

## Teachers Decisional Involvement in Public Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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### ABSTRACT

The study examined teacher decisional involvement in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Four research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. The researcher adopted a descriptive survey research design for this study. The population for the study was 8,885 principals and teachers. The sample size of the study was 888 respondents. The researcher utilized stratified, proportionate random sampling techniques in order to determine the sample size of the respondents. The instrument for data collection was a structured 42-item questionnaire titled "Teachers' Involvement in Decision Making Questionnaire (TIDMQ)". The instrument was validated by three research experts in Faculty of Education, ESUT. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha method was used to compute the internal consistency of the instrument. The computation yielded .80 for cluster 1 and .76 for cluster 2, .81 for cluster 3 and .79 for cluster 4. The instrument had an overall reliability index of .79 which indicated that the instrument was reliable and, therefore, considered appropriate for use for the study. Mean and standard deviation were used for research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical method at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that teachers are involved in decision making in the areas of student's affairs and staff affairs and school discipline. Teachers are not involved in the school planning process. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that Enugu State government should periodically involve teachers during decision making as it concerns staff affairs. This will make the teachers to be productive. Ministry of Education should organize regular interactive sessions for principals and teachers to exchange ideas and gain information to improve their collaborative decision makings on students' affairs.

**Keywords:** Teachers, Decision Making, Involvement, Secondary Schools

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### INTRODUCTION

Education has a core focus on self-actualization, where the individual's characteristics should influence the educational content, methods, and materials. It is widely recognized worldwide as a means for national development and transformation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Education serves as a tool to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for a country's progress, requiring efficient management of human and material resources within schools (Uzogor and Nwankwo, 2020). The Nigerian education system consists of several levels: kindergarten, basic, secondary, and tertiary (FRN, 2013). Among these, secondary

education holds particular importance as it comes after basic education and before tertiary education. It plays a critical role in shaping students' academic and professional futures (Ogunbiyi, 2018). Secondary education has two primary objectives: preparing students for practical life in society and preparing them for higher education (FRN, 2013). However, concerns have been raised about the poor performance of students, and some attribute it to the inadequate implementation of decisions and policies by teachers. Teachers, on the other hand, claim that their involvement in decision-making processes within secondary schools has been limited.



The role of secondary schools in fostering staff decision-making abilities is pivotal.

Decision making is a vital cognitive process that involves choosing the most suitable option from various alternatives to achieve specific goals or objectives. It permeates every aspect of human life, from everyday tasks to more complex personal and professional choices. Okumbe (2018) defined decision making as the process of identifying a particular problem's nature and selecting the best alternative available to solve it. It encompasses defining objectives, allocating resources such as people, money, materials, and authority, and determining the means of execution (Gemechu, 2014). For humans, decision-making is a universal necessity, and it involves evaluating and selecting options based on values and preferences (Omobude and Igbudu, 2012). In the academic context, decision making is a collaborative process involving various stakeholders, and among them, teachers play a crucial role. Teachers are implementers of the school curriculum and actively contribute to organizing school activities alongside principals (Rabacal, 2019).

The involvement of teachers in decision making refers to the extent to which they are included in the process of making choices that influence their work, students, and the overall learning environment. This participative approach utilizes the full capacity of teachers, fostering a sense of commitment to the success of the organization (Robbins in Gemechu, 2014). As professionals with expertise in different subjects, teachers are better equipped to make informed decisions that align with their roles and responsibilities (Gemechu, 2014). Increasing teacher participation in decision making contributes to more responsive school policies and management that address societal needs (Gemechu, 2014).

Teachers need to be actively engaged in school-based decisions to provide effective leadership (Omobude and Igbudu, 2012). Research shows that involving employees in decision making leads to reduced absenteeism, greater organizational commitment, improved performance, lower turnover, and increased job satisfaction (Muindi, 2011). Duze (2011) emphasized that teachers' adequate involvement in decision making is crucial not only for accepting and implementing decisions but also for maintaining internal discipline in schools and fostering a positive attitude towards school work, ultimately enhancing the quality of future decisions. Teachers can contribute to decision making in various areas, including students' affairs, staff affairs, school discipline, planning, curriculum and instruction, resource utilization, and school policies (Duze, 2011). In this particular study, the researcher focused on students' and staff affairs.

