information deals with having the formal and informal knowledge that is necessary to be effective in the workplace (technical knowledge and expertise required to accomplish the job and an understanding of organisational policies and decisions).
- Access to support involves receiving feedback and guidance from subordinates, peers and superiors.

These four conditions are what many organisational behaviourists have based their work and studies on. They are identified as distinct sources of organisational power (Wagner, Cummings Smith, Olson, Anderson, & Warren, 2010). Kanter believed that access to empowerment structures is associated with the degrees of power an individual has in the organisation. It requires one to accept responsibility for one's actions, feelings and beliefs and understand that they are the foundation of one's behaviour. It also requires the desire and ability to determine and direct one's actions and thoughts.

Kim (2013) further states that the goals of the structural empowerment focus on knowing how institutional, social, economic, political, and cultural forces can cause the conditions that foster ineffectiveness in the place of work. Practically, institutions can change organisational policies, processes, practices, and structures away from top-down control systems toward high involvement practices where power, knowledge, information and rewards are shared with staff in the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy. For example, educational leaders at the Woreda or regional level can change their strategies to let principals resolve their system problems so as to satisfy their customers beyond their anticipation rather than waiting for the endorsement of a superintendent (Laschinger, Michael, Leiter, Day, Gilin-Oore, & Mackinnon, 2012).

Such an idea is synchronised with Kanter's belief that a leader's power will grow by sharing the power through empowering others and, as a result, leaders will realise increased organizational performance. Kanter suggested that, if principals are provided with opportunities comprising accesses for advancement, resources, information and support to get themselves skilled, they will increasingly make informed decisions and accomplish tasks more effectively, thereby benefiting all the members of the school. Research on structural empowerment in educational settings (Laschinger, 2008a, in Wagner et al., 2010) indicates that changes in workplace structure can support better institutional leaders, reduce stress and increase instructional leaders' commitment to institutional goals, culminating in improved institutional outcomes that include improved learning of students.

In conclusion, Kanter indicated two additional systemic sources of power i.e. formal power and informal power that exist in organisations. While formal power accompanies high visibility jobs and requires a primary focus on independent decision making, informal power comes from building relationships and alliances with peers and colleagues (Wagner et al., 2010). Therefore, principals who believe their work environment provides access to these factors are empowered (Greco et al., 2006; Kanter, 1993; Mendoza-Sierra, Orgambídez-Ramos, León-Jariego, & Carrasco-García, 2013; Wong & Laschinger, 2013).

A common theme in the current principal management literature is the need to create a more empowered work environment in the school setting. Although the largest proportions of professional education workers are principals, the organisational support for them remains low (Laschinger, Sabiston, Finegan, & Shamian, 2001). The authors found many themes that reflect feelings of powerlessness from both managers and organizations. The principals do not receive recognition for their efforts, support, resources, and information required to achieve their goal.

Thus, they feel dissatisfied with their work places. Kanter (1993) posits that employees' lack of access to power and opportunity structures often results in a sense of powerlessness and relates to negative behaviours, such as job dissatisfaction and ineffective role performance.

In general, structural empowerment deals with the descending delegation of responsibility in an organisation to give employees an increased capability of decision-making. The structure of empowerment emphasises a work environment that results in the effectiveness of employees when they can access opportunities, resources, information, and support. However, Spreitzer (2007), believes that employees have experience of the nature of empowerment that is called "psychological empowerment" which is discussed hereafter.

### ***2.5.3 Psychological Empowerment***

The structural empowerment emphasises a work environment that results in the effectiveness of employees when they can access opportunities, resources, information, and support. Most definitions focus on issues of gaining power and control over decisions and resources that determine the quality of one's performance. Others also take into account structural inequalities that affect entire social groups rather than focus only on individual characteristics. Besides, writers explore empowerment at different levels: personal, involving a sense of self-confidence and capacity; and relational, implying ability to negotiate and influence relationship and decisions (Rowland, 1995).

The psychological approach puts less emphasis on delegation of decision-making. Instead, this approach stresses motivational processes in workers. That is, psychological approach views empowerment as various psychological cognitions that contribute to enhanced intrinsic motivation. Spreitzer (2007), believes that, employees have experience of the nature of empowerment that is called “psychological empowerment.” The author added that, psychological empowerment is an intrinsic motivator which allows workers to develop self-confidence or believe they are capable to efficiently accomplish roles. Such perception results in effective and satisfied employees.

Psychological empowerment is described as how public secondary school principals view themselves in the work environment and the extent to which they feel capable of shaping their position role (Spreitzer, 1995). As many researchers (e.g., Spreitzer, 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1980) have noted, psychological empowerment has its roots in early work on employee alienation and quality of work life. Rather than focusing on managerial practices that share power with employees at all levels, the psychological perspective is focused on how employees experience empowerment at work. This perspective refers to empowerment as the personal beliefs that principals have about their role in relation to the school organisation. When principals feel empowered at work, they experience four dimensions:

- **Competence:** Mentions how the secondary school principal is capable of performing activities with skill. It refers to self-efficacy specific to one's work, or a belief in one's capability to perform work activities with skill (Gist, 1987; Bandura, 1989, cited in Spreitzer, 2007).
- **Meaning:** States how the secondary school principal places a value on her or his work goals, resulting in high organisational commitment and concentration of energy. It involves a fit between the needs of one's work role and one's beliefs, values and behaviours (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).
- **Self-determination:** Refers to how the secondary school principal senses that one has a choice with regard to initiating and regulating actions and work behaviours. It reflects a sense of autonomy over the initiation and continuation of work behaviour and processes (e.g., making decisions about work methods, pace, and effort) (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989; Bell & Staw, 1989, cited in Spreitzer, 2007).
- **Impact:** Denotes how the secondary school principal has a degree of influence on outcomes in the school setting. This is the degree to which one can influence strategic, administrative, or operating outcomes at work (Ashforth, 1989, cited in Spreitzer, 2007).

All these four cognitions reflect an active, rather than passive, orientation to principal's leadership role. In other words, the experience of empowerment is manifested in all four dimensions, if any one dimension is missing, then the experience of empowerment will be limited. For example, if individuals have discretion to make decisions (i.e., self-determination) but they don't care about the kinds of decisions they can make (i.e., they lack a sense of meaning), they will not feel empowered. Alternatively, if people believe that they can make an impact but do not feel like they have the skills and abilities to do their job well (i.e., they lack a sense of competence), they will not feel empowered as well.

Moreover, the distinction between affective outcomes and performance outcomes of psychological empowerment was recognized by Spreitzer et al. (1997) in Kluska, Laschinger & Kerr (2004). They asserted that the Meaning and Self-determination dimensions were related to job satisfaction, an affective outcome, whereas the Competence and Impact dimensions were related to work effectiveness, a performance outcome. In their study, job strain was significantly related to psychological empowerment dimensions that affect both affective and performance outcomes (Meaning and Competence). This finding proposes that employees who believe that their work activity is consistent with their value system, yet feel they do not have what it takes to do their job well, will experience high levels of job strain.

While the social-structural perspective is limited because it is organisationally-centric, the psychological perspective is also limited because it is individually-centric. A complete understanding of empowerment at work requires the integration of both perspectives. In the sections below, it will be explained how the empowerment and the effective performance of instructional leadership roles by principals are related.

Spreitzer (2007) describes psychological empowerment as a group of psychological states essential for a person to feel that he or she can control the relationship to his or her own work.

Instead of focusing on managerial practices which share power among employees at different levels, the psychological vantage point focus on employees' experience of their own work and the nature of that unique experience. Spreitzer developed and validated the measurement of psychological empowerment in the workplace based on cognitions that reflect an individual's orientation to his or her leadership role: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

According to Spreitzer, employees are empowered because they increase their organizational commitment and enhance role performance effectiveness.



### ***2.3.3 Conclusion***

As indicated in the review of literature cited above, empowerment is essentially dealing with issues and processes related to power, autonomy, confidence, regulatory, own choice, self-respect, values, being free, independence, own decision making and capability to be understood if instructional leadership is to result in required achievements. Empowerment is both a value orientation for working in the school community and a theoretical model for understanding the processes and consequences of efforts to exert control and influence over decisions that affect the principal's role, managerial functioning, and the quality of role performance. It was discussed that there is a distinction between the values that trigger an empowerment process to effective role performance of instructional leadership by principals and empowerment theory. The value orientation of empowerment suggests goals, aims, and strategies for implementing leadership roles. While the social structural conditions enable empowerment in the workplace, the psychological experience of empowerment provides intrinsic motivation to effectively perform leadership roles.

