The State of Teachers' Participation in Decision-making in Public Senior Secondary Schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality of Ghana

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Abstract
The purpose of the study was to find out the state of teachers' involvement in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality of Ghana. Eighty-four (84) professional teachers and three school heads that had been in their present schools for periods not less than six months were stratified and randomly selected for the study. Two sets of questionnaires were developed one for teachers and the other for school heads. The teachers' questionnaire had 45 items and the school heads' questionnaire had 16 items. These questionnaires were pre-tested and administered to the sample. Frequency counts, percentages, and mean were used to analyze the data collected. The study found that teachers were most often in consultative decision-making with their school heads. Also, the teachers were found involved in decision-making involving curriculum and instructional activities, school operations, and decisions that promoted school-community relationship. However, they were not involved in decision-making on student admission and placement, staffing, and financial matters. Moreover, teachers were involved in school decision-making via delegation, school meeting, school Board of Governors, and school committee system. This involved was mainly influenced by factors such as the need for belongingness, the need to work to meet job standards, the need to acquire knowledge, the acceptance of one's job as a central part of one's life, and the need to try new teaching methods and acquaint oneself with the use of new equipment.
Keywords: Teacher Participation, decision-making, and demographic characteristics.

1. Introduction

Over the years, governments implemented a number of educational policy decisions to improve the academic performance of pre-tertiary public schools in Ghana. For example, in 1887, Governor Griffith passed an educational Act known as the 1887 Educational Ordinance for Ghana alone (Annoh, 1995).this Act stipulated among other things the setting up of a Board of Education. The Board formulated policies for the inspection of government and government assisted schools (now called public schools), certification of trained teachers, and the payment of grants to public schools. These grants were paid to schools on the basis of students' performance in a yearly examination conducted by the inspector of schools (Abosi & Brookman-Amissah (Eds), 1992; Annoh, 1995). For instance," an amount of two shillings per head per annum was paid for a pass in Arithmetic, Reading, Writing, and additional amounts ranging from six pence to one shilling for other subjects"(Abosi & Brookman-Amissah (Eds), 1992, p.12; Annoh, 1995). Therefore, the amount of grant received by the schools depended on the number of students who passed the yearly examination. Also, the amount a teacher received as his/her salary depended on the grant allotted for the students who passed the examination in his/her class. This was to entice the teachers to work harder to improve the academic achievement of their students. However, the teachers who knew their salaries depended on the inspector's examination did not take kindly to the inspector's visit to their schools. This made them enemies instead of colleagues in the same field working for the betterment of students (MacWilliam, 1959).

 For this reason among others, Governor John Peter Rodger delinked the payment of government grants to public schools from students' academic performance. However, he rather tied it to the "general efficiency of teaching in public schools". This emphasis on the quality of the teaching methods of teachers in public schools resulted in the opening of a number of teacher training colleges. Some of these colleges were established in Accra in 1909 for the training of teachers (Aboagye, 2002; Abosi & Brookman-Amissah (Eds), 1992). But, the number of trained teachers supplied by these colleges could not cope with the demand for trained teachers. To make up for the excess demand for teachers, some untrained teachers were recruited to teacher in public schools. Consequently, the expected improvement in the quality of education was not attained (Bame, 1991).

 By 1919, Governor Fredrick Gordon Guggisberg felt it was unfair to link the payment of government grants to public schools on the basis of general efficiency of teaching without proving the schools with the needed resources-physical, human, and financial. To correct this problem, he closed down all schools that did not have requisite resources, including certificate teachers, to meet the standards of a good school. For instance, he closed down 150 schools, which did not meet the required standards of a good school (Antwi, 1992). Also, to give legal

backing to his educational policies, Guggisberg passed the 1925 Education Ordinance. This ordinance stipulated, among other things, that a register of certificated teachers should be opened so that the recruitment of non-registered teachers into public schools could be stopped (Bame, 1991). However, to ensure there was continuous supply of certificated teachers to man the public schools, some teacher training colleges were opened and the existing ones upgraded into certificate "A" and certificate "B" awarding institutions. By the end of 1950, there were 19 teacher training colleges comprising eight certificate "A" [4years] colleges and eleven certificate "B" [2years] colleges, which passed out approximately 623 trained teachers yearly for sometime (Bame, 1991). However, this policy of non-recruitment of non-registered teachers into public schools was abandoned when the Accelerated Development Plan for education came into effect in January 1952 under the Nkrumah Administration.

