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IN COLLABORATION WITH

ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

THE SCHOOL MANAGER WE WANT: VOICES OF STAKEHOLDERS

By
Mazuba Hectoria

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Management at the University of Zambia in Collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

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DECLARATION

I, Mazuba Hectoria do hereby solemnly declare that this dissertation is my original work and that to the best of my knowledge it has not been submitted by any individual to this or any other University as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Degree of Masters of Education in Educational Management.

Signed..... Date.....

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Husband Cosmus, and children Memory, Mweendalubi, Bright and Mercy who missed me during the time I was away for studies and provided me with materials and resources to complete this study.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation authored by Mazuba Hectoria is hereby ratified as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Masters of Education Degree in Educational Management by the University of Zambia in Collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

Examiner's Signatures:

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated how views of stakeholders were embraced in school management, focusing on stakeholders' participation in decision making, factors affecting participation and effects of participation in decision making.

The analysis was based on the findings of the study conducted in six selected schools of Choma District on a representative sample (124) of stakeholders, teachers, pupils, general public and managers of schools, district and province. The results represented in graphs, tables and pie charts were analysed through coding, tabulation, assessing the means using percentage and explanations. Data was collected using structured questionnaire, interviews and focus groups discussions

The study showed that views of stakeholders were not adequately embraced in decision making process. Therefore, there is need to support capacity building for school managers, targeted orientation for stakeholders, and as well as supporting school committees with resources to establish and sustain existing committees. The results also act as a basis for further research work in future.

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ACRONYMS

ECZ – Examination Council of Zambia

PTA – Parents Teachers Association

SBM- Shared Decision Making

SDC – School Development Plan

SIP – School Improvement Plan

SPSS –Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.0.0 Overview

The study investigated how views of stakeholders were embraced in school management and administration. It focused on participation in decision making, implementation and monitoring. Management practices and style of school managers influenced stakeholders' participation in decision making process. In this study, the term 'voices' was used in the context of participation.

1.2.0.0 Background of the Study

School management and administration has evolved. Management and administration are at times used synonymously to refer to what school managers do in their daily routine at schools. However, in other instances the concepts have been used to denote two different functions that are most likely to be performed by two different offices, thus a manager and an administrator. For this study, the investigation concentrated on what school managers do in their daily routine activities with focus on decision making (Chen, 2011).

With the view to strengthen school management and administration, the Zambian Government in collaboration with partner organizations has since independence (1964) undertaken policies and reforms in the education sector. The formulation and implementation of the 2002 Decentralization policy was intended to delegate management roles, responsibilities and accountability from central to provincial, district, school and community levels. In addition, education sector decentralization was aimed at increasing stakeholders' participation in school based decision making through engagement and empowerment.

Schools in Zambia, regardless of whether they are government or non-government managed have the school manager as the chief executive officer. Among the functions of the school managers are planning, organizing, controlling and coordinating school activities. The specific management functions of the school manager involve management of material and human resources, public relations and communication, supervision and staff development, and determination of school mission, goals and objectives. Through planning with stakeholders' participation, school managers are able to come up with policies, schedules, procedures, budgets and regulations for smooth running of schools

In addition, school managers have the responsibility to ensure that government regulations are adhered to and implemented accordingly. It is also the responsibility of the school manager to make decisions for improving teaching and learning, and manage physical environment. In addition, school managers are responsible for ensuring that school buildings, furniture, equipment and other facilities are well maintained, assess teachers' performance regularly and evaluate the curricular objectives as well as school projects (Murphy,1997).

Faced with such increased roles and responsibilities, school managers have shown that there are not capable of making decision without active participation of teachers, pupils and parents as stakeholders. Accordingly, stakeholders are expected to participate in decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school activities. For instance, stakeholders participate in teaching and learning, resource use, physical environment and projects management.

To that effect, stakeholders' participation in decision making, implementation and monitoring enhance school performance management. To Walker (2000), decision making in school management is about making choices by identifying problems, gathering information and assessing alternative resolutions. Through step-by-step decision-making process, more deliberate, thoughtful decisions are made by organizing relevant information and defining alternatives.

Considering that decision-making process is a multi-dimension activity, the involvement of stakeholders' increase chances of choosing the most satisfying alternatives or solutions. Gulkan (2008) indicated that well-managed schools promote stakeholders' participation in decision making such as formulating school policies, regulations, procedures, and schedules which result into increased pupils' academic performance. However, the decisions made need to be capable of being implemented, whether on a personal or organizational level. In view of that, school managers need to be committed to the decision personally, and/or persuade others to reach consensus (Neil, 1996).

As Neil explained, consensus decision-making calls for a group decision-making process in which group members develop and agree to support a decision in the best interest of the school. Consensus decision-making is thus concerned with the process of deliberating and finalizing a decision and taking into account legal, social, economic and political effects of applying this process. Consensus decision making is an alternative to commonly practiced group decision making processes. As expected, school managers are supposed to promote group decision

making which is proven to be accepted by stakeholders. Although stakeholders can participate in decision making process, the question still remains to what extent they are involved in school management and administration.

The conditions of teachers' working life are influenced by the administration and leadership provided by school managers, and it is widely assumed that school leadership directly influences the effectiveness of teachers and the achievement of pupils' academic performance (Murphy, 1997). In Zambia as elsewhere in the world, school managers face challenges due to rising expectations for schools, which constantly require decision making.

As countries aim to transform their educational systems, the roles of school managers and related expectations have changed radically. School managers are no longer expected merely to be good managers, but effective school leadership is increasingly viewed as key to large-scale education reform and to improved educational outcomes. To help cope up with increasing demands, school managers have used different fora to strengthen decision making through stakeholders' participation.

According to Morrison (1997), participation in decision-making process takes different forms, and among the commonly used form is the committees' system. School committees range from academic committees to management committees. For instance, the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) is one of the management committees established in schools. The PTA committee usually comprise the school manager as secretariat, teachers, parents and even pupils in some instances. According to Henry (2016), school committees are formed with the view of not only assisting the school manager with school governance matters, but as a democratization gesture within the education system as well.

Mintzberg (1976) showed that democratic management promote divergent views and restore ownership of school activities. School managers that involve stakeholders in decision- making process achieve school goals and objective. Accordingly, democratic leadership sometimes referred to as participative leadership ensures that every member of an organization or association take part in decision-making process.

The advantages of having a democratic school manager is that teachers, pupils and parents are consulted or participate in decision-making process hence feel satisfied, aware of what is happening in the school and thus take interest in teaching and learning, and that they get the full opportunity to utilize their capacities. However, where power is not centralized, the school

manager suffers from delay in decision-making as less competent individuals cannot be used (Caldwell, 1997).

In order to build capacity within schools, the Zambian Government embarked on a number of programs aimed at developing management and administrative skills of school managers. To improve skills of school managers in decision making, implementation and monitoring, the Zambian Government has enacted legislature that encouraged teachers and school managers to go for in-service training to up-grade their qualifications particularly in management studies.

The in-service training offered at Chalimbana College included modules ran by the Ministry of Education. The aim of such programs were to assist with the development of management and administrative skills among teachers and school managers. Within the same context, the Zambian Government in collaboration with both public and private universities launched the Bachelor of Education in Educational Administration. This is a degree program specifically for school managers, which is aimed at equipping them with educational management and administrative skills.

In addition, the Zambian Government has made a mandatory requirement that all school managers should have 5 Ordinary level subjects in addition to a teaching qualification. It was envisaged that an improvement in educational qualifications would enhance their understanding of management and administration of schools.

Despite all these efforts, reports indicate that there is an increase in cases of schools' mismanagement. The problem is attributed to decision making, implementation and monitoring of school activities. Recent press reports in Zambia have shown that school managers are being forced to leave their schools due to mismanaging. To investigate and understand how views of stakeholders are embraced in school based decision making, the study was undertaken in Choma District of Southern Province. Choma is the Provincial Headquarter of Southern Province and has more than 180 schools located both in urban and rural areas.

1.3.0.0 Statement of Problem

Policy implementation is one challenge that the Zambian Government seems to encounter with many public policies enacted over the years. The National Decentralization Policy that was enacted in 2002 and launched in 2004 has failed to reach its implementation potential to date. Education sector decentralization was intended to promote stakeholders' participation in decision making process. However, current press reports do not suggest that schools are

effectively managed and administered, an indication that decision making process in schools need improvement. To Gulkan (2008), the school managers make unilateral decisions with limited teachers involvement. These problems affecting decision making have raised concerns in different circles. Among other concerns is whether school managers are not over-burdened by duties and responsibilities that require the expertise of many different people (Bennet 2013)

School managers that have attempted to handle both management and administration functions without stakeholders' participation in decision-making have often been cited for mismanagement (Jeynes 2003). The Times of Zambia newspaper (August, 2017) carried a story showing teachers and students on Copperbelt Province demanding removal of their school manager accused of not involving teachers and pupils in decision-making process. Macgomary (2016) stated that, students' riotous behaviour is often triggered by management's failure to embrace divergent views and inability to meet needs.

The current status where school managers rarely embrace views of stakeholders is likely to continue unless drastic measures are found. This study was undertaken in selected schools in Choma District

1.4.0.0 Purpose of Study

The purpose of study was to systematically investigate the place of the views of stakeholders in school management and administration. The intention was to establish the extent to which the voices of teachers, pupils and parents as stakeholders were embraced and contributed to school management.