It is clearly discussed that, while the structure of empowerment emphasises a work environment that results in the effectiveness of school principals when they can access opportunities, resources, information, and support; psychological empowerment is a motivational process or belief that is an individual, personal feeling. The process enables staff and schools to set and attain goals. In fact, psychological empowerment will increase employees' feelings of power to get things done. Any management strategy that does not meet employees' self-determination needs or self-efficacy beliefs, however, will make principals feel powerless. The next section of

this chapter will be devoted to describe how all of the dimensions of both structural and psychological empowerment which have been discussed in the previous section are related with the effective performance of the instructional leadership role by principals. Each perspective plays an important role in empowering public secondary school principals and is described in the sections below.

## **2.6 The Relationship Between Empowerment And Effectiveness In**

### ***2.6.1 Instructional Leadership Role Performance Of Principals***

This part of the literature review examines the relationship between empowerment and effective performance of their instructional leadership role by principals. As discussed in the

previous part of this chapter, empowerment is clearly a wise strategy for schools success in increasing role effectiveness, goal achievements, and organisational commitment among principals. More specifically, research on the link between empowerment to effective instructional leadership role performance is discussed in this part of the literature study. This literature study will also help to identify leadership behaviours needed by principals who are committed to successfully leading public secondary schools in which instructional leadership flourishes. It is believed that the complex process of school accomplishment will be successful only if it involves everyone in the organisation bearing the importance of distributed leadership in mind.

In addition, this review of literature adds to the body of knowledge on the topic of the institutional value of successful empowerment models in that it provides insight into giving equal attention to the process and outcomes, developing a culture of empowerment, and valuing instructional leadership development as distributed leadership. While there is little disagreement about the vital role played by principals in the Ethiopian situation, limited attention has been given to providing principals with accesses to opportunity, self-development, and the support needed to become more autonomous and empowered in assuming their professional responsibilities.

### ***2.6.2 The possible link between empowerment and instructional leadership***

Empowerment is found to be indispensable in the global learning environment that contributes to schools' success. Empowerment can be considered either as a goal or as a process.

Empowerment as a goal underlines the devising of control, whereas it underscores the process to determining the goals and means necessary to create professional relations (Tengland, 2008). If a school is to be instructionally successful as a learning community, it will be because of the empowered leadership of the principal that brings people into decision-making (Darling, 1996; Rowlands, 1995) as a process; and provides future-oriented management instead of dealing with daily routines (Baird & Wang, 2010) as a goal (Balkar, 2015).

While educational leaders are encouraging the cooperation of principals and teachers in an instructional process with an understanding of distributive leadership, the consequence will be empowering by enabling them to evaluate their own learning environments (Bogler & Nir, 2012; Vernon Dotson & Floyd, 2012 in Balkar, 2015). As a consequence of empowerment, leaders at all levels access information to evaluate and pinpoint learning needs, develop solutions, assign responsibilities, allocate resources. By and large, the inclusion of instructional

leaders in the decision making processes using the participative leadership approach enables them to develop empowerment (Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013 in Balkar, 2015).

As discussed earlier in this chapter, structural empowerment is viewed as a top-down approach to empowering principals, whereas psychological empowerment refers to increased intrinsic task motivation or enhanced feelings of self-efficacy by fulfilling one's needs for self-determination (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Hence, this part of the literature review

is trying to answer the question: "What is the relationship between empowerment and the effective performance of the instructional leadership roles by principals? This study is stimulated by the numerous benefits and advantages of empowerment and its crucial role in the principal's effective performance.

In today's global environment, school leaders need to be given more freedom and independence for striving to meet the challenging job requirements. School principals should be given opportunities to be more creative and responsible. Research indicates that there is significant correlation between the dimensions of empowerment and principal performance. Chen (2011) in

Awamleh (2013, p. 314) revealed that "employees' performance will improve significantly when they are empowered with autonomy, freedom and opportunities to influence decision making in their jobs or organizations". It has been further reported by Ke and Zhang (2010) that psychological empowerment, comprising autonomy, competence, meaningfulness and impact, has a constructive relationship with the principal's performance as a government employee (Awamleh, 2013).

Though the reviewed literature indicated that the concepts of structural and psychological empowerment have been developed in two separate research streams, other scholars cordially suggest that the two constructs are closely related (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995, 1996). Conger and Kanungo (1988) further declare that, the use of managerial strategies and techniques such as participative leadership, goal setting, feedback systems, and contingent or competence-based rewards are the conditions that can empower subordinates in a motivational sense. Spreitzer (1995) also ratifies that, access to information about organisational mission and

work unit performance, reward systems based on performance, and participatory climate are positively related to the cognitions of psychological empowerment. Consequently, such empowerment practices and techniques can be viewed as triggering the psychological state of empowerment. Structural empowerment may also have influences on work attitudes and behaviours through its impact on psychological empowerment.

This study, therefore, sees principal empowerment as a structural and managerial approach since it is an important antecedent to psychological empowerment and provides implications about how public school leaders should use empowerment practices and techniques to increase the effectiveness of principals in their instructional leadership roles. For that reason, these constructs contribute to the effective performance of principals' roles identified by Day et al. (2010) as dimensions of successful instructional leadership.

In responding to the research question of this research, eight sub-questions are examined. In examining these research sub-questions, the researcher focuses on those dimensions of successful instructional leadership identified by Day et al. (2010). These dimensions of successful leadership include: defining vision, values and direction; improving conditions for teaching and learning; redesigning and enriching the curriculum; restructuring the organisation: redesigning roles and responsibilities; enhancing teacher quality (including succession planning); building relationships outside the school community; enhancing teaching and learning; and building relationships inside the school community. The results of various research works have verified that, empowerment influences principals' performance of the instructional leadership role on both psychological and operational levels (Liden, Wayne & Sparrowe, 2000; Sparrow, 2004; Spreitzer, 1995; Spreitzer, Kizilos & Nason, 1997 in Sutherland et al., 2007).

Despite the effect of empowerment on principal performance that has been researched extensively in the developed nations (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003), the relationship between empowerment and the role performance of instructional leadership has not yet been thoroughly empirically researched in the Ethiopian context. The reason is that the context of Ethiopian school leadership is unique and distinct from other situations. It can be described as an environment where situational factors are extensively governed by laws incorporated in the policy document of the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2004), whereas the discrimination against principals like other government employees on the basis of disposition factors remains highly controversial (Rothman & Coetzer, 2003). Hence, in today's competitive global world,

it is obviously understood that the unique features of effective practices are the assertiveness and performances of their staff at all levels of the organisation (Sutherland, Bruin & Crous, 2007).

It is indicated in the results of some research that situational and dispositional reasons could also be taken as workers' enactment in the field of human resource management of educational organisations (Rothmann & Coetzer, 2003). Organisational policies and procedures, management practices, autonomy, and teamwork should, therefore, be taken as inclusive situational sources of principals' performance (Liao & Chuang, 2004). Personality characteristics, needs, attitudes, preferences, cognitive ability, emotional intelligence, and motives are referred to as dispositional variables (Douglas, Frink & Ferris, 2004; Mount, Barrack & Strauss, 1999; Rothman & Coetzer, 2003).

It seems that as consequences of such variables empowerment becomes a widely used notion in the current organisational settings which has been instilled in both the theoretical and empirical research works (Laschinger, Finegan, Shamian, & Wilk, 2001, 2004 in Orgambídez-Ramos & Borrego-Alés 2014). The idea of empowerment is meticulously associated with the effective performance of the dimensions of instructional leadership in order to have a successful school with the appropriate use of the workforce of the school (Siegall & Gardner, 2000). Conger and Kanungo (1988, p. 471), go on to say that empowerment "is a principle component of managerial and organizational effectiveness... [and] empowerment techniques play a crucial role in group development and maintenance". With any school looking for leaders who take the leading role in reacting innovatively to the problems faced by their school, empowerment is found to be a vital tool at both the micro and macro levels of the education system.

However, empowerment plans may not sometimes be successful for various reasons (Siegall & Gardner, 2000) so that a better understanding of which organisational factors positively influence empowerment would be useful in order to get its benefit (Orgambídez-Ramos & Borrego-Alés, 2014). Though this study examines how to empower public secondary school principals in Amhara regional state of Ethiopia to increase the effectiveness of their instructional leadership roles, the key features of distributed leadership, as identified in the literature, can be regarded as an act of influencing the activities of all members of school organisation towards goal setting and goal achievement. It seems true for the reason that many authors are suggesting 'distributed

leadership' is considered the contemporary brand for 'transformational leadership', 'participative leadership', 'shared leadership', and 'democratic leadership', if empowerment is implemented.