The Nkrumah Administration of internal self-government saw this plan as the panacea to the educational development problems in Ghana. Therefore, many schools were opened. By February 1955, there were 429,518 pupils in primary schools, 113,889 students in middle schools, 12,092 students in secondary schools (Bame, 1991). Consequently, a teacher supply gap was created. To bridge this gap, non-registered teachers were recruited to teach in public schools. Then, by September 1960, there were 12,000 trained teachers and 10,000 untrained teachers in public schools all over Ghana (Bame, 19991). This gap was further widened by the implementation of the 1961 Education Act, which stipulated fee-free, compulsory primary and middle school education. The fee-free and compulsory education components of this Act stimulated increased enrolment of pupils and students in basic and secondary schools. For example, the enrolment of pupils aged 6 to 15 years into first cycle schools rose from 38% in 1960 to 69% in1965. Moreover, the enrolment of students aged 16 to 21 years into second cycle schools rose from 2% to 6% (UNESCO statistics cited in Antwi, 1992). Consequently, the quality of education was sacrificed for quantity (Bame, 1991).

To address this problem of poor quality education, the National Redemption Council [NRC] made effort to reform the system of pre-tertiary education in Ghana. The seven year pre-tertiary education was reformed to a six year primary education, three year junior secondary education, and four year secondary education [6:3:4] in 1974. However, due to constraint of resources, this reform started in September, 1976 with the setting up of nine experimental junior secondary schools by Ghana Education Service (Aboagye, 2002). As a result, these experimental junior secondary schools had to operate alongside the existing ones. That is, the six year primary education, four year middle school education followed by seven year secondary education [6:4:7], and the six year primary education, two years of middle school education followed by a two year continuation middle school education and seven years of secondary education [6:2:2:7] (Aboagye, 2002; Antwi, 1992).This distorted the nation's educational philosophy and marred the quality of education. Therefore, there was the need to correct this situation.

But, this correction delay until 1987 when the Provisional National Defence Council [PNDC] introduced a major reform, which affected the entire structure and content of education in Ghana. The existing three structures of education were changed to a singled structure known as [6:3:3:4]. This means six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary education, three years of senior secondary education, and four years of university education. This reform, in addition to changing the structures of the educational system to a single structure and reducing the duration of the entire education system of Ghana from 21 years to 16 years, vocationalized and broadened the scope of the general curriculum. Moreover, it made tremendous effort in addressing the constraints that impeded the improvement of students' performance in public schools. These efforts were evident in the provision of physical, human and financial resources, the training of teachers, and the strengthening of management of all public schools among others (Aboagye, 2002; Antwi, 1992).

Laudable as the effort were, they never did succeed in improving the performance of public schools as expected. For example, seven years after the 1987 Education Reform, a criterion-referenced test in English and Mathematics was conducted on a sample of primary six pupils across Ghana. The test results revealed that less than four percent of pupils tested attained the criterion score of 60% of the total score in English. Also, one and half percent of the pupils attained the criterion score of 60% in Mathematics (Ministry of Education [MOE], 1994).In 1997, another criterion referenced test conducted in primary 6 in five percent of public primary schools in Ghana indicated that only six percent of pupils attained mastery level in English and only 2.7% attained mastery level in Mathematics (Ghana Education Service (2000) as cited in Government of Ghana, 2002).To the dismay of stakeholders in education, the results of 2002 criterion referenced test in English and Mathematics administered indicated that out of 14,423 pupils who took the test in English, 60% obtained scores between 15 and 44% and, out of 14,951 pupils who took the test in Mathematics, 82% scored between 15 and 44% (Ministry of Education, 2003).

This low academic performance manifested itself at the junior secondary school level and carried over to the senior secondary schools. For instance, the 2004 July-August senior secondary certificate examination results revealed that out of a total of 96,668 candidates who registered for the examination, only 51% passed in six

subjects and above, and 33% passed in five subjects and below, 3.5% failed in all subjects, 0.5% of the candidates were absent, 0.2% of the candidates had one or more of results cancelled, while the remaining 11.8% of the candidates results were withheld pending investigation into examination irregularities (West Africa Examination Council [WAEC], 2005). These show the state of pre-tertiary education in Ghana.

It is against this background that the president's committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana observed that the outcomes of school education are not satisfactory as compared to its objectives (Government of Ghana [GOG], 2002). Therefore, if the state does not put in appropriate measures to address this situation, the human resource base of the nation may weaken resulting in undesirable consequences for the economy.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The academic performances of students of secondary schools, over the years, have not been satisfactory as expected (Government of Ghana [GOG], 2002). For instance, the percentage of candidates awarded West African School certificate in 1970 rose from 50.3% to a high of 73.7 in 1975. This figure dropped to 65.8% in 1977 and rose slightly to 69.7% in 1978. However, it went down to as low as 40.1% and 46.2% in 1980 and 1981 respectively. Also, the percentage of candidates who passed the General Certificate of Education in one or more subjects declined from 32.4% in 1970 to 19.4% in 1975. It, however, rose steadily to 45.9% in 1980 to 47.6% in 1981(Antwi, 1992).

Then, six years after the inception of the 1987 Education Reform, the percentage of candidates who passed in the core subjects(English Language, Mathematics, Integrated Science, and Social Studies) in the senior secondary school certificate examination stood at 60%(WAEC ,2002 as cited in GOG,2002). This shows the state of public secondary education in Ghana for the past years of which public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality are a part. For example, in 2003, out of a total of 467 candidates who entered for the July-August Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination in the Bolgatanga Municipality, only 86 candidates passed in six to eight subjects (West Africa Examination Council, 2005).