Previous studies have shown that active participation of stakeholders in decision-making process resulted into achievement of school objectives. Shane (2014) in his study; "An Investigation of Stakeholders Participation and Learning in two schools within the Seychelles ECO-School Program" revealed that stakeholders' participation in school programs increased students pass rate, ultimately contributing to achievement of school goals and objectives. He indicated that teachers, students and parents were actively involved in teaching and learning, resource use and management, and physical surrounds management of the school.

According to Shane, learning and teaching was not limited to teachers and students but also integrated parents. In line with Shane's findings, the study was undertaken to investigate how school managers embrace views of stakeholders in decision-making process.

1.5.0.0 Objectives of Study

To investigate how views of stakeholders were embraced in schools' decision making process.

1.5.1.0 Specific Objectives

- i. To document stakeholders' participation in decision making.
- ii. To determine factors affecting stakeholders' participation in decision making.
- iii. To establish the effects of stakeholders' participation on school management

1.6.0.0 Research Questions

- i. How do stakeholders participate in decision making in school management?
- ii. What are the factors affecting stakeholders' participation in decision-making process?
- iii. How does stakeholders' participation in decision-making contribute to school management?
- iv. How can Ministry of Education strengthen stakeholders' participation in school management and administration?

1.7.0.0 Significance of the study

A lot of literature has been written about education management and administration. Besides, there is enough documented programs and policies for improving school management and administration. However, the current status of schools' management in Zambia does not appear to correlate with existing publications; an indication that there are gaps in existing decision making literature.

In view of that, the importance of the study was to contribute to decision making literature in order to improve decision making, implementation and monitoring of school activities. In addition, recommendations from the study would help policy makers, curriculum developers and educationists to develop and implement strategies that increased cooperation between school authorities and the communities.

1.8.0.0 Scope and Limitation

The study to investigate how the views of the stakeholders were embraced in school management and administration was undertaken for over six months targeting schools in Choma district. The limitation to the study included difficulties to access key respondents; senior managers who were usually busy and out of their offices. Further, some schools in

Choma district are located in hard to reach places making it difficult to travel and visit target schools. The other factor was time constraint arising from a busy work schedule at the place of work.

1.9.0.0 Definition of Terms

Decision Making- This is a process of making a choice from a number of alternatives to achieve a desired result. Decision-making is regarded as the most important process among the management process (Gulkan, 2008). Decision making problems are very common in a lot of disciplines, including educational management. Most of the decisions carried out in an educational problem are taken from an intuitive point of view or only with some very basic information

Parents -These are mothers, father, uncles or aunties of the pupils enrolled at a school. Parents' roles are critical and are involved in decision making attending meetings, assuming leadership roles, contributing funds or materials, paying school fees, working in projects and assisting pupils write their assignments

Parents Teachers Association - A committee in a school comprising school Manager, teachers, parents and even pupils. The roles of the committee are planning, organizing and coordinating school activities. The committee also act as a forum for identifying management and administration gaps, reviewing performance of pupils, coming up with infrastructure projects, and structuring school fees.

Pupils - The learners in the school. Apart from interacting with teachers and school manager in classroom, they also interact in out-door activities such as managing physical surroundings, sport activities, attending meetings, and assuming leadership roles.

School Manager - The head of the school responsible and accountable for planning, supervision, controlling, organizing and coordinating. The School Manager organizes and coordinate school activities through the involvement of stakeholders' in decision making. The School Manager also interacts with teachers, pupils and parents in class work, meetings, sporting, and physical environment activities. Through active stakeholders' participation, the school Managers are able to provide quality education services through implementation of quality decision.

School Management and Administration - The planning, organization, supervision, controlling and coordination of school activities coupled with implementation of policies, plans, decisions, rules and regulations.

Stakeholders - individuals with interest in and participating in school management. The major stakeholders in the education sector are teachers, pupils and parents.

Stakeholders' participation – Teachers, pupils and parents as stakeholders getting involved in learning and teaching, resource use and management, management of physical environment, managing school projects, school meetings and leadership roles. Active participation of stakeholders in decision making result into achievement of school objectives.

Targeted Orientation – Form of capacity building designed to equip teachers and community volunteers such as PTA executive members with skills and knowledge necessary to ensure their effectiveness and efficiency participation in school management.

Teachers - The persons trained and providing classroom and out-door education service to learners. Teachers are responsible for teaching learners, giving assignments, test and results, study tours, sporting activities, attending meetings, assuming leadership roles and managing physical environment. Their roles are critical for the school to perform well and achieve school mission, goals and objectives.

Voices – Participation of stakeholders through providing divergent views.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0.0.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.0.0 Introduction

Decision making is *sine qua non* to school management and administration because a school, like all formal organizations, is basically a decision-making structure (Adair, 2000). Decision making is a process that guides actions. Decisions are based on the beliefs, values and previous experiences of individuals. School managers must know themselves, know why they choose particular paths, know whom to involve, and know which particular decision-making model to use. Today, researchers and theorists know that those at the top cannot accurately gather or predict all alternatives. They know that followers deserve to be involved, and therefore, the first decision is for school managers to decide what level of stakeholders' participation is most effective.

Participation in decision-making is more than just a programme that concerns teachers and learners alone, but also parents and other community members (Emille, 2011). A partnership established between the school and stakeholders creates a conducive learning and teaching environment and also enhance support to school. Sidhu (2012) indicates that success of a school manager and that of a school depends on the relations that school managers cultivate and maintain with stakeholders in school management and administration.

2.2.0.0 Decision-Making Structure

To operationalize school-based decision making, structures at the school level need to be implemented to facilitate the involvement of key stakeholders in the decision making process. Once the school manager has determined that stakeholders should be involved in deciding, the next question becomes how the process should proceed. Mintzberg (1976) suggest five decision-making structures; group consensus, group majority, group advisory, individual advisory and unilateral decision.

Under group consensus, the school manager involves participants in the decision making, then the group decides. All group members share equally as they generate and evaluate a decision, but total consensus is required before a decision can be made. Whereas in group majority, the school manager involves participants in the decision making, then the group decides by majority rule.

With group advisory, the school manager solicits the opinions of the entire group, discusses the implications of group suggestions, then makes a decision that may or may not reflect stakeholders' desires. Further, under the individual advisory, the school manager consults with stakeholders individually who have expertise to inform the decision, then makes a decision that may or may not reflect their opinions. Yet with unilateral decision, the school manager makes the decision without consulting or involving stakeholders

According to Gulkan (2008), schools embracing shared decision-making typically develop councils consisting of representative stakeholders in the school, such as teachers, parents, support personnel, and managers. The school's governance structure is supported by guidelines that specify representation, terms of membership, council size, meeting format, and delineated lines of authority. Frequently, site councils further disperse involvement through the use of subcommittees. Subcommittees allow greater numbers of teachers, pupils and parents to participate in the formal decision-making process and reduce the overall burden of extended involvement of others.

In addition to decision-making governance councils, schools that embrace shared decision making understand that reaching collective agreement and consensus around difficult decisions require extended discussions, off-site meetings, and collective planning. Thus, schools that engage in shared decision-making at an authentic level set aside time for teachers to meet and places for them to congregate and talk. In addition, school schedules are often redesigned to facilitate teacher interaction by structuring common planning periods.

According to Hemmati (2002), system of committee is an important structure to participative decision making. However, committees should only be set up as and when needed with a frame and clear terms of reference. Unless well managed, they become 'talking shops', do not achieve their aims and serve to frustrate rather than motivate. It is important that a range of committees covers every aspect of school life and that they are led by competent teachers. Much time can be lost and participants can be demotivated through an inefficient system of committees (Bartol, 2007).

Setting up committees that directly relate to school management is good practice as it enhances planning (O'Hair, 1997). School committees such as Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and Educational Boards enable parents to act as core providers of education through monitoring, and being accountable for availability of educational resources, initiating and implementing

projects. The PTA provides a forum where the school manger and teachers explain school programs, gain support of parents, and thus help to ensure their success.

According to Zinth (2005), PTAs are an important decision making forum to solicit financial and material support essentially for school improvement. Therefore, the need for cooperation between the school and its teachers on one hand, and home and parents on the other, cannot be overemphasised. This cooperation is not only likely to be beneficial to the school, but also essential to the welfare of pupils. According to Hemmati (2002), it is evident that the decision making structure of schools which encouraged creation of committees has evolved over time and is largely taken for granted.

2.3.0.0 Participation in Decision Making

School-based decision-making is a concept based on the fundamental principle that individuals who are affected by the decision, possess expertise regarding the decision, and are responsible for implementing the decision, should be involved in making the decision. This concept often is attached to the broader school-system reform efforts of decentralization and school-based management (SBM), where decision-making authority is shifted from the district to the local school level. Some educators use the terms shared decision-making and school-based management interchangeably; others see shared decision-making as a component of SBM or decentralization (Chen, 2011).

In general, the goal of school-based decision-making is to empower teachers, pupils and parents by providing authority, flexibility, and resources to solve the educational problems particular to their schools (David, 2007). These propositions recognize that those closest to the technical core in education systems, because of their access to information concerning pupils' diverse characteristics, needs, learning styles, and performance levels, are better positioned to make decisions about educational programs than those farther removed from the teaching and learning process. Thus, decisions concerning curricula, instructional technologies, and other school initiatives will be most effective and enduring when carried out by those who feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for those decisions.

The three areas of decision-making in school based include; budget, personnel, and curriculum. Regarding school finances, under school-based decision-making models, schools receive either a lump sum budget or some portion of the district budget from which they may make decisions regarding personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, and professional development. Although budget authority implies a new level of autonomy,

administrative personnel expenditures account for the largest amount with few discretionary kwachas actually remain for other school-level allocation. Therefore, administrative expenditures and decisions regarding staffing structures are key to schools making decisions that might substantively affect the school's operation and effectiveness.