However, as Cunningham and Cordeiro (2009, p. 212) described the current meaning of it as, "Leadership is no longer thought of as an individual but instead as a practice in the new 'flat world' of the twenty first century". If instructional leadership is found to be empowered, this perhaps differentiates distributed leadership from shared or participative leadership in that duties and responsibilities are shifted to the rest of the members rather than shared with others.

It is, moreover, discussed that empowering the public secondary school principal has been studied as a relational or a psychological construct. From a relational perspective, principal empowerment is generally defined as sharing power and authority with lower level staff within the organisational hierarchy through the use of a set of professional practices and techniques.

Researchers and practitioners have often focused on leadership practices such as employee participation and delegation, contingent reward systems, and goal setting as key strategies to empower subordinates (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1988)

## **2.7 Teachers' Perceptions on Decision-making**

Teachers' perception of decisions endeavour to improve the quality of school improvement and targets are set, new approaches to curricula, assessment, teaching, and management are introduced, but still there remains wide-spread dissatisfaction with progress. It is the demand of society to improve the quality of teachers and classroom teaching that ultimately leads to the improvement of schools' decisions (Matwas, 2007). Different people have different notions about school improvement and school effectiveness in decision-making. Little, J.W. (2007), who defines school improvement in decision as a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.

However, the main purpose of the school's decision is to enhance the learning outcomes of children. According to Armstrong (2004), "organizational literature reveals most studies have stated PDM as the best approach in contemporary organizational management." However, empirical reviews demonstrating that participative decision-making actually improves organizational and employees' outcomes remain inconclusive (Parnell and Crandall, 2001). Some quantitative reviews have reported moderately positive relationships between

participative decision-making and certain outcomes such as job performance, job satisfaction, and turnover. However, the practice indicates the participation of school teachers in various decision-making processes is adequate.

## **2.8 Teachers' Involvement in Decision Making**

Directly or indirectly, teachers are participating in different school decision-making processes. Research also indicates that when teachers participate in decisions made during the process of implementation, the likelihood of successful implementation is reduced, as per Grant and Singh (2008). Moreover, characteristics of teacher style, commitment, and skill are critical to decisions about when participation should take place. School characteristics such as organizational structure, principal style, and student population must also be considered in the decisions about teacher participation. According to Hughes, as cited in Bush et al. (1980), teachers' participation in decision-making is considered a decisive factor in obtaining the cooperative of professional staff. Ivancevich (1990) also noted that teachers' participation in the decision-making process may lead to higher levels of outcome, satisfaction, and efficiency, while decisions made unilaterally have no contribution to the development or changes in school performance.

Griffin (1999) has underlined the importance of teachers' participation in decision-making as a decisive factor that can enhance changes that undergo in the organization. Furthermore, Tanner (1981) says that ensuring the individual's opportunities for participating in decentralised decision-making activities that affect them will maximise the level of teachers' participation. To generalise the above authors' idea, teachers' participation in the school's decision-making process is an important point and should be considered by school principals and vice-principals while a decision is made on any school issue. Teachers' involvement in school decision-making was seen to facilitate better decisions because those closest to students know best how to improve their schools and are in the best position to make and carry out decisions. It was seen as motivational to the participants, and it released their energy, responsibility, and initiative, resulting in greater commitment to the job and increased job satisfaction (Flannery, 1980). Teachers' participation in decision-making was viewed as a change initiative focusing on an alternative strategy for school management (Conley, 1990).

## **2.9 Areas of Decisions Teachers Engage in Decision-Making**

Teachers engage in three types of decisions: judgements, planning, and interactive decisions. Judgement is the process of evaluating a person or an object and involves classification, selection, or estimation and includes tasks such as decisions about grouping students based on ability, selection of students for tasks, and the estimates teachers make of students' abilities, class participation, independence, and self-concepts. Teachers' decisions about selecting content, handling misbehavior, and grouping decisions tend to be based on their judgements about students rather than the original information about students. This is in line with the findings that factors other than students' actual classroom performance, such as teachers' preconceptions about student traits and abilities, and students' physical attractiveness, are better predictors of student evaluations" (Bessenoff & Sherman, 2000).

Another type of decision teachers engage in is planning. Planning involves formulating a course of action for carrying out instruction over a school year, month, and day. According to this, the instructional plans teachers make can be seen as scripts for carrying out interactive teaching. The third type of decision teachers engage in is interactive decisions. These are the decisions teachers make while interacting with students.

## **2.10 Benefits of Teachers' Participation in Decision Making**

There had been several benefits to teachers' being empowered to be involved in school decision-making. To begin with, employees in an organization that is empowered to develop self-managing teams may exhibit work commitment and initiative (Cheung & Cheng, 2002). Likewise, teachers at school being empowered could contribute to the increase in teachers' commitment to schools. According to some research, a strong positive correlation between teacher empowerment and teacher commitment has been found (Caldwell, 2004; Cheung & Cheng, 2002; Gaziel, 2009; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Wan, 2005; Zajda, 2006).

Teachers' participation in decision-making would encourage them to understand how these were planned and designed. This involvement might promote teachers' commitment to these school policies and increase their motivation to implement them, as well as those decisions for their participation as decision makers. The decisions made by the teachers could be more easily implemented by them than before in that they were under obligation to enforce them in a satisfactory way. Second, teacher participation in decision-making presented crucial information close to the sources of problems in schooling, improving the quality of decisions



effectively (Johnson & Boles, 1994). Traditionally, teachers passively accepted the decisions made by those administrators, obliged to implement the policies or projects that they did not participate in at all. These decisions may be called into question because they were made without access to classroom realities or were otherwise impractical. Teachers were the very ones who taught and instructed students in the classroom and who were responsible for their learning directly. They could realize the authentic need of students' learning within the classroom instead of those administrators outside it. Thus, it was of vital importance for a school leader to empower teachers to support each other to acquire knowledge and skills to meet the needs of student learning, which would improve the quality of decision-making (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992).

Third, from the perspective of critical theory, supposing teachers were more empowered, they would hold the more important status quo (Richardson & Placier, 2001). Due to their lower chances of being involved in crucial school matters, teachers were traditionally viewed as the ones who were silenced in the process of decision-making. As teachers were always seen as voiceless, it was not true that teachers had no voice in the operation and management of their own schools. Thus, it would be the oppression of the hierarchal administrative school system that kept all the teachers who were important members of the school voiceless (Freire, 2000). In the event that schools became more democratic organizations by encouraging teachers' participation in decision-making in the manner of school restructuring, schools would then be transformed into sites for reconstructing society, further resulting in the equity of society eventually (Richardson & Placier, 2001).

## **2.11 Barriers to Teachers' Participation in Decision Making**

In addition to those benefits, there were likely to be two barriers to teachers' decision-making as well. At the outset, the first barrier was the teachers' capacity for their involvement. According to Lawler's (1991) organization theory of high-involvement management, teachers needed to be empowered by four basic elements, comprised of power, knowledge, information, and reward (Johnson & Boles, 1994). It was necessary for a teacher to have all the four critical elements to participate in decision-making concerning school management. Providing a school principal just provided authority and time for teachers to participate in the meeting, there was no guarantee that teachers would be able to acquire enough knowledge and information to work together. In other words, teachers who were empowered needed to understand both the

knowledge with regard to decentralized school governance and the information about the operation and outcome of school policies (Johnson & Boles, 1994).

This revealed the need for teachers' training about their participation in school budget, curriculum, and staffing decisions (White, 1992). Second, as empowered with the authority of decision-making, teachers had to change their beliefs and attitudes toward their roles outside the classroom and learn how to think in new ways regarding what was possible (Cambone, Weiss, & Wyeth, 1992). Sometimes it was not easy for teachers to adapt to the new, strange circumstances that they were not familiar with at all. Some may feel that they did not prepare well for the acceptance of the new roles to join in the group's making decisions. Others might complain that schools would increase their workload by means of their involvement in decision-making instead of incorporating it into their work (Zeichner, 1991).

These two misunderstandings reflected the lack of the appropriate belief and attitude toward involvement in teachers' minds, which needed the retraining and in-service activities for teachers to construct new attitudes and roles fundamental to the new style of decision-making (Chapman, 1990). Indeed, there were still other problems with teachers' involvement in decision-making, such as school political pressure, the lack of time, the vagueness of shared decision-making models, and the discord between teachers and administrators (Spencer, 2001).

## **2.12 The Role of Principals in Involving Teachers in Decision Making**

Principals play a critical role in establishing and maintaining school-wide participative decision-making. Leithewood and Steinbach (1993) stated that "principals who develop a positive school climate ensure opportunity for teachers' collaboration and joint planning through a greater involvement in decision-making". This section now turns to a consideration of the specific role of the principal in developing and sustaining a participative approach to decision-making within the school. In developing a high-involvement organization, managers must deliver information, knowledge, power, and rewards to employees (Lawler, 1992).