In searching for solutions to such problems, some authors, in their studies which involved basic schools in Ghana, have recommended the involvement of teachers in school decision-making (Atakpa & Ankomah, 1998). Also, similar studies, done somewhere else involving secondary schools, have found that teachers' participation in school decision-making is associated with increased academic achievements for students (Kuku& Taylor, 2002; Smylie 1996). This study, therefore, seeks to find out the state of teachers' participation in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality of Ghana in the midst of the low academic achievements for students.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions: What is the level of teachers' involvement in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality? In what decision-making areas are teachers in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality deeply involved? What are the ways of involving teachers in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality? What factors influence teachers' involvement in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality?

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study is a descriptive survey of the state of teachers' participation in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality. A descriptive survey is an attempt to describe what exists at the moment among a group of people (Roger & Joseph, 1983).Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) defined descriptive survey as an attempt to describe existing conditions among a group of people. The researcher's choice of descriptive survey was informed by the fact that it is the most appropriate design for measuring the characteristics of people. Apart from this, descriptive survey provides the researcher the opportunity to sample a population, which would have being too large to observe directly, for study (Babbie, 1983).

2.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

A sample of ninety-nine (99) professional teachers including three school heads, who had been in their present schools for periods not less than six months, were stratified and randomly drawn from three senior secondary school, namely, Bolgatanga Girls Senior Secondary School, Zamse Senior Secondary/Technical school, and Zuarungu Senior Secondary School, for the study. These senior secondary schools were all located in The Bolgatanga Municipality of Ghana. Out of the ninety-nine teachers including school heads who received the questionnaires, eight-seven (87) returned their questionnaires. This figure comprised eighty-four (84) professional teachers and three (3) school heads. This represented a return rate of 87.9%. Proportional stratified and random samplings were employed to ensure that key characteristics of the individual cases in the population were included in the sample (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

2.3 Instrument

The principal instruments used in this study were two sets of questionnaires developed by the researcher. A 45 item questionnaire was used to solicit responses from teachers and another 16 item questionnaire was used to solicit responses from school heads. The teachers' questionnaire was in five sections. The first section of the questionnaire contained five items which measured the level of teachers' participation in school decision-making. The respondents were asked to rank the items according to their occurrence in the day-to-day administration of their respective schools as follows: [1st] most often, [2nd] more often, [3rd] much often, [4th] often, and [5th] least often.

The second section contained a modified version of Russell, Copper, and Greenbatt (1992) teachers' involvement and participation scale [tips] which measured teachers' involvement in school decision-making. This scale was modified to suit the Ghanaian context. It was a five-point Likert scale, which contained eleven items. These items were divided into six sub-scales such as curriculum and instruction [items 6 and 7], student matters [items 8 and 9], staffing [items 10 and 11], operations/physical facilities [items 12 and 13], and school-community relationship [items 14, 15, and 16]. The items of each sub-scale was rated as "always", "frequently", "occasionally", "seldom", and "never". For the purpose of data analysis, responses to ratings such as "always", "frequently", "occasionally", and "seldom" for each item were combined to form a singled rating such as "involved". Also, the response to the rating "never" of each item was categorized as "not involved". However, two alternate response items [items 17 and 18] were added to this section of the questionnaire to ascertain teachers' involvement in school financial matters. These additional items were rated: "involved" or "not involved".

The third section contained ten items which sought to measure teachers' involvement in school decision making through delegation, school meeting, school board, and school committee. Delegation had three alternative response items [items 19, 20, and 21], which were rated as either "involved" or "not involved". Also, the school meeting scale had three Likert items [items 22, 23, and 24], which were rated as "always", "frequently", "occasionally", "seldom", and "never". But, for the purpose of data analysis, the responses to the ratings such as "always", "frequently", "occasionally", and "seldom" for each of the items were combined into a single category known as "involved". Also, the response to the rating "never" of each of the items was categorized as "not involved". On the issue of teacher involvement in school decision-making via school board, two items [items 25 and 26] were asked and rated as "involved" and "not involved". A dimension such as school committee had two multiple response items [items 27 and 28] whose responses were as follows: "none", "discipline committee", "food committee", "entertainment committee", "maintenance committee", "academic board", "procurement committee", and other(s).

The fourth section used factors influencing teachers' participation in school decision-making scale [fitps] which had 18 items and was designed by the researcher to ascertain factors which influence teachers' involvement in school decision-making. This scale had four sub-scales covering dimensions such as job satisfaction [items 29 and 30], professional development [items 31, 32, 33, and 34], job commitment [items 35 and 36], and innovativeness [37, 38, and 39]. These sub-scales contained five-point Likert items which were rated as "always", "frequently", "occasionally", "seldom", and "never". For the purpose of data analysis, the responses to ratings such as "always", "frequently", "occasionally", and "seldom" for each item were merged into a singled rating known as "involved". Also, the response to the rating "never" of each item was labeled as "not involved".