In terms of personnel decisions, schools are afforded flexibility and the power to determine how best to staff their schools. Personnel decisions typically fall in two areas: determining staffing needs based on the school's mission and educational plan and selecting people particularly non-teaching staff to fill the positions. Schools are afforded the latitude to decide whether their personnel funds are best spent on teachers, instructional aides, specialists, or clerical support. Once determinations are made regarding staffing needs, schools are actively engaged in the selection of new school support personnel.

In the third decision area, decisions regarding the curriculum and instructional strategies are determined at the school level within a framework of district or national goals, while attending to the school's unique mission and needs. School-level personnel such as teachers draw on their professional expertise and localized knowledge in making decisions that affect the school's educational program and instructional system. Teachers monitor the effectiveness of their programs and their pupils' academic performance. Decisions pertaining to budgeting, staffing, and the instructional program are often restricted and controlled by district policies regarding matters such as class size, tenure, hiring, firing, assignment, curriculum initiatives, textbooks, and assessment procedures.

In a school or a team, there are basically two approaches to decision making. The first is the authoritarian approach where the school manager or team leader makes a decision based on his own knowledge or experience and communicate his decision to the group and await their acceptance. The second being the group approach where a group of people tend to make the decision together by analyzing the different alternatives that fits their objective.

Some studies came up with the research that in an Authoritarian approach, the leader spends five minutes to make a decision, thirty minutes to communicate his decision and another 30minutes for the group to accept while a group approach spends 30 minutes to analyze and decide on the best option. Therefore, the group approach is more encouraged as group members tend to appreciate ideas they think of and have more zeal in achieving goals set by their own initiative than when decisions are being taken on their behalf. Bush (2003) argued that the school mangers can have overlapping management styles which can include democratic, autocratic and laissez faire with each style having an influence on pupils' outcomes

and how teachers respond to leadership. In democratic society, a school which allows participation in its decision-making process by all of its stakeholders could be considered democratic. However, the school manager being responsible for what goes wrong with decision made can change where need arise. Therefore, it is important that school managers should lead in a way that is appropriate to the school culture and context that they are given opportunities for management support training, and that their performance be appraised by school inspectors and other bodies that provide on-site monitoring of school management quality (Bartol, 2007).

2.4.0.0 Teachers, Pupils and Parents Participation in Decision Making

Duke (1990) indicated that teachers have a lot of functions that require decision making. As in decision making, teachers need to plan their lessons adequately for effective teaching and learning in order to improve pupils' pass rate. Besides, they decide and design test items, marking and reporting results. To Kelly (1992), the more opportunities given to teachers to participate in decision making, the greater is likely to be their sense of commitment and ownership of school programs.

Hemmati (2002) explains that teachers and parents' involvement in school board meetings, PTA meetings and sporting activities contribute to improved pupils' pass rate, resource use and management, physical environment management and teachers retention. Another important area of decision making where the school manager must involve teachers and delegate some authority and responsibilities is in organizing subject's departments or year groups. Further, with the view to increase teachers' involvement in decision making process, the school manager recommends the appointment of heads of departments among them.

Similarly, with effective school administration, the school manager works with teachers to decide, design and prepare curricula, establish budgets and ensure that school outcomes meet government standards (Bartol, 2007). Further, he explains that effective school administration ensures that teachers and parents participate in formulating and implementing policies and procedures, setting aims and standards, drafting and interpreting regulation and dealing with queries and complaints procedures, maintaining high levels of quality assurance including course evaluation, purchasing goods and equipment and processing invoices.

In addition, high performing schools ensures that teachers and parents are involved in organising and facilitating a variety of educational or social activities, managing budgets and ensuring financial systems are followed and managing pupils' services such as guidance programs. Parents participation is further promoted through working on committees including

academic boards and task groups. Gann (1998) argue that lack of parents' involvement in decision making affect the school outcomes.

Pupils participate in decision making process of the school. For instance, class prefects are usually appointed to help the school management set standards of behaviour and supervise other pupils whilst the teacher is not present. They can also perform a variety of tasks from keeping resources in order, organizing class teams, collecting and distributing work and books and delivering messages. They are often linked to school councils as the elected members where they participate in decision making (Musaazi, 1982).

Further, involvement of pupils in deciding the effects of programs, classes, activities and projects are avenues that can promote pupils' voices in powerful ways. Through such decision making avenues enable pupils learn that their opinions are important and their experiences are valid indicators of success. As Kelly (1992) indicated, pupils also participate in creating intentional, strategic plans for an array of activities including curriculum, building constructions and extra-curriculum activities such as managing environment, sporting and school committees.

Gamage (2003) argues that making rules in classrooms is not the only way to engage pupils in decision-making. Pupils can participate in formal and informal decision-making such as being school board members, education committee members and in many different roles in the school. Considering that pupils are in closer touch with each other through peer interaction than teachers are with them, no school can succeed without involving pupils in some of the decision-making processes and even in general management of the school. Marshall (1992) states that as active leaders in schools and education agencies, pupils can facilitate, teach, guide, direct and otherwise lead youths, adults and children in variety of ways. In addition, when they research, plan, write and evaluate education rules, regulations, laws and other policies, pupils as policy-makers can enrich, substantiate, enliven and impact the outcomes of policies and school outcomes.

Accordingly, pupils' participation in decision-making is particularly desirable in the field of extra-curricular activities, both sporting and in the organization of clubs and societies. Although teachers need to be appointed to serve as leaders of clubs, societies and associations in the school, as far as possible their day-to-day organization is left in the hands of pupils themselves, with their own leaders and officers to liaise with the teachers for guidance

(Gamage, 2003). To that effect, pupils have to be involved in school management because it releases some of the burden on school manager and their teachers.

2.5.0.0 Decentralised Decision Making

The aim of the decentralising decision making was to promote public participation in institutions of learning and increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Besides, the policy was intended to reducing the direct role of central government administration in delivering of services. To that effect, decentralisation of educational management and administration as outlined in Statutory Instrument no 87 of 1992 and 70 of 1993 stipulated the creation of School Development Committees (SDC) in Government schools in order to bring change in schools.

Decision making is a process of making a choice from a number of alternatives to achieve a desired result (Gulkan, 2008). The Zambian Governments has introducing a range of policies and strategies aimed at improving the delivery of education services. One such strategy was to decentralize education decision making by increasing parental and community involvement in schools.

Decentralizing decision-making authority to parents and communities' fosters demand and ensures that schools provide the social and economic benefits that best reflect the priorities and values of those local communities (Chen, 2011). Concerned with such issues as granting greater power and authority to local communities as well as diffusing state authority and increasing organizational efficiency, the decentralization movements saw the devolution of authority as an end to meet political and administrative goal (Walker, 2000).

A school manager may include others in a decision process involving an issue that is relevant to them and that they have the expertise to make, instead of making the decision unilaterally. Such action is referred to in the research literature as participatory decision making. Participatory decision making, also referred to as shared, collaborative, or group decision making, focuses on decision processes that involve others. In education, participatory decision making is based on the idea that active involvement of teachers, parents, or community members in school decisions will lead to improved school performance (Levacic, 1998).

Researches done on real problems and needs of the education system have become more and more closed to the practice, even though the information sent as feed-back from the level of schools, classes etc. does not reach the policy- and decision-makers through its institutional

way, namely through county inspectorates. On the other hand, some of the civil organizations, such as committees of the parents, pupils and local authorities have day-by-day more implied in solving all kind of problems of the schools (Neil, 1996).

An education system must be always connected with the local community and less controlled from a distance through decisions of some institutions, such as scholar inspectorates and the Ministry of Education. The local authority may be focused to school needs and may take into consideration the organizational culture within each school partly. Considering the authorities' intention to transfer the responsibilities, resources, the general and financial management, to schools and the local community, some changes in the decision-making process must be done.

According to Sandra (2001), despite various arguments advanced about educational decentralization, there is still need to agree on an ideal version of decentralization. This explains why success or failure in implementation tend to be context based and mostly influenced by a number of factors such as the availability of financial resources. The adoption of decentralization decision making has in certain instances led to positive changes especially in participation and transparency both at the district and school level.

Gumboh (2007), in his scholarly Research Paper 'Decentralization Policy Implementation in Zambia: Reality or Mere Political Rhetoric?' indicated that decentralisation decision making has not been fully implemented. The argument advanced were that government's aim to fast track service delivery improvement in basic schools through citizen participation was not achieved. Among the reason sighted were leadership attitude at local level and inadequate resources such as staffing, materials and finances for school improvement. Overtime, it has also become clear that decentralization of responsibilities to local level was proving difficult for its objectives to be achieved.

Despite decision making process short comings, Sandra (2001) argued that decentralisation decision making has given powers to local authority level which resulting into local control of staff, construction and control of physical infrastructure of schools. In a paper produced by the Ministry of Education in 2005 (A strategy for decentralisation), the ministry decided to maintain its professionalism by way of adopting or taking on board all five components of decentralisation which included devolution, delegation, deregulation, decentralisation and privatisation. To ensure adherence to policy direction, Higgins (2008) recommended that the

school managers needed to utilise powers invested in them and promote active stakeholders' participation in decision making.