A decision group's leader facilitates communication between individuals and integrates the incoming response so that a united response occurs. Information about the school and work, as well as knowledge of the field, as well as power, should be shared with teachers to increase their participation by allowing them the opportunity to participate in making decisions that affect their work (Organ & Batema, 1991). Teachers typically have more complete knowledge of their work management, so if teachers participate in decision-making, the decision will be

made with a better pool of information. Teacher participation is thought to give school administrators access to critical information closest to the source of many problems in schooling, namely, the classroom. Increased access to and use of this information is thought to improve the quality of curricular and instructional decisions (Smylie et al., 1996). Every principal in every school must make a decision and is accountable for the consequences of that decision.

Ivancevich (2002) suggests a guideline for a leader to improve the quality of decisions in groups. These are: creating an environment in which the group members feel free to participate and express their opinions; including all the concerned bodies and people who can provide the needed additional information relevant to the concern; and involving those individuals whose acceptance and commitment are important.

In support of the above ideas, Robbins (2003, p. 146–147) lists the following methods by which school administrators can build trust in their employees and propounds each of them as follows: a) Be open: keep people informed, ensure the criteria on how decisions are made, explain the rationale for your decision, and fully disclose relevant information; b) Be fair: be objective and impartial in performance appraisal and pay attention to equity perceptions in reward distributions; c) Speak your feelings: sharing your feelings allows others to see you as real and human. They will know who you are and their respect for you will increase. d) Tell the truth: you must be perceived as telling the truth; e) demonstrate consistency: people want predictability. Take the time to consider your values and beliefs, and then let them consistently guide your decisions; f) Keep your word: a promise made must be kept; g) Maintain confidence: people trust those who are discreet and on whom they can rely; h) Demonstrate confidence: develop the admiration and respect of others by demonstrating technical and professional ability. Thus, school principals should strive to develop a trusting relationship among all the stakeholders in the school.

In general, the success of teachers' involvement in decision-making has a lot to do with the readiness of the principal to share power and his ability to establish the processes to make participative decision-making work. Somech (2002) shares this view: "Leaders must be willing to let go of traditional authority roles," argues Somech, "not only allowing teachers to have a greater voice but also helping to prepare them, providing support, and establishing an environment of trust."



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of the study is to examine the participation of teachers in decision-making in secondary schools in the Buno Bedele Zone. Thus, to achieve this purpose, a descriptive survey method was designed, because a descriptive survey gathers data at a particular point in time, intending to describe the nature of the existing condition (Abiy et al., 2009:30). The data source of the study, subjects, instruments of data collection and procedure, and methods of data analysis were presented in the following order.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A descriptive survey research design is employed to examine teachers' participation in school decision-making in secondary schools in the Bunno Bedele Zone. The design was chosen because it allows for the collection of data from a relatively large number of study subjects in a short period of time at a low cost, as well as assessing recent practice and making generalizations to Best and Khan (2004). The researcher used a descriptive survey research design with a qualitative and quantitative approach to collect, analyze, and interpret different and compulsory data sets to get in-depth information about the current situation of the under study.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

The methods that were employed in this research were both qualitative and quantitative. This method was selected because it is appropriate when the study aims to get an exact description of the current status (Seyoum and Ayalew, 1989).

### **3.4 Data Source and Collection Instruments**

To get pertinent information related to teachers' participation in the decision-making process in secondary schools in Bunno Bedele Zone. Both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected from teachers and principals of secondary schools. Primary sources are used to get first-hand information concerning teachers' participation in the school decision-making process (Mohammed, 2017). The primary sources were teachers, school principals, and department heads. Secondary sources were used to strengthen the primary

sources (Mohammed, 2017). Documents such as guidelines, files, and minutes were revised to provide context for teachers' participation in decision-making at secondary schools.

### **3.5 Population Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Buno Bede le Zone is one of the zones of the Oromia National Regional State of Ethiopia. The zone comprises 24 secondary schools. In this study, the secondary target populations were selected from seven secondary schools, representing 81 teachers, 7 principals, and 52 department heads. Since it is difficult to manage and conduct the study in all secondary schools in the Bunno Bede le zone, it is important to determine and identify the number of samples from each secondary school and, The researchers drew their conclusions from the responses of the employees of seven secondary schools, which included employed teachers, principals, and department heads.

### **3.6 Data Gathering Tools**

A questionnaire on the Likert scale, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis were used as data collection tools.

#### ***3.6.1 Questionnaire***

The questionnaire is one of the tools commonly used in many studies. The researcher used a questionnaire to gather information, such as facts and additional opinions, from the respondents on the problem of the study. Baron and Hawell (1974) stated that using a questionnaire in the study provides an economical method of gathering information on matters of opinion and attitude as well as facts from a substantial number of people who may be widely scattered. The questionnaires are prepared for school teachers, principals, and department heads. Questionnaires include both types of items: open-ended and closed-ended. Both open and closed-ended items are used to collect data from the respondent, assessing teachers' participation in decision-making in secondary schools. The closed-ended items were arranged on a five-point rating scale, from very high to very low. Open-ended items were also prepared for respondents to give their opinions, comments, suggestions, and possible solutions to the study.

A structured questionnaire was administered to gather the required information about the extent of teachers' current participation in the decision-making process (see Appendix A).

The questionnaires were tested, and the necessary corrections were made to avoid ambiguity and confusion before conducting the final data collection. This is followed by the preparation of the final draft of the questionnaires. Then, the questionnaires were administered by a researcher with the help of school leaders. The questionnaires were collected after a week from each school.

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### ***3.6.2 Document Review***

In addition to primary sources, relevant information was generated from secondary sources. This technique will help the researcher cross-check the data that would be obtained through a questionnaire. The researcher analyzes different documents such as school guidelines, files, minutes, and reports that are used to document the practices.

### **3.7 Pilot Testing**

Before the study is commenced or before the study, the questionnaire is distributed to one secondary school teacher to check the validity and reliability of the method. And the feedback, comments, and suggestion from those teachers and principals help the researcher by providing the mechanism to obtain relevant information.

### **3.8 Methods of Data Analysis**

After the data collection instruments were checked, classified, arranged, and organised according to their characteristics and items, they were prepared in a good manner for analysis. Then, after the data has been analysed and interpreted by frequency and percentage distribution, it is used to analyse various characteristics of the sample population, such as sex, age, academic qualification, field specialization, and experience. Frequency, mean score, and standard deviation were computed for quantitative variables against each item score to

identify the extent of teachers' participation in selected areas of decision-making using quantitative and qualitative research analysis (SPSS version 26).

### **3.9 Ethical Clearance**

The study protocol received approval from the Department of educational planning and management, College of Education and Behavioural Science, and the Jimma University Institutional Ethics Committee. Since the study participants are teachers and principals, it requires Ethics Committee approval. The eligible participants received a copy of the "Participant Information Sheet" describing the purpose of the study, reasons for their participation, and explaining that only aggregated results were reported before they decided to agree or decline to take part in the study. Therefore, their agreement to participate in the study constituted consent.



## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This part of the study deals with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data collected from teachers; department heads, and principals' regarding areas of the decision in which teachers participate most and least; the extent to which school principals facilitate the environment for more teachers' participation in decision-making and factors affecting teachers participation in decision-making.

### 4.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Here the demographic characteristics of the respondents were presented. Accordingly, the characteristics of the study groups were examined in terms of sex, academic qualification, and service years.

*Table 4. 1 Respondent in terms of sex*

No	Characteristics	Sex of Respondents		
		Male	Females	Total
1	Teachers	53	27	80
2	Department heads	44	8	52
3	School Principals	6	1	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>36</b>	139

As the data in Table 4.1 shows, a Significant majority [103(74%)] were male, whereas 36 (25.9%) were females. In terms of the respondents' groups, Figure 4.1, 53 teachers were male while 27 were female. As to the department heads, 44 were male, whereas only 8 were females. In regard to principals, 6 were male, whereas only 1 was female. From the data, thus, one can realize that females are still under-represented. This, consequently, implies that, despite policy provisions and actual attempts at all levels, female participation in both the teaching force and leadership positions in secondary schools of the Buno Bedele zone is at its lowest level. This, in turn, implies the policy-practice gap regarding female participation in the teaching force as well as leadership in schools. In support of this idea, Alutto and Belasco

(1972, P .120) suggest that “... females participate less than males and desire low extent of participation”.