The fifth section dealt with teachers' demographic characteristics and had six items whose dimensions and responses were as follows: item 40 sex- male and female, item 41 age-29yrs or less, 30-39yrs, and 40-49yrs, 50yrs or more. Item 42 years taught as a teacher- 5yrs or less, 6-12yrs, 13-19yrs, 20yrs or more, item 43 duration taught in present school-5months or less, 6-12months, 13-19months,20months or more, item 44 highest academic qualification-below first degree, first degree, second degree, and PhD, and item 45 professional teacher -yes or no.

The school head questionnaire had sixteen Likert-type items, which were grouped under three dimensions: administrative principles, decision-making style, and demographic characteristics of school heads. On administrative principles, three Likert-type items [1, 2, and 3] were asked, and whose responses were rated as "strongly agree" "agree" "uncertain", disagree", strongly disagree". For the purpose of data analysis, the responses to the ratings such as "strongly agree" and "agree" for each item were merged into a singled rating known as "agreed" while "disagree" and "strongly disagree" were also amalgamated into a single category known as "disagreed". Also, the decision-making style had eight Likert items [4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11]. These items were rated as "most important", "more important", "much important"," important", and "not important". However, the responses to the ratings such as "most important", "more important", "much important", and "important" for each item were merged into a singled rating known as   "important" for the purpose of data analysis. Also, the response to the rating "not important" of each item was maintained as "not important".

The demographic characteristics of the school heads had five correct response items whose dimensions and

responses were as follows: item 12 sex-male and female, item 13 age-29yrs or less, 30-39yrs, 40-49yrs, 50yrs or more, item 14 years as school head-5yrs or less, 6-12yrs, 13-19yrs, 20yrs or more, item 15 duration in present school as head-5yrs or less, 6-12yrs, 13-20yrs, 21 yrs or more, item 16 highest academic qualification- below first degree, first degree, second degree, and PhD.

2.4 Validity and Reliability of Instrument

Two methods were used to validate the questionnaires. These were face validity and content validity. Face validity of the items of a questionnaire referred to the degree to which the items appeared to be a measure of the variables of concern (Babbie, 1983) while content validity of the items of a questionnaire referred to the adequacy of the items as a true indicators and measure of a variable and appropriateness of the items' format in the questionnaire (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000). To ensure the questionnaires had the desired validity, the researcher first review literature to ascertain how similar variables were operationally defined, their indicators, and format of their questionnaires. This guided the researcher to operationally define the variables under study and designed questionnaires to measure them. Copies of the designed questionnaires were given to experts in educational research and some teachers of Management to ascertain their face and content validity. Based on the feed-back obtained, the questionnaires were revised.

After validating the questionnaires, they were further subjected to reliability test. Reliability of the questionnaires were obtained by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS].The teachers' questionnaire was administered to 30 professional teachers randomly drawn from Zamse senior secondary school for pre-testing. The overall Alpha reliability for the teachers' involvement and participation scale was 0.8093 while its sub-scales had the following: curriculum and instruction [0.8077], student matters [0.8616], staffing [0.9386], operations/physical facilities [0.8996], and school-community relationship [0.8005], and financial matters [0.8727]. However, Russell, Copper, and Greenbatt (1992) teachers' involvement and participation scale [tips] reported an overall Combach Alpha reliability of 0.96 and its sub-scales had the following internal reliability: curriculum and instruction [0.87], budgeting [0.86], staffing [0.87], and operations/physical facilities [0.89].

On ways of involving teachers in school decision-making, school meeting scale had an internal reliability of 0.7815. The overall Combach Alpha reliability for factor influencing teachers' participation in school decision-making scale was 0.7638 while its sub-scales had the following: job satisfaction [0.7000], professional development [0.7289], job commitment [0.7391], and innovativeness [0.8575]. These reliability coefficients showed the extent to which a measuring instrument was likely to produce consistent scores. The closer the index was to one the greater the likelihood of the instrument producing consistent scores. However, the closer the index was to zero, the lower the likelihood of obtaining consistent scores. Therefore, a good instrument was one whose reliability coefficient index was closer to one (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000).

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Frequency counts, percentages, and mean were used to analyze the data collected. This formed the basis of this report.

3. Findings

3.1 Background Characteristics of Respondents

Out of the 87 respondents, 84 were professional teachers and, out of this number 64(76.2%) constituted males while 20(23.8%) represented females. Also, 60.7% of the professional teachers aged 30-39 years, 23.8% aged between 40-49 years while 8.3% aged 29 years or less. However, the older group, aged 50years or more, only constituted 7.1%.