2.6.0.0 Factors Affecting Participation in Decision Making

The successful implementation of school-based decision-making is affected by a number of organizational factors and institutional constraints including; clarity of purpose and access to information, power and authority relationships, administrative support and the changing role of central office personnel, and policies at the district, province and national levels. These issues taken singularly or collectively affect the long-term effectiveness of decentralizing decision making at the school level (Walker, 2000).

The first factor is clarity of purpose and access to information. Schools that are active in decision-making have a vision statement that focuses their decision making process on the technical core of schooling—teaching and learning. Determining the school's vision is a school wide effort affording stakeholders the opportunity to understand the power of their commitment to decisions they make. Those involved in decision-making understand the necessity of using school-based and student-centred data to inform their decisions. In districts where data are limited or not disaggregated at the school level, the decision making process is limited and curtailed to issues that hold less promise of impact on the school's educational program.

The other factor is power and authority relationships. Frequently, when decision-making authority is delegated, the degree of authority given to the site is often limited and ambiguous. In schools where there is confusion over decision-making authority, issues addressed at the school level tend to focus on secondary-level issues, such as school climate, scheduling, safety, and parent involvement, rather than on primary concerns, such as instructional programs and strategies, student achievement, and school performance. In order to focus on the primary issues affecting school success, decision-making authority in the areas of curriculum, staffing, and budgeting must be real and authentic.

In addition, Walker indicated that administrative support and the role of central office personnel is the other factor. District-level support of school-based decision-making is critical to its success. Superintendents play instrumental roles in moving central offices from a directive function toward a service orientation and resource support network. This shift in roles from a bureaucratic orientation to a service organization is often difficult and misunderstood by those occupying various roles in the district office and in the schools.

Further, policies at the district, provincial and national levels also affect participation in decision making. In a similar manner, decision-making latitude is often restricted at the school level by various district, provincial and national policies or mandates. Under school-based decision-making, schools are encouraged to make decisions regarding the curriculum and supporting instructional strategies. These decisions should be made within a framework of district goals or the core curriculum required by the district, province or nation. Yet schools are often limited by national mandates affecting their educational programs and are similarly restricted by compliance requirements related to national funded programs within their school or district. Thus, these competing and often contradictory policies constrain school-based decision-making.

According to Wanat (1992), stakeholders get frustrated with school bureaucracies or policies imposed on their pupils. Waste still, information provided by the school management is usually not comprehensive either because of education jargon or the parent does not understand or read English. Hinderson (2012) indicated that although some schools have made great strides in engaging parents as stakeholders in decision making, there is still much more that can be done.

In addition, recent studies focusing on stakeholders' participation in decision making show that autocratic management style has contributed to low participation. According to Natarajan (2009), autocratic school managers make unilateral decisions without the involvement of teachers, pupils and parents. For instance, the school managers' increases school fees without consulting stakeholders, and then go on to manage the funds. Inability to consult teachers and parents before making a decision has often led to frustration and rebellious behaviour among teachers and pupils. Wanat (1992) indicates that calls for removal of school managers have become common in Zambia arising from discontent among teachers, pupils and parents. Therefore, the group approach is more encouraged as group members tend to appreciate ideas they think of and have more zeal in achieving goals set by their own initiative than when decisions are being taken on their behalf.

In addition, low participation is greatly caused by school manager style of management. Beliner (2005) has shown that low participation is as a result of school managers who are not trained or oriented in management and administration practices. Too often, serving teachers are appointed to position of leadership without management background, consequently contributing to low stakeholders' participation.

Further, Wanat (1992) observed that parents find it difficult to get involved in decision making due to inability to use English language, teachers' attitude towards parents, inadequate

resources and time to visit the school. Yet some scholars indicated that low participation in decision process is greatly caused by school manager style of management. Further, Beliner (2005) has shown that low participation is as a result of school managers who are not trained or oriented in management and administration practices. Too often, serving teachers are appointed to position of leadership without management background, consequently contributing to low stakeholders' participation.

According to Sandra (2001), the greatest problem contributing to low participation can be attributed to school structure. The school structure that does not have or create wide range of leadership positions and committees restrict stakeholders' participation in school management. The argument advanced is that, with increased number and availability of positions in a school such as head of departments, head of sports, school prefects, projects chairperson, PTA chairperson and other related positions that can be occupied by teachers, pupils and parents contribute to improved participation in school management.

Despite the lack of 'hard evidence' in regard to the nature and extent of the decision-making, most school managers saw greater teacher and parent involvement as a positive development for their school. However, they acknowledged that one of the key challenges for them was to engage the whole community meaningfully in the school to a greater extent than previously, particularly in regard to decision-making at a strategic level.

2.7.0.0 Effects of Stakeholders' Participation in Decision Making

Scholars indicated that stakeholders' participation in decision making enhanced the quality and the implementation of decisions, and contributed to achievement of school outcomes. The three classes of effects resulting from the application of bottom-up, inclusive approaches, as well as consultation and deliberation techniques include; substantive (concrete decision outcomes), procedural (modifications to the process of deciding), and contextual (outcomes) (Gulka, 2008).

Substantial evidence show that stakeholders' participation is more likely to improve than to undermine the quality of decisions. Studies show that stakeholders' participation also tends to increase the legitimacy of decisions, which, in turn, raises the likelihood that they can be implemented effectively and efficiently. The process itself builds parents' knowledge of technical and scientific aspects of the school.

The procedural effects include; improvement of the quality of the informational basis of decision processes and better use of information, better integration of the wider context that

determines the range of choices for the decision, increased pool of ideas and creativity, opening up the domain of choices considered, more dynamic processes, more transparent decision making, early identification of conflict and better management or resolution, increased legitimacy of the decision process, improvement of the effectiveness of the process in terms of costs and time, and empowerment and enhanced influence of less organised interests

Whereas, the contextual effects on decision making are; increased community awareness and interest of school activities, better preparation for future situations in which stakeholders may need to take particular actions, improved strategic capacity of decision makers, improved competence and expertise in organisations, improved quality of technical support tools, community acceptance, ownership, support for decisions, changes in the perception and conceptualisation of the school context, better co-operation between the authorities and the community, strengthened co-operation, communication and co-ordination between institutions and with stakeholders, for future actions that will necessarily affect or involve stakeholders, reinforcement of democratic practices and citizens' involvement, and increased confidence in citizen problem-solving capacity.

Further, studies have shown that stakeholders' participation in decision making improved school outcomes. Other studies also have supported the desirability and influence of participation in decision making, both in business and in educational organizations. The following generalizations summarize much of the research and theoretical literature on stakeholders' participation in decision making.

The opportunity to share in formulating policies is an important factor in the morale of teachers and in their enthusiasm for the school. Accordingly, participation in decision making is positively related to the individual teacher's satisfaction with the profession of teaching. As a result, teachers prefer school managers who involve them in decision making (Caldwell, 1992).

Usually, decisions have failed because of poor quality or because they are not accepted by stakeholders for not being involved. Teachers neither expect nor want to be involved in every decision; in fact, too much involvement can be as detrimental as too little. The roles and functions of both teachers and school managers in decision making need to be varied according to the nature of the problem. According to studies, stakeholders' participation in decision making can produce either positive or negative consequences.

Gulkan (2008) advances two propositions about shared decision making: First, as stakeholders are involved in decision making located within their zone of acceptance, participation will be less effective. Whereas when stakeholders are involved in decisions making located outside their zone of acceptance, participation will be more effective. The problem for the school manager is to determine which decisions fall inside and which outside the zone

Enhanced stakeholders' participation in decision making leads to; Wider and greater ownership of the school, its vision and priorities achieved, greater diversity of views and expertise as inputs to decision-making, development of more inclusive partnerships among teachers and parents, and enhanced professional culture among teachers

2.8.0.0 Strategies to Improve Decision Making

According to Mintzberg (1976), making decision can be more tasking, and outlined Optimizing, Satisficing, Maximax, and Maximin as strategies used in choosing the best choice or alternative. With optimizing, the strategy is for choosing the best option among the identified alternatives. The effectiveness of this strategy relies on importance of the problem, time limit, availability of resources, cost of other alternatives and the psychology of the decision maker. Often, there is a better decision than the decision made. It is better to place limitations to alternatives as it might not be possible to sample all alternatives for a case with large sample space.

Under satisficing, the first satisfactory alternative should be considered. The word satisficing was derived from two words Satisfy and sufficient. Once, these two conditions are in place, it is then considered as the best option. This is mostly used in many small and quick decisions like where to park, what to where and what to eat.

Yet Maximax is maximising the maximums. In this strategy, evaluation is done and the alternative with the maximum profit is chosen as the best option. This is usually referred to as decision of the optimist, as favourable outcome is expected and high potentials are the area of concern. This is usually used when risk is most acceptable and failure can be tolerated.

According to Mintzberg (1976), maximin is another strategy: Also known as the maximise the minimum. This strategy is considered to be that of a pessimist as it considers the worst possible outcome of all alternatives and the one with the highest minimum is chosen. This type of strategy is used when failure is expensive and can't be tolerated.

The concern with the actions and resources needed to achieve specific long-term objectives require strategies that are able to sustain improved school performance. According to Anderson (1998), school improvement is as a result of organizational stability and continuity. To achieve

stability and continuity as a strategy, there is need to ensure high degree of social capital and trust, collaboration and teachers' professional development, stable teaching staff, and stable and competent leadership. Further, there is need to focus on developing leadership among teachers and focusing on the school as the organizational unity rather than collection of classrooms.