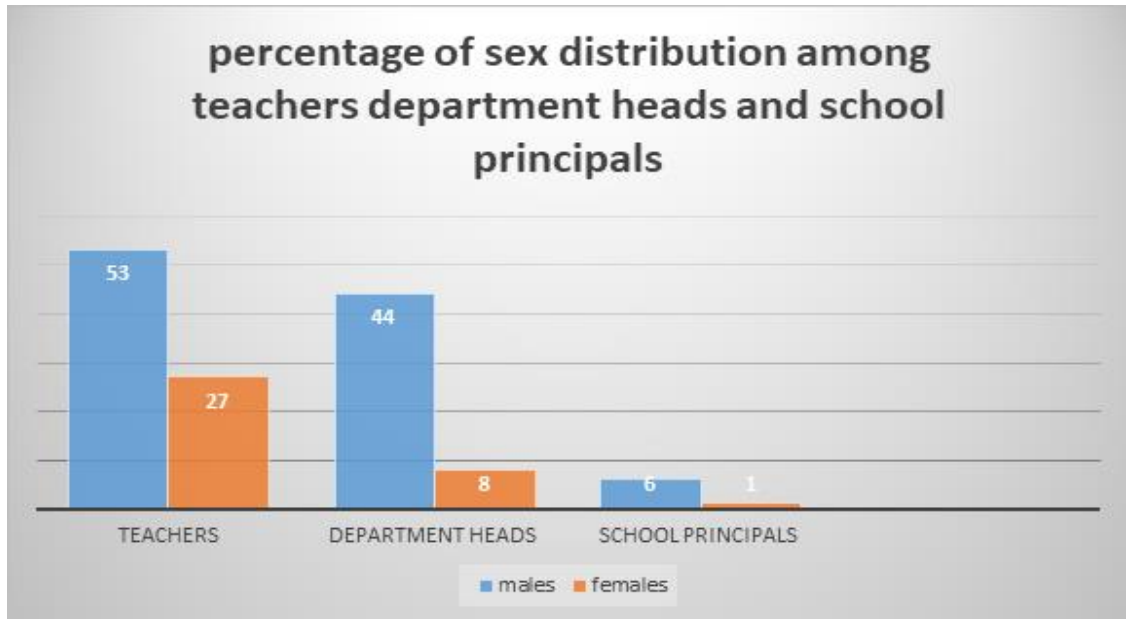
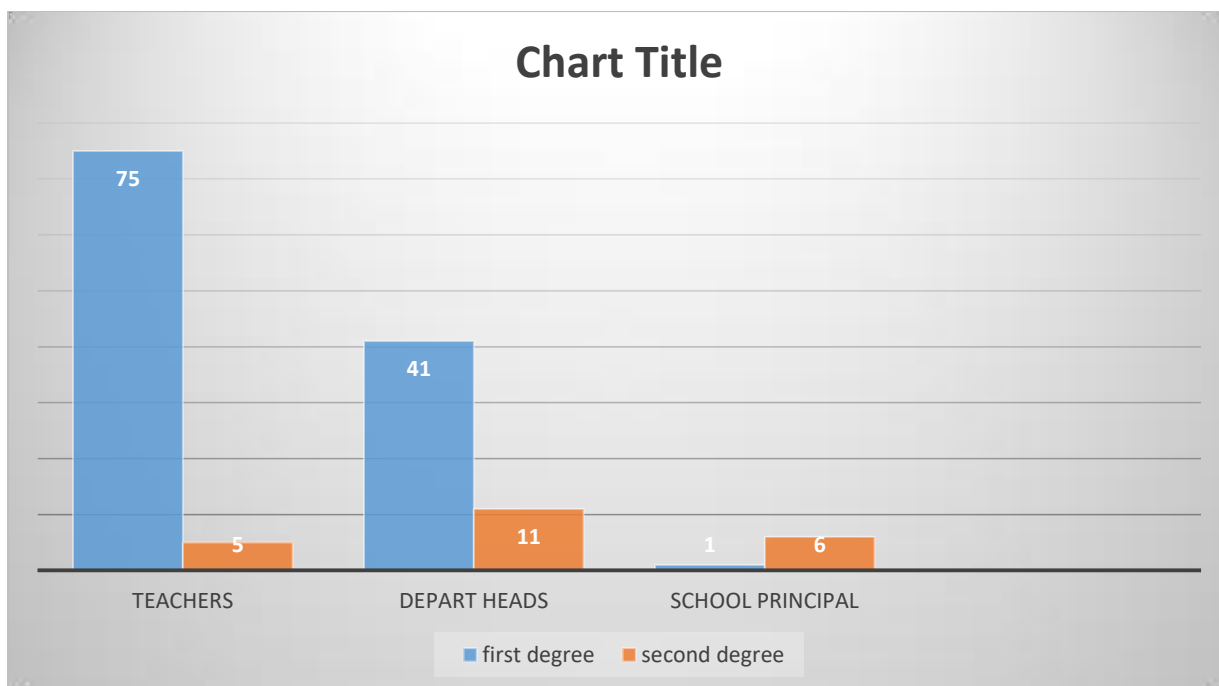


Figure 4. 1 Sex Distribution among teachers department heads and school principals

As it can be seen concerning the sex distribution of respondents, from fig. 4.1 bar graph of teachers, 53 of them were males and 27 of them were females. There were 44 female department heads and 8 male department heads. Among school principals, six of them were males, and one was female. This indicated that the participation of females in secondary schools under the sample study was minimal, both in teaching and administrative offices.

Table 4. 2: Respondent by educational qualification status

	First degree			Second degree			
teachers	75	M		5	M		
		F			F		
department heads	41	M		11	M		
		F			F		
school principals	11	M		6	M		
		F			F		
<b>Total</b>		<b>126</b>		<b>22</b>			<b>148</b>

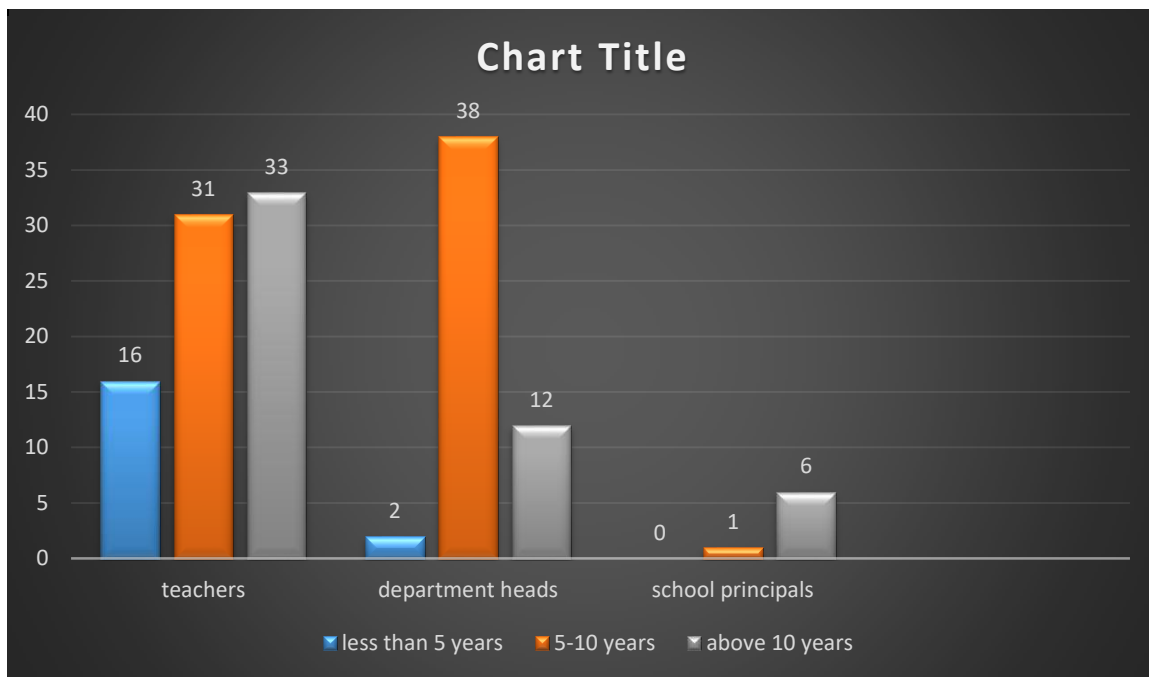


*Figure 4. 2 Respondents qualification*

As can be seen from fig 4.3, concerning respondents' qualifications, 75 (\_\_)% of them had first degree Five (\_\_)% of them were second-degree holders. Of the department heads, 41 of them were first-degree and 11 of them were second-degree holders. Among school principals, 1 is a first-degree holder while the rest of them are second-degree holders. This implies that the respondents were well qualified and might understand the decisions made in the school. Moreover, they might have had a strong desire to participate in school decisions. This finding is supported by the findings of Riley (1984, P.40-41) who pointed out that "highly educated employees desire greater participation because of a higher level of intrinsic need."