In addition, 83.3% of the total respondents were first degree holders. Out of this number, 74.3% were males and 25.7% were females. The remaining 16.7% of the respondents held academic qualifications below first degree. Moreover, 45.2% of the total respondents had 6-12 years of teaching experience while 44.1% had 13 or more years of teaching experience. However, only 10.7% taught for less than six years .Apart from these, 58.1% of the respondents were in their respective schools for periods not less than 20 months while 44.1% were in their present schools for periods less than 20 months.

However, the remaining three respondents were school heads who consisted of two males and a female. The males aged 50 years or more and had been school heads for periods not less than 12years. However, their female counterpart aged between 40-49 years and had been heading a school for a period not less than 6 years. Among the school heads, one male had a first degree and the others had Master's degrees. In addition, each of them was in their current post for a period not less than 20 months.

3.2 Levels of Teachers' Involvement in School Decision-Making

The study found that, out of the five items presented to the respondents [teachers] to ascertain the level at which their school heads involved them in school decision-making, item three- the school head presents the problem to the teachers and solicits their suggestions before he/she makes the final decision-was ranked first by 31(36.9%)

of the total respondents as the most often decision-making practice of their school heads. Also, item four-the school head presents the problem to the teachers and jointly takes the decision with them-was ranked second by 18 (21.4%) of the total respondents. Item two-the school head makes a decision and sells it to the teachers to solicit their support-was ranked third and fourth by 16(19%) and 15(17.9%) of the total respondents respectively. Moreover, item one-the school head takes a decision alone and announces it to the teachers-was ranked fifth by 48(57.1%) of the total respondents. The school heads noted that these levels of teachers' involvement in school decision-making were based on factors such as the teachers' personal interest at stake, teachers' expertise in solving the problem, the quality of the decision needed, the information available to the teachers to make a quality decision, the degree of commitment of the teachers to the decision, and the sufficiency of information the teachers have in taking the decision.

3.3 Areas in Which Teachers are involved in School Decision-Making

3.3.1 Curriculum and Instruction

The study found that majority of the respondents was involved in curriculum and instructional activities. For instance, 83(98.8 %) of the total respondents decided what teaching and learning support material to be used for their lessons while 82(97.6%) of the total respondents planned their lessons alone.

3.3.2 Students' Matters

The study revealed that majority of the respondents was not involved in students' admission and placement exercises. As a result, 50(59.5%) of the total respondents never took part in formulating guidelines for students' admission into their schools. Also, 64(76.1%) of the total respondents never participated in the placement of students into programs of study in their respective schools.

3.3.3 Staffing

 The study found that all the 84(100%) respondents were involved in staffing activity such as the formulation of guidelines for the recruitment of teachers into their schools. However, 73(86.9%) of the total respondents was never given the opportunity to recommend fellow teachers for promotion.

3.3.4 School Operation

The study found that majority of the respondents was involved in making decisions concerning school operations. Therefore, 69(82.1%) of the total respondents participated in formulating safety guidelines for the use of school facilities. Moreover, 66(78.7%) of the total respondents took part in deciding the use of their school facilities.

3.3.5 School-Community Relationship

The study revealed that majority of the total respondents was engaged in activities that promoted school-community relationship. Thus, 50(59.5%) of the total respondents participated in formulating guidelines for their schools' participation in community programmes so as to promote good school-community relationship. Also, 65(77.5%) of the total respondents took part in activities of Parent Teacher Association [PTA] of their schools while 63(75%) of the total respondents was involved in planning school clean-up exercises in their respective communities.

3.3.6 Financial Matters

The study revealed that majority of the respondents was never involved in decision-making concerning financial matters. As a result, 59(70.2%) of the total respondents did not take part in deciding how much their departments spend each year. Furthermore, 79(94%) of the total respondents did not known the amount of money voted for their departments each academic year.

3.4 Ways of Involving Teachers in School Decision-Making

3.4.1 Teachers' Involvement in School Decision-Making via Delegation

The study found that most of the respondents agreed that some of form of delegation did exist in their respective schools. As a result, 55(65.5%) of the total respondents said that activities in their schools never slowed down when their school heads were away. Also, 49(58.3%) of the total respondents held the view that their school heads did not take a long time to get a simple job done. Moreover, 64(76.2%) of the total respondents settled that their school heads do follow-up to find out how far they have performed assigned jobs.

3.4.2 Teachers' Involvement in School Decision-Making via School Meetings

The study shown that majority of the respondents participate in school staff meetings. Hence, 72(85.7%) of the total respondents tabled proposals for discussion during staff meetings in their schools. Also, 78(92.8%) of the total respondents took part in discussions at staff meetings. However, 43(51.1%) of the total respondents never submitted any issues as agenda items for staff meetings while only 41(49.9%) of the total respondents did.

3.4.3 Teachers' Involvement in School Decision-Making via School Boards

On the issue of teacher involvement in school decision-making via school board activities, all 84(100%) of the total respondents agreed that their respective schools had Board of Governors with teacher representation. However, only 33(39.3%) of the total respondents did not know that they were represented at school Board meeting by a teacher.