In addition, improvement of school performance is attained with quality leadership and with a vision. Too often, teachers are appointed to the position of school manager without management background; consequently, contributing to poor performance of the school. To ensure the school manager is of quality leadership, the need for training in management practices cannot be overemphasized.

Other strategies contributing to school improvement are organizational coherence, commitment to an improved strategy and availability of a working action plan. Bennet (2013) suggested that action plans are an important guiding document necessary to achieve pupils and school performance as a whole.

Further, Anderson (1998) has shown that enhanced external support particularly from parents help to improve school performance. Support in form of material and financial contribution towards school management and administration result into improved school performance. Further, coherent program funding tied to strategic plan as a strategy enable the school improve the performance of pupils. In support, Heller (1998) recommended that government and partners should sustain funding to schools in order to improve school performance.

According to Hemmati (2002), effective school managers design a school improvement process to guide their work. The improvement plan sometimes referred to as development plan is a strategic framework based on scanning the school environment and conditions that are faced.

As Hemmati indicated, availability of school improvement plan helps to priorities goals and objectives, identify strategic actions to achieve school goals, implementing plans and evaluating outcomes. In particular, improvement plans may outline strategies for improving pupils' academic performance in targeted subject areas, recommend particular types of assessment for teachers to measure pupils' performance over time, and indicate when and how long strategies should be implemented. The development and implementation of school improvement plan is a collaborative process between school professionals, parents and other community stakeholders

2.9.0.0 Theoretical Framework

The decision theory is about the principles and algorithms used for making decision. This is achieved by identifying values, uncertainties and other things that might influence the decision. Decision theories can basically be grouped into two: Normative and descriptive decision theory. While normative theory explains how decision should be made, descriptive theory explains how decisions are made. Before the end of the 1950s, an elaborate idea about decision-making theory was built up by many and among them the most prominent figures, were Richard Snyder, Chester Barnard and Herbert Simon (Bush, 2003).

Herbert Simon made key contributions to enhance our understanding of the decision-making process. In fact, he pioneered the field of decision support systems. According to Simon and his later work with Newell (1972), decision-making is a process with distinct stages. He suggested for the first time the decision-making model of human beings. His model of decision-making has three stages; intelligence which deals with the problem identification and the data collection on the problem, design which deals with the generation of alternative solutions to the problem at hand, and choice which is selecting the 'best' solution from amongst the alternative solutions using some criterion.

The rational model of decision making presupposes that there is one best outcome. Because of this it is sometimes called an optimizing decision making model. Such a model also presupposes that it is possible to consider every option and also to know the future consequences of each. While many would like to think they know what will happen, the universe often has other plans.

The rational model is limited by the cognitive abilities of the person making the decision; how good is their memory? how good is their imagination? The criteria themselves, of course, will be subjective and may be difficult to compare. This model requires a great deal of time and a great deal of information. And, of course, a rational decision making model attempts to negate the role of emotions in decision making.

The particular rational model of decision making used is the Vroom-Jago decision model used by leaders to determine whether they should make a decision alone or involve a group, and to what extent the group should be involved. The Vroom-Jago decision model was first proposed by Vroom and Yetton in 1973 and was later modified by Vroom and Jago in 1988.

Subsequent studies have shown that the greater precision in situational assessment of the Vroom-Jago decision model allows for better discrimination in choosing a process.

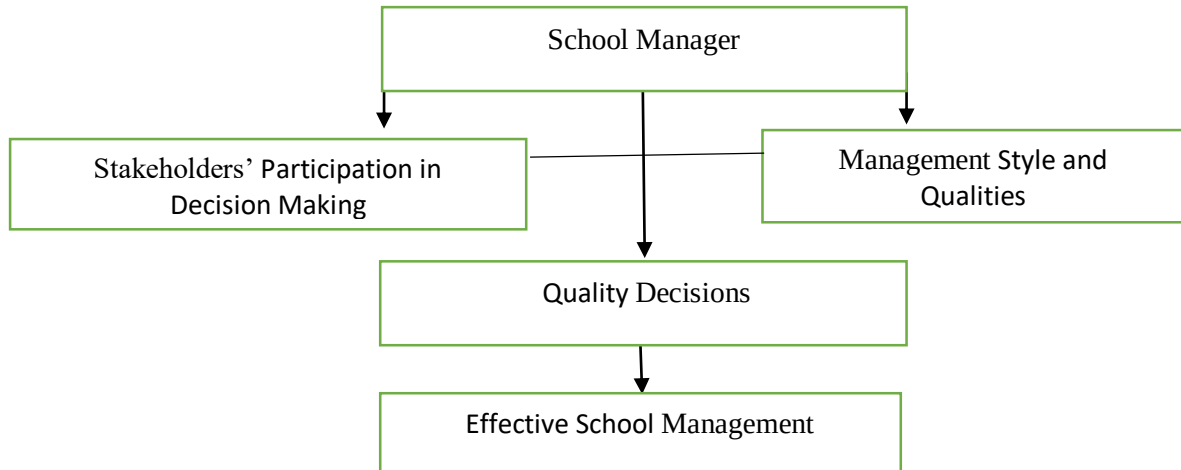
In some situations, it's better for a leader to be the decision maker for the group. In others, it's best for the group to have some input or even make the decision. This model distinguishes different situations and outlines the autocratic, consultative and group discussion types. The Vroom-Jago decision model uses a series of questions, asked in order to determine which of the discussion types are applicable.

Scholars have shown that no one school manager or a group of managers is equipped with all the necessary knowledge to address all the issues or problems in the school. While school managers still retain final decision-making authority when participatory management is practiced, participants are encouraged to voice their opinions about their current environment.

Stakeholder participation in decision making may be measured or evaluated in a number of ways either in form of pupils' pass rate, or infrastructure development. This leads to perceived achievement of positive school outcomes in terms of service delivery and the quality of service. This argument is underpinned by the normative and descriptive form of decision making theory. This argument is underpinned by the normative and descriptive form of decision making theory.

2.10.0.0 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Effective school management depends on the quality of decision made. The quality decisions are equally depended on management style and qualities of the manager as well as stakeholders' participation in making decisions. Therefore, effective school management depend on the school manager, the management style approach as well as the involvement of stakeholders in making quality decision.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0.0.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1.0.0 Research Design

The research combined qualitative and quantitative approaches, and was used to assess how the voices of stakeholders were embraced in school management. The investigation was interactive and respondents were involved. For collection of data, the investigation used questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussions in order to achieve evidence based results.

The investigation started by visiting schools, reviewing documents, conducting interviews with school Managers, teachers and pupils before holding focus group discussions with PTA executive members and pupils. The general public which included retired teachers, religious and traditional leaders were also interviewed. Later, the research team proceeded to District and Provincial Education Offices to review documents and interview senior managers involved in planning, supervision, organization, controlling and coordination of schools.

3.2.0.0 Population of Study

Southern province has a population of 1,231,541, 12 districts and over 320 schools. Out of which 140 schools are in Choma District distributed in 18 zones. To investigate how views of stakeholders were embraced in school management, a total of six schools from the six zones of the 18 zones in Choma district were purposively selected. To that effect, the population of study were School Managers, teachers, pupils, parents and senior managers at District and Provincial Education Offices. In addition, the general public living around the target schools were involved in the study.

3.3.0.0 Sample Size

The sample size drawn from the population of study was 124 respondents. The compositions of respondents were four Senior Managers from Southern Provincial and Choma District Education Offices, six School Managers, 18 teachers, 36 pupils, 36 parents and 24 members of the general public which included retired teachers, religious and traditional leaders.

3.4.0.0 Sampling Method

To achieve the target sample size (124), purposive and simple random sampling methods were used in the study. Purposive sampling was used to choose schools managers, and those at provincial and district were not left out, the purposive sampling method was used. In addition, teachers, pupils and parents with leadership roles in the schools, retired teachers, religious and the traditional leaders were chosen using purposive method. While simple random sampling method was used to select additional teachers, pupils, parents and general public. Further, two focus group meetings per school were conducted for PTA executive members and pupils.

3.5.0.0 Data Collection

With the view to establish participation in decision making, documents such as records and reports were reviewed. Among the records and reports checked for secondary data were school establishment, asset inventory, teacher transfer files, teachers' duty rota, pupils' assessment and result analysis, Performance Appraisals, action plans and project files. Minutes for PTA meetings where available were also checked. Primary data was also collected using structured questionnaire, unstructured interviews, and unstructured interactive focus group discussions.

3.6.0.0 Data Analysis

Data collected was analysed both manually and using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). In an effort to achieve correctness and consistence, figures obtained from records and reports were categorized, tabulated and interpreted. For illustrations, tables and charts were used to present data from primary and secondary sources. The relationship between stakeholders' participation in decision-making and the effectiveness of school management was determined.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0.0.0 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1.0.0 Background

A total of 124 respondents were interviewed and responded to a questionnaire, 65 men and 59 women. The age distribution among respondents ranged from 11 to 65 years old.