Students' affairs encompass the non-academic responsibilities focused on the well-being of pupils within a school environment. Akilaiya in Ozioko (2014) defines students' affairs as an endeavor to address the welfare of students, aiming to help them build a promising future while maximizing their educational pursuits and enhancing both personal and institutional reputation within and beyond the educational sphere. Teachers, who impart knowledge and guidance to students in the classroom, play a vital role in decision-making concerning students' affairs in the school (Yao, 2014). These decisions cover various aspects, such as admission, orientation, registration, discipline, health and safety services, co-curricular activities, and result processing, among others.

Another area where teachers may be involved in decision-making is staff affairs. Staff affairs are significant for two primary

reasons: they boost staff morale and confidence, leading to increased focus on their job and optimal performance. The engagement of teachers in decision-making regarding staff affairs, as emphasized by Wadesango and Bayaga (2013), makes these decisions more likely to be accepted and effectively implemented because they align with the interests of those responsible for their execution. Decision-making in staff affairs covers issues like orientation, supervision, staff welfare, training, communication, and discipline, among others. The decisions made in staff affairs directly impact teachers, who are professionals and specialists in various subject areas, making them better equipped to make appropriate decisions while considering their responsibilities as educators (Ndiku in Uzogor and Nwankwo, 2020). This study seeks to determine the extent of teachers' involvement in staff affairs despite the efforts made by school principals.

The principal serves as the school's Chief executive, assuming responsibility for all actions and inactions within the school. Meador (2014) defined the principal as an educator with executive authority over the institution, while Nwogu and Ebunu (2019) emphasize their role as managers of secondary education. According to Onyeike and Nwosu (2018), the principal acts as a standard setter, leading the way in developing aspirations and expectations for both teachers and students to excel. With the rise of teacher empowerment, there is a growing expectation to involve teachers in making important decisions about school matters. Kiami, Chemnjor, and Macharia (2014) underscore the importance of bringing teachers on board, especially when critical decisions concerning students are being deliberated. Teachers have various responsibilities, including preparing lesson notes, delivering instruction, maintaining student records, and preparing teaching aids.

Including them in decision-making processes enables them to fulfill these roles effectively (Mutuku and Orodho, 2014). Based on this literature review, the researcher aims to investigate the extent of teachers' involvement in decision making in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria, especially in Enugu State, has been below expectations over the years. There has been a significant decline in the percentage of students awarded the West African School Certificate. The public has expressed concerns that the poor implementation of certain decisions and policies by teachers is to blame for the students' lackluster performance. On the other hand, teachers argue that they have had very limited involvement in decision-making within secondary schools. This lack of input has led to frequent disruptions of law and order in schools, as certain decisions are made without considering the teachers' perspectives. In some cases, schools have been forced to close for extended periods, causing significant disruptions to the educational system. Teachers believe that they should be more actively involved in decision-making processes, particularly concerning students' affairs and staff affairs, as they are the ones ultimately responsible for implementing policies. This study aims to investigate the extent of teachers' participation in decision-making in public secondary schools in Enugu State. The central question of this study is, "To what extent are teachers involved in decision-making in public secondary schools in Enugu State?"

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to ascertain teacher decisional involvement in public secondary schools in Enugu state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the extent of teacher decisional involvement in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State;
2. ascertain the extent of teacher decisional involvement in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State;
3. Identify the extent of teacher decisional involvement in fostering school discipline in public secondary schools in Enugu State;
4. Find out the extent of teacher decisional involvement in the area of school planning in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do teacher decisional involvement in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State?
2. To what extent do teacher decisional involved in decision in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State?
3. To what extent do teachers involved in decision in fostering school discipline in public secondary schools in Enugu State?
4. To what extent do teachers involved in decision in the area of school planning in public secondary schools in Enugu State?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided this study and they were tested at .05 level of significance:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in terms of

student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

- H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision in fostering school discipline in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

- H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision in the area of school planning in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### Research Method

In this study, the researcher adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design is defined as one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting, describing and analyzing data from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu, 2015). This research design is chosen because it has been accepted as a useful tool in educational research for describing existing conditions and for evaluating effectiveness of programmes. Also, it involves the collection of data from a sample of the principals and teachers using questionnaire as instrument for data collection for teachers' involvement in decision making in public schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State**