3.4.4 Teachers' Involvement in School Decision-Making via School Committee System

On the area of school committee, 84(100%) of the total respondents were asked to identify the number of committees existing in their schools, 61(72.6%) of the total respondents identified three or more committees to exist in their schools while 13(15.5%) of the total respondents identified two committees, 7(8.3%) of the total respondents identified one committee, and 3(3.6%) of the total respondents identified none. Also, out of the 84 respondents, 47(56.0%) of the total respondents were not members of any committee while 6(7.1%) were members of three or more committees, 11(13.1%) of the total respondents belonged to two committees, and 20(23.8%) of the total respondents was members of one committee.

3.5 Factors Influencing Teachers' Participation in School Decision-Making.

The study found that the topmost factors, in order of descending mean[x], identified by the respondents to influence their participation in school decision-making were the need for belongingness[x=4.52], the need to work to meet job standards[x=4.35], the need for acquiring new knowledge[x=4.33], the acceptance of one's job as a central part of one's life[x=4.30], the need to use new teaching methods[x=4.27], the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new teaching methods[x=4.19], the need to enhanced one's skills in decision-making[x=4.18], the need for recognition[x=4.14], the need to work harder to attain results[x=4.14], the need to take on higher responsibility with confidence[x=4.13], and the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new equipment[x=4.02]. However, the need to take independent decisions[x=3.75], the need to receive authorization to take decisions[x=3.44], the desire to be part of the school[x=3.42], having the expertise to contribute meaningfully in school decision-making[x=3.32], and taking part in decision-making when one's interest is at stake[x=2.38] were considered by the respondents as less influencing factors.

4. Discussion of findings

The analysis of data on the levels of teachers' involvement in school decision-making with school heads revealed that the teachers were most often in consultative decision-making with their school heads. This goes to affirmed Tannenbaum and Schmidit's (1958) assertion that, in administrative practice, the leadership style and their accompanying employees[teachers'] involvement in decision-making is somewhere between school heads announcing a decision to teachers and teachers taking full control of decision-making. This finding implies that there is the likelihood of greater teacher involvement in school decision-making. Gregory and Ricky (1998) pointed out that employees' [teachers'] involvement in school decision-making brings about increased teacher satisfaction, reduced group conflict and satisfied high order needs such as self-esteem and self-actualization. This, in totality, increases teacher productivity. Lucey (1994) corroborated this when Lucey pointed out that there is some evidence that participative styles are associated with higher-producing groups. The possible reason for this level of teacher involvement in school decision-making is the factors, which the school heads, took into consideration when they were involving their teachers in decision-making. The prominent ones identified by this study were the teachers' interest at stake, teachers' expertise in solving the problem, the quality of the decision needed, the information available to the teachers to make a quality decision, the degree of commitment of the teachers to the decision, and the sufficiency of information the teachers have in making a quality decision. Also, another possible explanation for this finding is that some school heads are unsecured and fearful of diminishing their power when they allow greater participation of teachers in school decision-making. As a result, all that they can do is to adapt pseudo-participation by consulting their teachers for ideas in order to take a decision. However, in reality, such ideas do not sometimes influence the final decision.

Also, the study into school decision-making areas in which teachers were deeply involved revealed the following:

1. The study found that teachers were involved in curriculum and instructional decisions by planning their lessons alone and deciding the teaching and learning support materials to be used for such lessons. This finding agrees with Kuku and Taylor (2002), whose comparative study found that faculty teachers [departmental teachers] participated in decision-making regarding curriculum and instruction. This finding could mean that teachers have a high preference for taking decisions on curriculum and instructional activities. Therefore, school heads could enhance this to promote the success of the implementation of their school curriculum because, according to Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1990), the success of a curriculum implementation depends on the understanding and commitment that teachers have towards the curriculum. This finding may, also, be as a result of teachers' roles in curriculum implementation. A nation with cultural diversity [such as Ghana] places its teachers in a position that compels them to interpret and implement the content of the curriculum to the needs of the students, community, and the nation as a whole (Commonwealth Secretariat [CWS], 1993).

2. The study indicated that teachers never made decisions on students' matters such as formulating guidelines for students' admission into their schools and placement of students into programmes of study. The finding agrees with Kuku and Taylor (2002).Kuku and Taylor (2002) found that faculty teachers hardly ever participated in decision-making involving students' matters. Perhaps a reason for

this situation can be found in Mankoe's (2002) observation that teachers' view participation as additional administrative responsibility to their teaching workload or they lack the professional competence to participate. One could further argue that this is as a result of administrative practices and work culture. The placement of students into programmes of study in senior secondary schools in Ghana is most often done by school heads and their assistants. In some situations, this may be assigned to a placement and orientation committee. However, the inception of the computerized schools' selection and placement system [CSSPS] in September, 2005, has replaced the manual system of selection and placement of students into schools and programmes of study. This has completely disengaged teachers of senior secondary schools from such activities (Ghana Education Service, 2003).