*Table 4. 3 Respondents by Service year*

	Below 5 years	5-10 Years	Above 10 Years
Teachers	16	31	33
Department Heads	2	38	12
School Principals	0	1	6



*Figure 4. 3 Respondents by Service year*

Concerning the service years of respondents, as can be seen from fig. 4.3 bar graph below, 16 of the teachers had served less than five years. Of those, 31 served between 5–10 years, whereas 33 of them had served over 10 years of service. Of the department heads, 38 had served between 5 and 10 years, while 12 of them had served longer than 10 years. As to the school principals, only 1 had a service year of 5–10, while 6 of them had served more than 10 years. These showed that the majority of teachers were inexperienced in implying quality of involvement decisions, whereas the majority of principals were well experienced in coordinating and facilitating participative decision-making. In support of these findings, Alutto and Belasco (1972, P121) explained that there is a positive relationship between teaching experience and the extent of participation in decision-making.

## **4.2 The Extent of Teachers Participation in Decision Making**

The data for this section of the study were gathered from teachers, department heads, and school principals regarding the extent to which teachers participate in various decision-making areas. The information gathered from these groups of respondents was analyzed and presented below. The data were gathered in the following five decision areas: rules and regulations; involvement in decisions regarding student discipline; involvement in budget and income generation decisions; involvement in decisions regarding teachers' career structure and development; and involvement in decisions regarding school activity planning and time allocation. In each of these areas of decision-making, teachers were asked to give their extent

of participation on the rating scale of 5 on the Likert scale form, from strongly agreeing to strongly disagreeing.

The summaries of the result for teachers, department heads, and school principals were shown below in table 4.4.

*Table 4. 4: the Extent to which teachers' participation in decision making.*

No	Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I	<b>Extent of teachers' participation in decision making (Decision on, rules and regulations of the school)</b>				
1.	Teachers participate in decisions regarding school plan	80	1.31	.466	.052
2.	Teachers participate in decisions that relate to rules disciplinary guidelines, etc	80	1.43	.497	.056
3.	Teachers participate in a decision made on procedures in evaluating school	80	1.41	.544	.061
II	<b>Teachers participate in the decision made on student discipline guidelines</b>				
4.	Do teachers participate in the decision made on students awarding procedures?	80	3.30	.461	.052
5.	Teachers participate in the decision made on the preparation of guidance for students guidance & counseling	80	1.33	.471	.053
III	<b>School Budgeting and income-generating</b>				
6.	Teachers participate in the decision made on Determining school expenditure priorities	80	1.40	.542	.061
7	Teachers participate in decisions made on Budgeting for the department	80	1.34	.502	.056
8	Teachers participate in a decision made on Determining means of income-generating	80	1.39	.515	.058
9	Teachers participate in a decision made on Allocating materials and equipment to the subject department	80	1.39	.539	.060
IV	<b>Teachers career structure and development</b>				

10	Teachers participate in a decision made on planning teachers development program in your school	80	1.35	.506	.057
11	Teachers participate in the decision made on Participating in teachers' performance appraisal.	80	1.38	.513	.057
12	Teachers participate in the decision made on Establishing teachers evaluation criteria	80	1.31	.565	.063
V	<b>decision on planning and time allocation for school activities</b>				
13	Teachers participate in a decision made on the Scheduling timetable	80	1.28	.477	.053
14	Teachers participate in the decision made on planning work schedules for the departments	80	1.33	.471	.053
15	teachers are participating in the decision made on planning the classrooms and other facilities for the school	80	1.44	.570	.064
	(Grand result)	80	80	1.41	0.54

As it can be seen from the responses to items 1, 2, and 3 of Table 4.4, most teachers disagreed that teachers participate in decisions regarding rules and regulations of the school, such as participation in decisions made on school plans, disciplinary guidelines, and procedures for evaluating school performance.

In addition, items 4 and 5 show that most teachers disagreed. Teachers participate in the decision-making on student discipline guidelines, such as participating in the decision-making on student awarding procedures and participating in the decision-making on the preparation of guidance for students' guidance and counselling.

Moreover, items 6, 7, 8, and 9 show that most teachers disagree. Budgeting for schools and income-generating activities such as teachers' participation in the decision made on determining school expenditure priorities, in the decision made on budgeting for the department, in the decision made on determining means of income generation, and in the decision made on allocating materials and equipment to the subject department.

Whereas items 10, 11, and 12 show that most teachers disagree, teacher's career structure and development, such as participating in decisions made on planning a teacher's development

program in your school, participating in decisions made on participating in teachers' performance appraisal, and participating in decisions made on establishing teacher's evaluation criteria,

Similarly, items 13, 14, and 15 show that most teachers disagree with teachers' participation in decisions on planning and time allocation for school activities, such as: participating in the decision made on the scheduling timetable, participating in the decision made on planning work schedule for the departments, and participating in the decision made on planning the classrooms and other facilities for the school.

As it can be seen from table 4.4, the response of the teachers was given. The grand mean result was 1.41, with a standard deviation of 0.54. Thus, this shows that teachers disagreed that they were participating in the DM of the school.

Moreover, the statistical significance of the results was secured from SPSS Version 26 (see next section), and the distribution of one sample t-test result of the teacher's on the extent of teachers' participation in decision-making on school issues is given in table 4.6 below.

*Table 4. 5: the distribution of responses of the teachers on the extent of teachers' participation in decision-making on the school issue.*

<b>One-Sample Test</b>						
	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Teachers participate in decisions regarding school plan	63.520	79	.000	1.313	1.21	3.42
Teachers participate in decisions that relate to rules disciplinary guidelines, etc	61.581	79	.000	1.425	1.31	3.54
Teachers participate in a decision made on procedures in evaluating school	56.097	79	.000	1.413	1.29	3.53
Do teachers participate in the	64.006	79	.000	1.300	1.20	3.40

decision made on students awarding procedures?						
Teachers participate in the decision made on the preparation of guidance for students guidance & counseling	63.097	79	.000	1.325	1.22	3.43
Teachers participate in the decision made on Determining school expenditure priorities	56.117	79	.000	1.400	1.28	3.52
Teachers participate in decisions made on Budgeting for the department	59.496	79	.000	1.338	1.23	3.45
Teachers participate in a decision made on Determining means of income-generating	58.784	79	.000	1.388	1.27	3.50
Teachers participate in a decision made on Allocating materials and equipment to the subject department	56.168	79	.000	1.388	1.27	3.51
Teachers participate in a decision made on planning teachers development program in your school	59.255	79	.000	1.350	1.24	3.46
Teachers participate in the decision made on Participating in teachers' performance appraisal.	58.901	79	.000	1.375	1.26	3.49
Teachers participate in the decision made on Establishing teachers evaluation criteria	52.471	79	.000	1.313	1.19	3.44
Teachers participate in a decision made on the Scheduling timetable	61.452	79	.000	1.275	1.17	3.38
Teachers participate in the decision made on planning work schedules for the departments	63.097	79	.000	1.325	1.22	3.43
teachers are participating in the decision made on planning the classrooms and other facilities for	53.919	79	.000	1.438	1.31	3.56



the school						
<b>grand result</b>	<b>59.98</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>1.31</b>	<b>3.23</b>

As indicated in table 4.5, the grand result t-value was 59.98, and the mean difference result was 1.38. Whereas, the minimum and maximum values were 3.21 and 3.58, respectively. Most teachers disagreed with the teacher’s participation in decisions on rules and regulations of the school, on student discipline guidelines, on school budgeting and income-generating, on the teacher’s career structure and development, as well as on planning and time allocation for school activities.

Moreover, the findings confirmed the findings of other studies. Schneider (1984, P.57) found that”... teachers reported a low level of actual involvement in issues related to the following: the administrative and organizational structure of the school; procedures to be used for teacher evaluation;... setting and revising school goals; and establishing school policies.” Similarly, Asefa (2005, p.51) has reported that “the present extent of teachers’ participation in general school policy areas seems relatively low.”

The findings from the principals' interviews were also confirmed by the analysis obtained from Table 4.2. The principals’ sample schools said that:

Primarily, the policy was made at the national level and forwarded to the school for discussion. At the school level, some rules, and regulations may be derived from the general policy guidelines by the school board and PTA. However, teachers were invited for discussion to strengthen those rules and regulations already established by the school board and PTA.

From the principals’ views, it is possible to say that teachers participated not for the sake of setting rules and regulations, but for the sake of listening to what was already being made by the school board and PTA. However, the meaningful participation of teachers in this aspect can be explained by sharing their views through different mechanisms before the rules and regulations were drafted by the school board and PTA.