Figure 4.1 Composition of Respondents

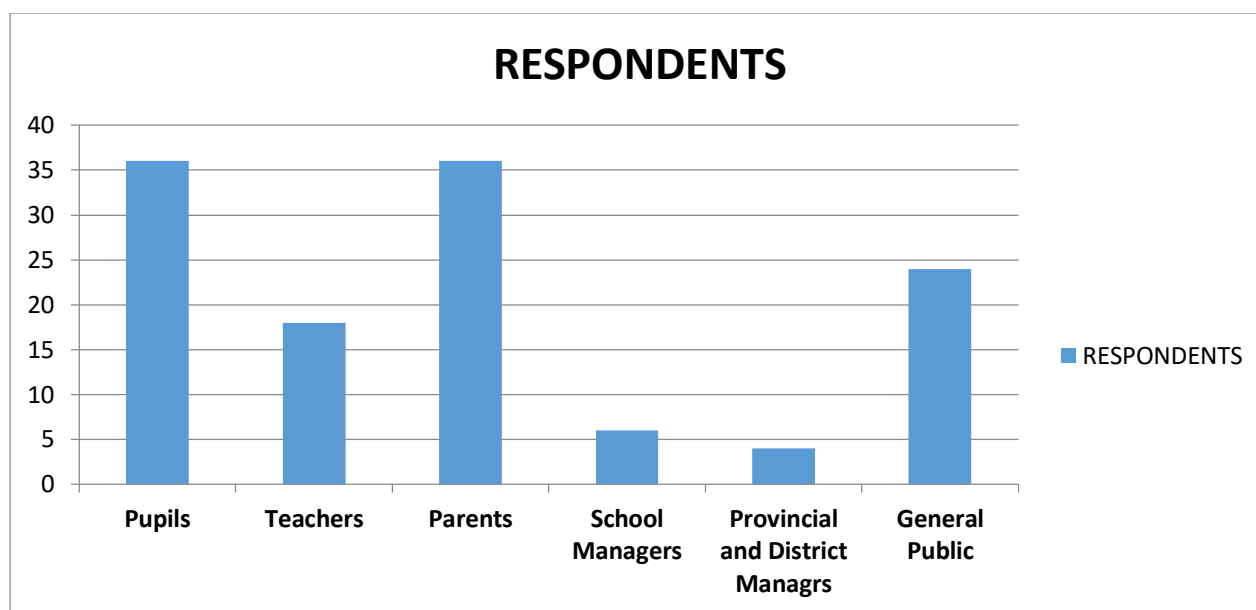


Table 4.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	(x)	Frequency
0 and under 15	7.5	36
15 and under 30	17.5	11
30 and under 65	45.5	77
Total		124

Further, the study documented stakeholders' participation in decision making, factors affecting stakeholder participation in decision making, effects stakeholder participation in decision making, and strategies to improve decision making.

4.2.0.0 Stakeholders' Participation in Decision Making

Through interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions, 100% of the respondents confirmed availability of school managers, and that 60% the managers were trained in education management. However, only 38% of the 124 respondents indicated that School Managers were showing good qualities of leadership to head schools.

In interview, teachers, pupils and parents revealed that stakeholders were not adequately involved in deciding how to use resource. The respondents (67), mentioned that stakeholders were actively involved in teaching and learning, and sporting decision process. In support, over 70% of pupils acknowledged parents' involvement in teaching and learning through writing assignments at home.

Table 4.2 Stakeholders' Participation in Decision Making

RESPONDENT TYPE	NUMBER RESPONDED	RESPONSE		
		Not Involved	Partial ly Involv ed	Fully Involved
Provincial and District Managers	4	0	2	2
School Managers	6	0	0	4
Teachers	18	0	12	6
Pupils	36	0	27	9
Parents	36	3	24	9
General Public	24	12	10	2
Total		15	75	32
Score (%)		12.3	61.5	26.2

4.2.1.0 Management Style of School Managers

Based on findings, 10 teachers representing 55% and 22 pupils (61%) indicated that school managers were autocratic. Similarly, of the 36 parents, 14 reviewed that school managers were

autocratic. While during focus group discussion, over 60% of the PTA executive members regretted school managers' undemocratic management style.

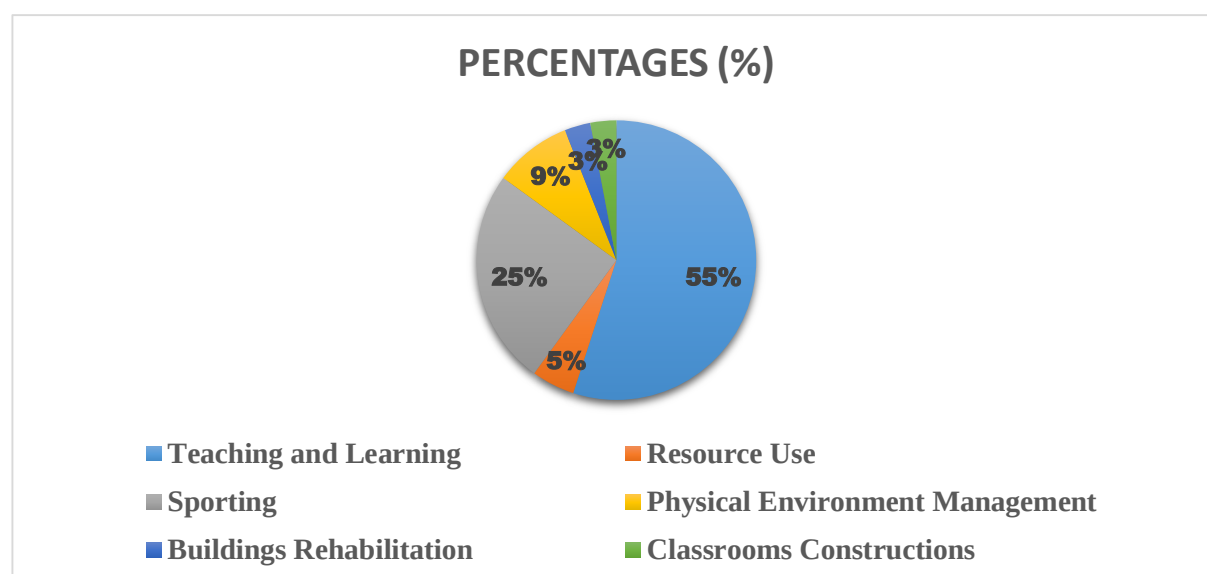
Table 4.3 Responses on Management Style of School Managers

RESPONDENT TYPE	NUMBER RESPONDED	RESPONSE		
		Democratic	Autocratic	Laisse Faire
Teachers	18	6	10	2
Pupils	36	14	22	0
Parents	36	16	19	0

4.2.2.0 Level of Stakeholders Participations in Decision Making

During the study, the team investigated school activities teachers, pupils and parents as stakeholders were involved in decision process. Among the activities highlighted by respondents were; teaching and learning, resource use and management, physical environment management, sporting, and projects such as classrooms rehabilitation and construction. Others school activities mentioned were gardening and academic tours.

Figure 4.2 Level of Stakeholders Participation in Decision Making of School Activities



In interviews and group discussions, respondents mentioned availability of school committees. However, the number of committees existing in each school were not even. For instance, three of the schools, two in urban and one in rural had each more than seven committees and were active. While other schools had each less than three committees, and in some instances none were active. Despite the PTA committees found in all schools, only three schools had active PTA committees as evidenced from minutes.

4.3.0.0 Factors Affecting Stakeholders Participation in Decision Making

During visits to schools, a number of factors affecting stakeholders' participation in decision making were provided by respondents. For the purpose of elaboration, these factors are grouped into management, institutional and committee systems.

4.3.1.0 Management Factors

All the managers complained of community members' negative attitudes towards school activities. According to the managers, community members particularly parents were not willing to contribute materials or financial resources towards school projects. Of the six schools, three representing 50% had construction of classrooms stalled due to lack of funds. According to school managers in affected schools, parents were not willing to contribute funds despite showing commitment at start of the projects.

Further, management style was sighted as factor contributing to low stakeholders' participation. Over 58% of respondents indicated that autocratic management style was common in schools. In four of the schools visited, all the school managers were not delegating roles and responsibilities to manage project funds, writing receipts for school fees, and procure goods and supplies. Schools with school managers not delegating responsibilities showed lack of stakeholders' participation in deciding resource use and management.

4.3.2.0 Institutional Factors

In interviews, 75% of the 24 members of the public indicated teachers' negative attitude towards community members which affected participation in decision making. In support, two traditional leaders revealed that teachers had a negative attitude towards the community and even their own work. As observed in three rural schools, over 50% of teachers were not present during visits to schools; an indication of lack of commitment to school decision process. Similarly, all senior managers at provincial and district education offices revealed that some teachers were less committed towards their work.

The school establishment checked in two rural and one urban school, showed that schools were experiencing shortage of teachers due to deaths and transfers. Although teachers' demotivation was largely due to school managers' attitudes, 67% of PTA members revealed that shortage of teachers was as a result of inadequate teaching materials, poor working relationship with communities and schools were in rural areas.

. 4.3.3.0 Committee System Factors

The PTA members in all schools, expressed willingness to participate in decision making. However, participation in decision making was limited due to school structure. According to respondents (83%), participation was restricted due to limited number of committees in schools. As observed, three of the schools only had the PTA, preventive maintenance and sports committees.

Sampled committee minutes in schools showed that meetings were not regularly held. For instance, scheduled monthly project committee meetings were not held for periods ranging from five to seven months in two rural and one urban school. Some parents and teachers accused school managers for failing to hold meetings regularly.

Table 4.5 Distribution of Committees in Schools

Existing School Committees	Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
Parents Teachers Association	6	17.6
School Boards	5	14.7
School Councils (Pupils)	4	11.8
Finance	2	5.9
Projects (Construction)	3	8.8
Sports	6	17.6
Prevention Maintenance	4	11.8
Procurement	1	3.0
Academic	3	8.8
Totals	34	100

4.4.0.0 Effects of Stakeholders Participation on School Management

The effects of stakeholders' participation in decision making have been grouped into community aware of School Activities, Support for decisions, and planning and implementing school projects.