N = 841

ITEMS		Principals n = 22			Teachers n = 819		
S/N	Teachers' involve in decision making in students' affairs in the following extent:	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
1	organising co-curricular activities for students in the school.	2.65	.89	GE	2.65	.93	GE
2	medical services for students.	2.67	.97	GE	2.56	.93	GE
3	library services for students.	2.59	.94	GE	2.57	.90	GE
4	processing of students' admission in the school.	2.50	.86	GE	2.52	.93	GE
5	organising orientation programme for students in the school.	2.50	.90	GE	2.59	.82	GE
6	deciding of mode of students' continuous assessment.	2.68	.94	GE	2.61	.93	GE
<b>Cluster Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.60</b>	<b>.91</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>.89</b>	<b>GE</b>

The data analysis on Table 1 above shows the mean ratings of both principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State. In the above table, the principals' mean ranged from 2.50 to 2.73, while the teachers' mean ranged from 2.52

to 2.65. The values of the cluster mean are 2.60 and 2.59 with standard deviations of .91 and .89 for both principals and teachers. The outcome of Table 1 revealed that teachers are involved in decision making in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State to a great extent.

**Table 2: Mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State**

ITEMS		Principals n = 22			Teachers n = 819		
S/N	Teachers' involve in decision making in staff affairs in the following extent:	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
7	taking part in staff welfare schemes.	2.63	.94	GE	2.58	.91	GE

8	taking active part in staff development.	2.53	.96	GE	2.41	.92	LE
9	involving in security services of staff.	2.52	.94	GE	2.57	.92	GE
10	being part of library services for staff.	2.54	.98	GE	2.55	.92	GE
11	involve in staff placement.	2.43	.90	LE	2.40	.98	LE
12	providing health services to staff.	2.59	.96	GE	2.57	.92	GE
<b>Cluster Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.54</b>	<b>.94</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>2.51</b>	<b>.93</b>	<b>GE</b>

The data analysis on Table 2 above shows the mean ratings of both principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State. In the above table, the principals' mean ranged from 2.40 to 2.65, while the teachers' mean ranged from 2.36

to 2.58. The values of the cluster mean are 2.54 and 2.51 with standard deviations of .94 and .93 for both principals and teachers. The outcome of table 2 revealed that teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State to a great extent.

**Table 3: Summary of t-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State**

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	P-value	Decision
Principals	22	2.60	0.91	839	.053	Honot rejected
Teachers	819	2.59	0.89			

Data in Table 3 for principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State show that at 839 degree of freedom, the p-value was .053. The outcome of the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for this study. This signifies

that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in terms of student's affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

**Table 4: Summary of t-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State**

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	P-value	Decision
Principals	22	2.54	0.94			Honot
Teachers	819	2.51	0.93	839	.061	Rejected

Data in Table 4 for principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State show that at 839 degree of freedom, the p-value was .061. The outcome of the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for this study. This implies that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent to which teachers are involved in decision making in the aspect of staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### Discussion of Findings

The study's results indicated that teachers play a substantial role in decision-making concerning students' affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding aligns with previous research by Mosheti (2013) and Uzogor and Nwankwo (2020), both of whom also observed high levels of teacher involvement in decision-making related to guiding students' academic progress and future career choices, as well as in matters concerning students' affairs.

Furthermore, the study's findings suggested that teachers are similarly actively engaged in decision-making regarding staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding is consistent with previous research by Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011) and Uzogor and Nwankwo (2020), both of

whom reported a significant level of teacher involvement in staff-related decision-making processes. However, the study's results differed from the findings of Wadesango and Bayaga (2013), who argued that teachers were not significantly involved in staff affairs, particularly in the allocation of teaching load in most of the participating schools.

Overall, the study revealed that there is no significant difference between the perspectives of principals and teachers regarding the extent of teacher involvement in decision-making, both concerning student affairs and staff affairs in public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding is in agreement with the observations made by Uzogor and Nwankwo (2020) on the absence of a significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers regarding the level of principals' involvement of teachers in decision-making on various school issues.

### Conclusion

The study determined teachers' involvement in decision making in public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Based on findings, the study concludes that teachers are involved in decision in the areas of student's affairs, staff affairs and school discipline. However, the study also concludes that teachers are not involved in the school planning process.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. The involvement of teachers in decision-making process is crucial for the betterment of the school performance. Hence, the school management body should devise strategies by which teachers can be involved in the decision-making as it concerns school planning.
2. Teachers should be encouraged by the secondary school education stakeholders to be involved actively in student's affairs for the good of the school and society at large.
3. Enugu State government should periodically involve teachers during decision making as it concerns staff affairs. This will make the teachers to be productive.

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