3. The study found that teachers did not take decisions involving staffing such as the recommendation of their fellow teachers for promotion. This finding may be a reflection of current administrative practices. Under the present system of education, senior secondary school heads have limited power in the appointment, promotion, and disciplining of teachers, school heads can only recruit teachers for their respective schools based on approval from the Metropolitan, Municipal or District Director of Education. However, the Director–General of Education, the Metropolitan, Municipal or District Director of Education are   responsible for the recruitment and appointment of teachers based on recommendation from school heads(Ghana Education Service Council, 2002).As a result, teachers could not have the chance of participating in such decision-making. It is against such background that the President's Committee on Review of Educational Reforms in Ghana recommended that senior secondary school heads should be involved in the selection of teachers for their respective schools (Government of Ghana, 2002). Adesina (1990) observed that such involvement will enable school heads to select teachers who can contribute meaningfully to the success of their schools.

4. The study found that teachers made decisions on school operation by deciding the use of school facilities and formulating safety guidelines for their use. This is in congruent with the finding of Kuku and Taylor (2000), Kuku and Taylor found that faculty teachers [departmental teachers] participated in making decisions involving school operation [management of school buildings]. It has corresponding relevance for maintaining school physical facilities. Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1990) noted that a good school is one, which maintains an orderly and a safe environment for students and teachers. Sergiovanni and Starrant (1998) pointed out that such school environment improves students' performance. Hence, there is the need to promote greater teacher involvement in the management of school operation/facilities.

5. The study revealed that teachers made decisions on school-community relationship by planning school clean-up exercises in their communities, taking part in activities of the Parent Teacher Association [PTA] of their schools and formulating guidelines for their schools' participation in community programmes. This result confirms Adesina's (1990) view that teachers must have adequate knowledge of the communities in which their respective schools are situated in order to be in a better position to make a wide variety of satisfactory decisions in adapting the content of the national curriculum to meet the needs and abilities of the students and the communities as a whole. Therefore, the teachers must be involved in community activities in order to understand the community better. Also, under the Provisional National Defence Council[PNDC] Law 207, both boarding and day senior secondary schools are community-based schools and, under this concept, communities are to assist the schools set and achieve their performance targets(Mankoe, 2002). Thus, the school heads and their teachers must build strong relationship with these communities in order to win their support (Farrant, 1980). To do this, Mankoe (2002) noted that teachers must actively participate in community activities such as clean-up campaign, health education, and festivals. Farrant (1980) further noted that, this way, schools could win the support of the communities and play their role as sub-units of the communities in training the youth.

6. The study further found that teachers did not either know the amount of money voted for their department each academic year or take part in deciding how much their departments spend each year. This confirms Sabo, Barnes, and Hoy's (1996) assertion that budgeting and hiring of teachers are decision-making areas where teachers are highly deprived. On the contrary, Kuku and Taylor (2002) found that teachers sometimes make decision on budgeting. One possible reason for this finding can be found in the observation of the president's committee on the review of the education reforms in Ghana. The committee observed that due to lack of transparency in financial management of schools, school heads do not involve their teachers in school financial matters. Consequently, there is a great deal of dissatisfaction among staff (Government of Ghana, 2002). It is along this   line that Duodo (2001) advised that school heads must ensure that all sections and departments are consulted and their needs incorporated in the school budget. Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) explained that this is necessary to avert the

uncertainty that marks budget estimates. Asiedu-Akrofi further cautioned that school heads and bursars should not monopolize preparation of school budget estimates because the teachers who use the equipments and other supplies in the classrooms, laboratories, and workshops are in a better position to advise them.

Moreover, the investigation into ways of involving teachers in school decision-making found the following:

1. The study revealed that teachers were involved in school decision-making through delegation. As a result, activities in their schools did not slow down or come to a halt in the absence of the school heads. Also, the school heads followed up to find out how far teachers had performed tasks assigned to them. Apart from these, the school heads did not take a long time to get a simple job done. This finding agrees with the Ghana Education Service's (2001) assertion that school which practice delegation are those whose heads do not feel pressed for time to neither perform their daily activities nor take a long time to get a simple job done. In addition, activities in such schools do not slow down or come to a halt in the absence of the school heads. Moreover, the teachers do not always wait for the school heads' instructions before they can perform their duties.

2. The study indicated that teachers participated in school meetings by tabling proposal for discussion and involving in discussions at staff meetings but did not submit issues for incorporation as agenda items. This finding may be as a result of the nature in which meetings were planned. Teachers' participation in school meetings largely depend on how well the meeting is planned and organized. A well-planned meeting is one whose members are pre-informed of agenda items, time, and venue of the meeting and are given the opportunity to submit other issues for incorporation as agenda items and as well as given the opportunity to participate. In addition, it must be one, which is properly convened (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1978). Therefore, one can say that the meetings did not give room for submission of other issues for incorporation as agenda items or they were impromptu meetings and participants did not have the opportunity to submit issues for incorporation as agenda items but only has to participate or the participants lack the competence to do so.