4.4.1.0 Communities Awareness of School Activities

To help establish effects of stakeholders' participation in decision making, the study determined whether communities were aware of school activities. In a discussion with PTA members, the majority of respondents reiterated lack of adequate information about school activities. According to majority respondents (80%), were aware about pupils' academic performance which they described as generally poor. According to respondents, pupils pass rate were communicated during PTA meetings. However, less than 40% members of public were aware of construction activities at their schools.

4.4.2.0 Support for Decision

Support for decision was used as criteria to determine effects of stakeholders' participation in decision making. Findings revealed 60% teachers mainly those delegated responsibilities and participated in decision making supported school decisions. Whereas only 45% of parents revealed that they supported school activities. In addition, less than 30 of the members of public indicated that they support school activities. The majority of respondents indicated that there were not able to support decision they were not familiar with. Support for decision was in form of contributing financial or material support, volunteering or disseminating information about school activities

4.4.3.0 Implementation of School Projects

Stakeholders participate in project management either through contributing resources or volunteering as labourers. Of the six schools visited, 67% had uncompleted and stored classroom block, an indication of limited support for decisions. According to the school managers in affected schools, construction had stored due to resource constraints. The managers expressed disappointment of parents' unwillingness to contribute material and financial support towards classrooms construction. In addition, the school managers retaliated parents' refusal to offer their labour, consequently resulting in projects either delayed to be completed or abandoned.

Although all the parents accepted that classroom construction had started, more than 60% disputed assertions that they were not contributing resources towards school projects. Similarly, all PTA members denied assertion that parents were not involved in decision process; planning, implementation and monitoring of school projects. To the contrary, PTA members revealed that parents were participating in decision making and supported the decisions by contributing funds towards school projects.

According to senior managers at district education offices, inability to complete classroom construction due to weak cooperation between school authorities and communities affected pupils' enrolment, teachers' retention and pupils' academic. In support, over 80% of teachers attributed failure to complete classroom construction to lack of consensus in making decisions which negatively affected teaching and learning due to shortage of classroom space.

4.5.0.0 Strategies to Improve Decision Process.

To improve school based decision process require implementation of appropriate strategies. In interviews, group discussions and responses to questionnaires, teachers, pupils, parents and managers outlined the following strategies to improve decision process:

- Strengthen teachers group meetings
- Revamp or start academic committees and school councils
- Ensure Availability of resources (materials and financial), time for decision, and school improvement plans
- Upgrade teachers' qualifications
- Involve teachers in teaching, extra-curriculum and school committees
- Conduct targeted orientation for teachers
- Establish and strengthen existing finance committees in schools
- Availability of Knowledgeable and skilled human resource
- Appointing focal point person to spearhead school projects decision making, implementation and monitoring.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0.0.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter focused on discussing findings, conclusions and recommendations on stakeholders' participation in decision making, contribution to literature and proposed future research.

5.1.0.0 DISCUSSION

The findings analysed, stakeholders' participation in decision making, factors affecting stakeholders' participation in decision making, effects of stakeholders' participation in decision making and strategies to improve decision process.

5.1.1.0 Background

The findings revealed that less than 10% of respondents were between the age of 15 to 30 years, and over 60% were above 30 an indication that majority of adults were not actively involved in school decision making.

5.1.2.0 Stakeholders Participating in Decision Making

The study documented stakeholders' participation in decision making focusing on qualities and management styles of school managers, level of stakeholders' participation in decision making, and indicators for improved decision making.

5.1.2.1 Management Styles and Qualities of School Managers

According to Bush (2003), schools which allow participation in its decision-making process by all of its stakeholders, could be considered democratic and lead to improved quality and support of decision. To the contrary, 57% of school managers were autocratic, a situation that has contributed to low stakeholders' participation in decision making process. In addition, majority (51%) school managers were not trained in education management which has contributed to poor quality leadership and decision outcomes.

Bartol (2007) indicated that school managers must be supported for management support training, and that their performance be appraised by school inspectors and other bodies that provide on-site monitoring of school management quality. To the contrary, school managers were not exhibiting good qualities of leadership, and the problem was attributed to lack of education management training. As scholars have stated, quality decisions are attained with

quality leadership and with a vision. Too often, teachers are appointed to the position of school manager without management background; consequently, contributing to poor quality of decisions and overall school outcomes. To ensure that the school manager is of quality leadership, the need for training in management practices cannot be overemphasized.

5.1.2.2 Level of Stakeholders Participation in Decision Process

According to Kelly (1992), school managers were expected to involve stakeholders in school management both in-doors and outdoors activities. As emphasised, stakeholders' participation in decision making of school activities should be even, and not restricted to few activities. To the contrary, stakeholders were not adequately involved in decision making. From the study, stakeholders were mainly involved in teaching and learning, and sporting, and least involved in construction, procurements. This indicates that many stakeholders participate in teaching and learning than they do in resource use, classrooms construction and rehabilitation of schools.

From the study, it has shown that Kelly's recommendation of stakeholders participating evenly in all school activities was not happening. As Jeynes (2003) stressed, limited stakeholders' involvement in school activities contributed to poor decision making, implementation and monitoring; consequently, resulting into low pupils' pass rate, wastage of resources, demotivation of teachers leading to transfers, and inability to achieve infrastructure development.

Further, low participation in decision making bear fruits of indiscipline among teachers and learners, and a sense of organised chaos reigns. Schools characterised by lawlessness arising from teachers and pupils' disapproval of school manager leadership tend to disrupt teaching and learning.

To achieve effective management, the school manager has to promote full stakeholders' participation in planning, organising, directing, controlling and coordinating human and material resource (Hemmati, 2002). Claim that school managers promoted full stakeholder participation in decision making were disputed, instead, the study has shown that stakeholders are were actually inadequately involved in decision making. It would also be correct to state that, with partial stakeholders' participation, support for decisions of the school manager is equally not adequate.

5.1.3.0 Factors Affecting Stakeholders Participation in Decision Making

Factors affecting stakeholders Participation were investigated with a focus on managerial, institutional and committee systems factors

5.1.3.1 Managerial Factors

Autocratic management style is common among school managers. According to the study, school managers were not delegating roles and responsibilities, an indication that unilateral decision were made. As revealed, the common activities school managers were not willing to involve others in decision making were; collecting and using funds for school projects, writing school fees receipts and procuring of goods and supplies.

According to Natarajan (2009), autocratic school managers make unilateral decisions without the involvement of teachers, pupils and parents. Inability to consult teachers and parents before making a decision has often led to frustration and rebellious behaviour among teachers and pupils. Kelly (1992) stressed that school managers that often delegated their roles and responsibilities strengthened teachers' participation in decision process, thereby contributing towards achievement of school objectives. Although Kelly's literature does not specify roles and responsibilities to be delegated, was able to demonstrate that performance correlate with delegation. Where roles and responsibilities were delegated, the school manager had time to concentrate decision making in other activities, which resulted into effective performance management. Therefore, the group approach is more encouraged as group members tend to appreciate ideas they think of and have more zeal in achieving goals set by their own initiative than when decisions are being taken on their behalf

5.1.3.2 Institutional Factors

The investigation showed that the school structure contributed to low stakeholders' participation in school based decision making, consequently affecting school performance. According to Sandra (2001), the greatest problem contributing to low participation in decision making can be attributed to school structure. School structures without a wide range of leadership positions and committees restrict stakeholders' participation in school management. To Kelly (1992), performance of pupils and the school in general is strengthened through organised system that spells out positions of responsibilities and decision making process paths. Teachers' negative attitude towards community members was cited among factors affecting decision making. Besides, teachers were not only being negative to community members but

also to their work and pupils. Beliner (2005) also support the assertion that teachers' negative attitudes restricted stakeholders' participation in decision making. Hinderson (2012) retaliated and argued that information provided by the school management was usually not comprehensive either because of education jargon or that parents did not understand or read English, an indication that much more still needed to be done.

5.1.3.3 Committee System Factors

PTA members in all schools were willingness to participate in decision making but were restricted due to school structure. Accordingly, participation was restricted due to limited number of active committees in schools. As observed, only the PTA, preventive maintenance and sports committees were active in schools. Hemmati (2002) contend that where fewer stakeholders are incorporated in school committees such as PTA and Education Boards their contribution towards project implementation and physical environment management is minimised compared to when majority are involved.

Other scholars have demonstrated that sustained improved school performance such as an increase in classrooms and pupil pass rate can only be achieved through stakeholder participation in committees.

5.1.4.0 Effects of Stakeholders Participation on School Management

In discussion, effects of low stakeholders' participation on school performance, pupils academic, teachers' retention and school projects will be explored.

5.1.4.1 Communities Awareness of School Activities

With active stakeholders' participation in decision making, communities are aware of school activities and have interest in supporting implementation. To Jeynes (2003), the aim of involving stakeholders in decision process was to achieve effective school management. To the contrary, school managers were not adequately involving stakeholders in decision making, hence communities were not interested in school activities. To some extent, lack of interest in school activities contributed to low pupils' pass rate, wastage of resources, demotivation of teachers resulting into transfers, and inability to achieve infrastructure development.

5.1.4.2 Support for Decisions

To Kelly (1992), the more opportunities teachers were given to participate in decision making, the greater was their sense of commitment and ownership of school programs. To the contrary,

the study has revealed that teachers were not adequately utilised and were not supporting decisions to construct infrastructure. In explaining, teachers showed that they were not actively involved in making decisions for resource use and management, procurements, and school projects. Similarly, the study showed that parents were not supporting decisions imposed on them.