The absence of decisions made that related to school policy, rules, and regulations by teachers in the minute documents of the teaching staff and management of the school also confirmed the finding of Table 2. The writer of this paper believes that it is of prime importance for a school to make policies in order to create a conducive teaching-learning

atmosphere. Moreover, setting policies, rules, and regulations at the school in cooperation with those who are going to implement them has greater advantages for the success of school performance. The making of better policies, rules, and regulations at the school level largely depends on the degree of participation on the part of those who are affected by them, especially teachers and students. However, making policies, rules, and regulations by individual teachers was found to be low in the sample schools. This indicates that the level of recognition given to the contributions of teachers by the school principal is low. Principals' empowerment is a prerequisite for providing quality education at the level of the secondary school. McCay (2001) confirms that, today's argument on empowerment among educators has been focused on principal empowerment. Many authors (e.g. Day et al., 2010; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2006; MacBeath & Cheng, 2008; Mulford & Silins, 2003, 2009 quoted by Hallinger, 2010) stated that leadership for learning pronounces methods used by school principals to effect a variety of significant school outcomes with a particular focus on student learning. However, while there is little disagreement about the vital role played by school principals in most countries, limited attention has been given to providing principals with the opportunity and support needed to become more autonomous and empowered in assuming their professional responsibilities (Maxfield & Flumerfelt, 2009). With regard to the importance of the literature review, Cunningham and Cordeiro (2009) state that it helps to clarify what is already known so that opinions, values and experiences can be communicated and shared. Therefore, studying a range of literature enables the researcher to identify the gaps in current knowledge and opinions about empowering public secondary school principals to perform instructional leadership roles. Instructional leadership constitutes those actions that principals take, or delegate to others, to promote growth in student learning.

The importance of leadership from woreda/district to regional levels and/or in schools has led to a closer examination of the principal's role and a better understanding of what instructional leaders do (Blase & Blase, 2004; Hoyle, Bjork, Collier, & Glass, 2005). Instructional leadership involves the strategic application of knowledge to solve context specific problems and to achieve the purposes of schooling through others. Although the problems that face instructional leaders are numerous and the contexts in which instructional leaders operate diverse, Day et al. (2010) have made the argument that effective instructional leadership can be essentially described in terms of eight broad dimensions: defining vision, values & direction; improving conditions for teaching & learning; redesigning and enriching the curriculum; restructuring the organisation: redesigning roles & responsibilities; enhancing

teacher quality (including succession planning); building relationships outside the school community; enhancing teaching & learning; and building relationships inside the school community. These dimensions of effective instructional leadership are thoroughly discussed in chapter Three (see pp. 86-91, par. 3.4). Thus, the opportunities gained from the empowerment of PSSPs are changes that build trust in schools, motivate them into taking risks for innovative decisions for school success, and promote teamwork for problem solving (Trus & Razbadauskas, 2011). Besides, Bernato, in Shah et al., (2014) states that instructional guidance is utilising national, state, and district standards by the school in planning and implementing instructional programmes. Today's school leaders are required to be social, political, and instructional leaders to be empowered and influential.

This understanding helps them to see beyond the walls of schools to search for opportunities that bring a positive change at multiple levels (Short, Rinehart & Eckley, 1999). The principal as the head of a school possesses a pivotal position that requires initiatives and skills for the day to day management of instructional processes. As a school leader, the principal must have foresight for effective, efficient and dynamic principles in handling matters between the school, staff and the host community.

Since schools are social organisations that can be managed by competent educational leader who has an ability to make a conducive school environment within which principals in the region are candidly fighting against challenges, acquire knowledge from fault, and increase significant, positive, and supportive comment regarding their effort, the possibility is augmented that principals are expected to develop an equivalent type of culture for the academic staff of their schools so that teachers in their part are able to perform the same in each of their teachinglearning activities (D'Auria in Bottoms & Fry (2009) .

### **4.3 The Extent Of Principals' Facilitate The Environment**

*Table 4. 3: response on the extent of principals' facilitate the environment*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>1</b>	Teachers have freedom to express their opinion	52	1.38	.530
<b>2</b>	Teachers Shared responsibility	52	1.46	.503
<b>3</b>	Teachers are provided incentives	52	1.35	.683

4	Decisions made independently by teachers is accepted	52	1.46	.503
5	Teachers are allowed cooperative /collaborative rule making	52	1.23	.546
6	Teachers are allowed to have voice in process of decision making	52	1.37	.486
7	Teachers have Transparency	52	1.46	.503
8	Teachers involve in the election of independent heads and unit leaders.	52	1.37	.561

As it can be seen from table 4.3, the responses to items 1, show that most respondents disagree with Teachers have freedom to express their opinion participating in decisions made on the rules of disciplinary guidelines, and participating in decisions made on the procedures for evaluating school performance.

Moreover, the response to items 2 shows that most respondents disagree. Teachers participate in Shared responsibility in decisions made on student discipline guidelines, such as participating in decisions made on student awarding procedures and participating in decisions made on the preparation of guidance for students' guidance and counselling.

In addition, the responses to items 3 show that most respondents disagree. Teachers are provided incentives priorities, budgeting for the department, determining ways to generate income, and allocating materials and equipment to the subject department.

Similarly, the responses to items 4 show that most respondents disagree. Decisions made independently by teachers is accepted such as participating in decisions made on planning a teacher's development program in your school, participating in decisions made on participating in teachers' performance appraisal and participating in decisions made on establishing teacher's evaluation criteria.

Moreover, the response to items 5 shows that most respondents disagree. Teachers are allowed cooperative /collaborative rule making on planning and time allocation for school activities, such as, participating in the decision made on the scheduling timetable, participating in the decision made on the Planning Work Schedule for the Departments, and teachers' participation in the decision made on planning the class rooms and other facilities for the school.

As shown in table 4.3, on all items, scores were rated far below the average by teachers. This shows that teachers claimed that the low extent of principals' roles have been played in sharing responsibility and providing incentives to teachers.

Moreover, regarding the response on Teachers are allowed to have voice in process of decision making, Teachers have Transparency, and Teachers involve in the election of independent heads and unit leaders. The respondents disagree on all these issues. Thus The response was that the grand mean result is 1.36 with a standard deviation of 0.56. Thus, this shows that the department heads agree that they are participating in the decision on the rules and regulations of the school.

The existence of written documents such as a format in which undisciplined students signed in front of their parents in the hands of home room teachers and unit-leaders confirmed these findings as well. Moreover, the availability of a minute document in the sample school in which teachers fully participated concerning students' affairs such as drop-out, students' seats, how to control undisciplined students, and conflicts resolved that existed between some teachers and undisciplined students, also confirmed the finding of Table 4.3. From the principals' points of view, the researcher believes that there are still some decision issues related to students that cannot be made by teachers. As the principal indicated, some heavy disciplinary problems can be solved through PTA by excluding teachers. To the extent of teachers' current participation in school budgeting and income generating, five factors were generated.

In general, as the study indicated, a limited degree of teachers' participation in school decision-making was observed. This may show that the schools did not properly utilize the potential and experience of their teachers. Moreover, without the teachers' involvement, there might be a possibility of reaching the wrong decision.

#### **4.4 Factors Affecting Teachers' Participation in SDM**

The third objective of this study was to investigate factors that affect teachers' participation in school decision-making. To succeed in this purpose, ten factors that possibly influence their involvement were identified and presented to both teachers and principals of the sampled schools. To this end, the respondents were kindly asked to report their response on a five-likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

As it can be seen from table 4.13, the responses of teachers to items 1, 2, 3, and 4 show that most high school teachers have shared responsibility, provision of incentives, accepted decisions made independently, and allowed cooperative to refuel.

*Table 4. 6: factors affecting Principals effort in facilitating environment teacher*

No.	Statements	N	M	SD
1	Teachers have sharing responsibility	52	1.46	.503
2	Teachers have Provision of incentives	52	1.35	.683
3	Teachers have to accept the decision made independently	52	1.46	.503
4	Teachers have Allowing cooperate refuel	52	1.43	.623

As it can be seen from table 4.14, the responses of teachers to items 1, 2, 3, and 4 show that most high school teachers have shared responsibility, provision of incentives, accepted decisions made independently, and allowed cooperative to refuel.

This indicated that teachers disagreed with the factors that affected or hindered teachers' participation in school decision-making; whereas, principals strongly agreed that these factors affect teachers' participation in decision-making in primary schools. The results obtained revealed the differences in opinion between the two groups of respondents.

This indicated that a lack of trust between teachers and principals is one of the major factors that hindered teachers' participation in secondary school decision-making. In this respect, the opinions of the two groups of respondents were conceded to each other.

As is the case in items, these differences may occur due to the reluctance of principals to admit their weakness.