3. The study further found all three senior secondary schools to have school Board of Governors with teacher representation. This finding is as a result of the role school Board of Governors play in the management of schools. Without such a body, the schools cannot carry out certain activities. Therefore, they are compelled to institute it. The representation of teachers in any school Board of Governors is restricted by guidelines governing the composition of such body. In line with the guidelines, a single teacher represents all teachers in each school Board meeting irrespective of the number of teachers in each school. One is unrepresentative considering the teacher population of each school and would not give teachers any meaningful participation in such meetings.

4. The study revealed that a majority of the respondents was not members of the school committees. This finding is in contrast with Mankoe(2002) and Ozigi's (1991) view that all members of the teaching staff must be engaged in, at least, one or two committees so that all talents could be maximized to the benefits of the school without overburdening a few teachers.

In addition, the investigation into the factors that influence teachers' involvement in school decision-making revealed the following:

1. The low order need such as the need for belongingness was ranked first as the topmost factor responsible for teacher involvement in school decision-making. This finding was earlier noted by Herzberg, Mausner, and Synderman (1959) as a need whose fulfillment in pursuit of an organizational goal brings job satisfaction. Herzberg, et al (1959) found that the need for belongingness [peer and group relationship] as a job-environment factor [dissatisfier], which does not motivate but can cause job dissatisfaction if it is not present in the accepted standard. However, other researchers such as Maslow as cited in Lucey (1994) argued that both job-content motivators and job-environment factors including the need for belongingness do separately motivate. This is what Burke and Bittel (1981) meant when they cited employee participation in decision-making as a motivator, which employees work to attain in pursuit of the goals of an organization. On the contrary, Gregory and Ricky (1998) viewed that employees [teachers] who successfully participate in a decision-making, its implementation, and achieving its desired outcomes satisfy their high order needs such as the need for achievement, recognition, responsibility, and self-esteem, which, according to Lucey (1994), are responsible for increase productivity.

2. The need to work to meet job standards was ranked as the second topmost factor accountable for teacher participation in school decision-making. This finding agrees with Plunkett and Fournier's (1996) assertion that teacher involvement in school decision-making is a powerful "antidote" against complacency and failure in any institution. In line with this, Lucey (1994) explained that, in such situation, teachers usually implement their decision with greater speed and effectiveness to attain the

expected result. Therefore, substantial decrease in time is required in implementing them (Cameron &Whetten, 1995).

3. The need to acquire new knowledge was ranked as the third topmost factor behind teacher participation in school decision-making. This result confirms the assertion by Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) that when teachers are involved in the complete process of decision-making, they are likely to acquire some experience, which would put them in a better position to make work decisions for themselves without overburdening their superiors'[school heads] for advice or slow down work in the absence of their school heads. On the same line, Wasley (1991) noted that the best way teachers can influence their professional practices is to spend some time learning and working with their colleagues.

4. The acceptance of one's job as a central part of one's life was ranked as the fourth topmost factor responsible for teacher involvement in school decision-making. This finding supports the view of Smylie (1996) that teachers who are involved in school decision-making, in turn, become ideologically and culturally committed to act in the best interest of the institution with a true sense of ownership. Cosgrave (1975) noted that such employees [teachers] usually see their work as a central part of their life.

5. The need to use new teaching methods and the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new equipment were ranked as fifth and sixth respectively as factors responsible for teachers' involvement in school decision-making. This result buttresses the assertion that teachers, who participate in school decision-making are more willing to take instructional risk and experiment with new ideas. As a result, there is continuous improvement in classroom practices and the overall performance of students (Abdal-Haqq, 1988).

    Finally, the need for belongingness, the need to work to meet job standards, the need for acquiring new knowledge, the acceptance of one's job as a central part of one's life, the need to use new teaching methods, the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new teaching methods, the need to enhanced one's skills in decision-making, the need for recognition, the need to work harder to attain results, the need to take on higher responsibility with confidence, and the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new equipment have corresponding degree of relevance to teacher motivation via participative decision-making. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993) noted that these factors are some of the motivating factors behind successful schools. Burke and Bittel (1981), also, pointed out that school heads could create opportunities for teachers to satisfy these needs in pursuit of the goals of their schools. This will motivate teachers to improve their own performance and that of their students.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that teachers' involvement in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in Ghana especially the Bolgatanga municipality is mostly consultative and centres on issues boarding curriculum and instruction, school operation, and school-community relationship to the neglect of students' admission and placement, staffing, and financial matters. Teachers' involvement in decision-making is done via delegation, school meetings, school Boards of Governors, and school committees. This has largely being influenced by factors such as the need for belongingness, the need to work to meet job standards, the need for acquiring new knowledge, the acceptance of one's job as a central part of one's life, the need to use new teaching methods, the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new teaching methods, the need to enhanced one's skills in decision-making, the need for recognition, the need to work harder to attain results, the need to take on higher responsibility with confidence, and the need to acquaint oneself with the use of new equipment.

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