In support, Jeynes (2003) has shown that inability to involve teachers in decision making contributed to demotivation of teachers resulting into lack of support to school activities. In some instances, teachers were transferred. To reverse rate of teachers' attrition, school managers need to work with teachers to design and prepare curricula, establish budgets and ensure that pupils' academic performance meets government standards (Bartol, 2007).

5.1.4.3 Implementing School Projects

During visits to schools, four schools had uncompleted and stored classroom blocks. According to the school managers in affected schools, construction had stored due to resource constraints as parents were not supportive to decisions. In addition, managers attributed resource constraints to parents unwillingness to provide labour and contribute material and financial support towards classrooms construction, consequently resulting in projects either delayed to be completed or abandoned.

Hemmati (2002) argue that, with low number of parents volunteering to take part in school projects and other developmental activities, negatively affected decision implementation resulting into shortage of classrooms and low pupils' enrolment. In addition, with fewer parents supporting decisions to contributing material and financial support towards school management constrain procurement of readers books, furniture such as desks, and rehabilitation of worn out buildings.

5.1.5.0 Strategies to Improve Decision Making

According to Gulkan (2017, committee of parents and teachers provide a forum of sharing ideas. Few schools have managed to strengthen teachers group meetings, academic committees. student councils, and ensuring availability of teaching aids, resources (human, materials and financial), time for decision making, and a school improvement plans.

Yet Anderson (1998) states that school improvement through decision process is as a result of organizational stability and continuity. To achieve stability and continuity as a strategy, there is need to ensure high degree of social capital and trust, collaboration and teachers' professional

development, stable teaching staff, and stable and competent leadership. Further, there is need to focus on developing leadership among teachers and focusing on the school as the organizational unity rather than collection of classrooms.

The other strategies are to encourage teachers to upgrade their qualification, and involving in teaching and extra-curriculum such as in sport and physical environment management. In addition, teachers need to be involved in school committees. These proposals are well explained in Nami's research in which strategies such as supporting teachers to upgrade professional qualification are elaborated and should be encouraged.

In addition, strengthening existing school finance committees, and formulating and implementing school policies are other strategies. The assumption is that these strategies can create trust among stakeholders and eventually increase participation in decision process. Inability to support decision to contribute material and financial resource was due to mistrust between the school manager and stakeholders.

To achieve stability and continuity as a strategy, Anderson (1998) is of the view that there is need to ensure high degree of social capital and trust. According to Knight, mutual trust among people solidify bondage and help to sustain projects activities.

5.2.0.0 CONCLUSION

The overall objective of the study was to investigate how views of stakeholders were embraced in school management, and concluded that views were not adequately embraced. The investigation focused on three specific objectives which included; document stakeholders' participation in decision making, determine factors affecting stakeholders' participation in decision making, and establish the effects of stakeholders' participation in decision process.

5.2.1.0 Stakeholders Participation in Decision Making

The first objective to document stakeholders' participation in decision making showed that school managers' qualities and management styles influenced stakeholders' participation. Autocratic leadership and lack of management skills contributed to limited stakeholders' participation as school manager were making unilaterally.

Despite stakeholder accessible, school managers have not adequately utilized capacities at their disposal in decision making process. The investigations confirmed that many school managers

have not been trained in education management and were responsible for low stakeholders' participation in decision making.

5.2.2.0 Factors Affecting Stakeholders' Participation in Decision Making

The second objective to determine Factors affecting Stakeholders' Participation in decision making showed that autocratic leadership, inability to delegate roles and responsibilities, and weak committee systems existed in schools, and were responsible for low stakeholders' participation in decision making. Contrary to contemporary literature, the school managers were not democratic. The study also confirmed that group decision making was rarely happening in schools.

5.2.3.0 Effects of Stakeholders' Participation on School Management

The third objective to establish effects of stakeholders' participation in decision process showed that low stakeholders participation in decision process contributed to weak support for decisions, communities unaware and not interested in school activities, and poor cooperation between school authorities and the community. Weak support for decision resulted into uncompleted or abandoned school projects.

The study also confirmed contemporary literature stating that project management was a multi-dimension activity which was dependent on group decision making, implementation and monitoring. In view of that, the study also confirmed that weak support for decisions lead to uncompleted or abandoned school projects.

5.3.0.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

With the view to achieve effective school management through strengthening stakeholders' participation in decision making, implementation and monitoring, the following recommendations need to be adopted and applied:

5.3.1.0 Support School Managers Capacity Building

Teachers are appointed to management positions without qualifications in education management or in other related management studies. That problem has contributed to schools not effectively managed. In an effort to ensure that school managers are trained and are effectively management, District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS) should support orientation of school managers and teacher in education management. The orientation can be conducted on an annual basis, and should be included in the school and district plans. School

managers can also be provided opportunities to undertake exchange visits as part of capacity building. Ministry of Education need to strengthen support for training in education management. This can be made possible by increasing number of teachers provided with bursaries or loans to undertake training in education management. In addition, the District Education Board Secretaries need to start supporting schools to conduct ‘Targeted orientations’ for teachers and PTA executive members in order to improve quality of decisions. Targeted orientation would be better conducted bi-annually at each school.

5.3.2.0 Support School Committees

Committee system has proved to be an effective forum for increased participation in decision making. However, schools are struggling to establish and sustain existing committees. To ensure efficient and effective school committees, there is need for District Education Board Secretaries to provide material support in form of stationery for establishment and sustaining committees. Committees such as PTA, pupils’ council, academic, teachers’ groups, finance, and projects should be made mandatory and supported with resources. It should be the responsibility of school managers to solicit for resource support, and ensure that committees are established, producing reports or minutes, and share them with relevant authorities.

5.3.3.0 Develop and implement School Improvement Plans

Documentation of school plans is still a challenge in schools. Despite numerous decisions made, there are often not documented. As a result, stakeholders remain unaware and implementation of decisions has proved to be difficult. To that effect, there is need to develop and implement improvement plans. Improvement plans can be used to communicate decisions or school activities, solicit for stakeholders’ support, and save as benchmark to measure school achievement. Teachers, pupils and parents are required to involved in developing and implementing school improvement plans. The school mangers should be responsible for ensuring successful developing and implementation of improvement plans.

5.3.4.0 Contribution to Literature

The study has provided the concept ‘targeted orientation’ which denote capacity building for stakeholders. In line with existing literature, the study showed that low stakeholders’ participation in decision making though largely due to management style of school managers but also. However, current literature neglects to show that stakeholders participating in school management require capacity building. Supporting ‘targeted orientation’ for PTA executive

members would result into efficient and effective participation in decision process which ultimately accelerate school development.

5.3.5.0 Areas for Future Research

The study has shown that stakeholders' participation in decision making, implementation and monitoring was dependent on school manager. Future research is needed to demonstrate how the composition of stakeholders' participating in decision making influenced the quality of decisions. The study has also confirmed previous studies indicating that stakeholders support for decisions influenced school infrastructure development. However, there is still need to investigate the relationship between school infrastructure development and pupils' academic performance.

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APPENDIX ONE: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS, PUPILS AND PARENTS

Dear Respondent,

I am a student pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational management at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University undertaking a research to investigating how views of stakeholders are embraced in school management. You have been chosen to take part in answering this research questionnaire, and be assured that your response will be confidential

INSTRUCTIONS

- a) Answer all the questions according to the instructions.
- b) Show your response by ticking and writing in spaces provided where applicable

	PART A: PERSONAL DETAILS			
1	Status:	Teacher ☐	Pupil ☐	Parent ☐
2	Sex:	Male ☐	Female ☐	
3	Age:	0-15 years ☐	16- 30 years ☐	Above 30 years ☐
	PART B: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT			
4	Has the school got a School Manager trained in education management? Yes ☐ No ☐			
5	If yes, does the School Manager show good qualities to head the school? Yes ☐ No ☐			
6	Does the School Manager involve teachers, pupils and parents as stakeholders in decision making, implementation and monitoring? Yes ☐ No ☐			
7	If yes, to what extent are teachers, pupils and parents involved in decision making? Not involved ☐ Partially involved ☐ Fully involved ☐			
8	Which of these activities are teachers, pupils and parents involved in decision process? Teaching and learning ☐ source use and management ☐ naging physical environment ☐ School meeting ☐ Sporting activities ☐ Specify any not included.....			
9	If partially involved or not at all, what are the contributing factors? I II III IV.....			
10	From your observation, what is the management style of the School Manager? Democratic ☐ Autocratic ☐ Laissez-faire ☐			

	PART C: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
11	<p>How would you rate the performance of your school in relation to decision making?</p> <p>Poor performance ☐ Improved performance ☐ Good performance ☐</p>
12	<p>Assuming participation in decision making contributed to school improvement, which of the following indicator (s) were achieved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High number of teachers retained six months after deployed ☐ • Increase in number of pupils enrolled into Grade one ☐ • Increase in number of pupils who pass ECZ Grade 9 examination ☐ • Increase in number of classrooms ☐ • Availability of clean physical environment ☐ • Increase in number of trophies won in sporting activities ☐ <p>Specify any other not included.....</p>
13	<p>Give at least two effects of stakeholders' participating in decision process.</p> <p>I</p> <p>II</p> <p>III</p>
	PART D: SCHOOL STRATEGIES
14	<p>Suggest strategies for improving stakeholders' participation in decision making</p> <p>I</p> <p>II.....</p> <p>III</p>