From the overall results obtained, the following major findings were drawn: Currently, there are no uninviting policies or shortage of time that impact the wider involvement of teachers in secondary school decision-making. The major problem that negatively influences their participation is the mistrust that exists between teachers and principals. This might be a reason why opinion disparities were observed between them on most of the factors listed in the table. A number of paramount findings were obtained from an open-ended questionnaire concerning factors that hindered teachers' participation in secondary schools under the

sample study. Among them, the majority of teachers claimed that lack of motivation from society, lack of supervision, the principle's bias towards his/her relatedness, and language concerns were some of the factors that negatively affected their involvement.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study, draws conclusions arising from the findings, and makes recommendations for the next studies.

### **5.1 Summary of the Major Finding**

The study was designed to examine the teachers' participation in SDM in some selected secondary schools in the Buno Bedele Zone. To achieve this, it has the following basic questions raised:

- To what extent do teachers participate in decision-making?
- To what extent do school principals' facilitate the environment for teachers' involvement in school decision-making?
- What are the factors that affect teachers' participation in decision-making?

Moreover, the descriptive survey research design was employed for the detailed analysis of the data and the findings for the basic questions. The study was conducted in eleven secondary schools that were selected based on random sample techniques to provide fair representativeness. The subject of the study included 80 teachers, 52 department heads, and 7 principals from 7 schools. Information was thus obtained through Likert scale questionnaires and documents. Regarding the analysis of the data, IBM-SPSS Version 26 statistical tools were used. According to the data analysis, the following major findings were obtained:

The participation of teachers in deciding about policy, rules, and regulations; teachers' growth and development; school budget and means of generating income; and teachers' development and growth were found to be low. However, teachers' involvement in deciding student affairs and discipline, implementing school curriculum and instruction, and allocating school time was found to be relatively high.

The results of this study indicated that teachers participated most in school curriculum and instruction and least in school budgeting and income-generating activities. The extent of principals' efforts in facilitating the environment for more teachers' participation in decision-making was found to be low. That is, principals' efforts in providing support for teachers and establishing an environment of trust; incentives for their valuable participation; establishing and maintaining good interpersonal relationships between the school communities; and accepting decisions made independently by teachers were found to be low. The school



principals in the sample school were found to avoid criticism when teachers have an opportunity to participate in decision-making to increase their involvement.

The results of this study further revealed that there was a shortage of time that affected teachers' participation in decision-making. The results showed that the major problem that impacted their participation was the mistrust between teachers and principals. Moreover, the analysis of data from open-ended items indicated that lack of motivation, lack of supervision, principals' biases toward some replies, and language concerns were some of the factors that influenced their participation.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

In general, the final analysis of the results indicated that the extent of teachers' participation in school decision-making was found to be relatively low in the sample schools.

From the findings obtained in this study, it was found that the participation of teachers in deciding about policy, rules, and regulations; teacher growth and development; school budget and means of income generation; and school building effort was found to be low. However, teachers' involvement in deciding student affairs and discipline, implementing school curriculum and instruction, and allocating school time was found to be relatively high. In addition, in the educational system, without the involvement of teachers, there might be a possibility of reaching a wrong decision that may affect the school's performance. The findings of the study also indicated that teachers participated most in implementing school curriculum and instruction and least in school building efforts. This implied that there might be a misperception in identifying teachers' roles and responsibilities by both teachers and principals; i.e., they might consider the roles and responsibilities of teachers as teaching and learning activities only, and other activities of the school as the roles and responsibilities of the management of the school. The findings of this study also revealed that the extent of school principals' efforts in facilitating the environment for more teachers' involvement in decision-making was found to be low. From this finding, it was concluded that the school principals might lack the necessary leadership skills, knowledge, and attitude to attract teachers toward school decision-making. Lastly, it was found that mistrust between teachers and principals mainly affects teachers' participation in decision-making. This finding implied that principals might be professionally incompetent to establish and maintain trust between teachers and themselves. This is because none of the principals were qualified and/or trained in fields related to management.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusion, it was recommended that:

1. Teachers need to be encouraged to actively participate in decision-making in their schools to exploit their wide range of experience, expertise, and personal characteristics and capability. It is therefore essential to develop in secondary schools teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are necessary for effective participation in decision-making. As a result, it is advisable to train teachers through workshops and forums in the participative decision-making process for the success of teachers' involvement. Moreover, it is also advisable to provide proper orientation on the rights, duties, and responsibilities of individual teachers in each area of decision-making. Therefore, teachers become competent and skilful to participate in the areas that concern them and make the school efficient and effective in achieving its objectives.
2. The principals of the schools need to change their attitudes towards teachers and treat them as colleagues, free from bias in running their schools. It is also necessary for school principals to support teachers and establish an environment of trust; establish and maintain good interpersonal relationships in the school; and provide incentives for their valuable participation in decisions. For school principals to be successful, competent, and skilful in participating with teachers in decision-making and being effective and efficient in their workplace, it is better to train principals in educational leadership. Thus, it was recommended that principals' training in educational leadership be strengthened and continued both on and off-the-job.
3. Teachers form part of the stakeholders in the school. Hence, there is a need to carry out a similar study to investigate the position of other stakeholders, especially parents and students, among others, in relation to teachers' participation in decisions in secondary school.
4. It would also be good if other researchers conducted further research on the effect of teachers' participation in decision-making on school performance.

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# Appendix A

JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

## Questionnaire to Be Filled by Respondans

The objective of this questionnaire is to collect information about the participation of teachers in school decision making. The aim is to use these information/data to underline the importance of teachers' participation in school decision making and to make secondary school performance more effective and efficient for the improvement of quality education, particularly in Buno Bedele Zone,

Therefore, your cooperation in answering each question as thoughtfully and frankly as possible is highly required. All your responses are analyzed in statistical form, so that you are not identified by names. Besides, in order to ensure complete confidentiality you are kindly requested not to write your name anywhere on the questionnaire.

Your cooperation in taking the time to fill out the questionnaire is very much appreciated.

### PartI. Demographic Information

**Direction:** Indicate your answer by putting “√” mark in the given box and also write on the space provided.

➤ School Code \_\_\_\_\_

➤ Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

➤ Teaching experience: In this school \_\_\_\_\_; In other school \_\_\_\_\_; Total \_\_\_\_\_

➤ Qualification/Educational Back ground/

Certificate \_\_\_\_\_ Diploma \_\_\_\_\_ Bachelor Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Masters Degree \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part II. The extent of teachers' participation in decision-making**

**Direction:** The following items are some of the decision area in which teachers expected to be participated. Please, indicated the extent to which teachers' participate in your school; by putting “√” mark in the given box in front of each statement

**1 = strongly agree**

**2 = agree**

**3 = neutral**

**4 = disagree**

**5 = strongly disagree**

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Decision on, rules and regulations of the school</b>					
	Teachers participate in decision made on school plan					
	Teachers participate in decision made on the rules of disciplinary guide lines					
	Teachers participate in decision made on the procedures in evaluating school performance					
2	<b>Student affairs and discipline</b>					
	Teachers participate in decision made on student discipline guide lines					
	Teachers participate in decision made on students awarding procedures?					
	Teachers participate in decision made on preparation of guidance for students guidance & counseling					
3.	<b>School Budgeting and income generating</b>					
3.1	Teachers participate in decision made on Determining school expenditure priorities					
3.2	Teachers participate in decision made on Budgeting for the department					

3.3	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Determining means of income generating					
3.4	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Deciding budget allocation for instructional material					
<b>4.</b>	<b>Curriculum implementation and Instruction</b>					
4.1	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Evaluating how well your subject department is operating					
4.2	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Determining teaching methodologies					
4.3	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Developing procedures for assessing student achievement					
4.4	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Determining when and how instructional supervision can be delivered.					
4.5	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Allocating materials and equipment to subject department					
<b>5.</b>	<b>Teachers career structure and development</b>					
5.1.	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Deciding on staff promotion					
5.2.	Teachersparticipate in decision made on planning teachers development program in your school					
5.3.	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Participating in teachers' performance appraisal.					
5.4.	Teachersparticipate in decision made on Establishing teachers evaluation criteria					
<b>6.</b>	<b>decision on planning and time allocation for school activities</b>					



6.1.	Teachersparticipate in decision made on do you particilate in th e Scheduling time table					
	Teachersparticipate in decision made on planning work schedule for the departments					
6.3.	Teachersparticipate in decision made on planning the class rooms and other facilities for the school					

## ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between People	39.062	31	1.260		
Within People Between Items	2.695	4	.674	.814	.518
Residual	102.605	124	.827		
Total	105.300	128	.823		
Total	144.362	159	.908		

Grand Mean = 4.09