**DECISION MAKING PRACTICES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAKUMIRO DISTRICT**

**BY**

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**MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING OF NKUMBA**

 **UNIVERSITY**

**OCTOBER, 2019**

# DECLARATION

I **Kyofuna Mary** do hereby declare to the best of my knowledge that this dissertation is my original work and has never been presented to any other institution for the award of a Master Degree.

Sign…………………………………….. Date………………………………………….

**KYOFUNA MARY**

# APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation on **Decision Making Practices and Learning Outcomes in Selected Primary Schools in Kakumiro District** was developed by Kyofuna Mary and has been done under my supervision and guidance, ready for submission as a partial fulfillment for the award of a degree of Masters of Education Management and Planning of Nkumba University with my approval.

Sign …………………………………… Date…………………………………

**Prof Simon Peter Ongodia**

**SUPERVISOR**

# DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents Mrs Zoe Nakazibwe Kasule, Mr. Elibankya John and Mrs Mary Elibankya for the tireless encouragement and contributions towards my education. It is only the determined and focused parents who care about the future of their siblings. It is in this line that I dedicate this work to them. I wish them a longer stay on earth so that they can live to benefit from the sacrifices they sowed earlier, through investment in my education. May the almighty Father bless them abundantly.

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# ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning outcomes among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. It objectively concentrated on the different decision-making practices that are characterized by primary school administrators in selected schools in Kakumiro District, how decision-making styles influence on learning among pupils in the affected schools and the strategies used to eliminate educationally unproductive decision-making practices in Kakumiro District in primary schools. The study employed a descriptive research design. Basically, it was a cross-sectional survey using different categories of people at the same time. It adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches of data collection were used. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the respondents for this study. The study used a sample of 133 respondents, selected using Slovin’s (1967) formula for determining sample size. However 69 filled and returned the questionnaires. Questionnaires and interviews were the major tools for primary data collection. Primary data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency tables and percentages. The study revealed that, decisions made in school focus on improving pupils’ academic performance and well-being, it further found out that relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options. Also decisions are sometimes taken into effect with teachers and parents’ involvement. However it was noted that, decisions on pupils learning are rarely analyzed strategically, but top management sometimes motivates and convinces teachers and staff on need for take action to ensure pupils improve learning. It was also noted that, decisions for implementation are always selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders; and all decisions agreed upon are sometimes documented for future references and reviews. The study recommends that, schools should choose a team to filter all ideas made by parents and teachers so as information gathered can be used to make relevant decisions for pupils learning. School management should encourage group decision making as the ideal decision-making style. Sincerity and consistency in the enhancement of group decision-making at the Kakumiro schools should be a compulsory task to transform and improve pupil’s learning.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. **Background to the Study**

This study focused on the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning outcomes among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study.

Public school Districts are charged with providing quality education for every Ugandan child. Instructional and curricular decisions have been at the forefront of the research on decision making in schools and school Districts, but decisions involving facilities also have an impact on the education of students. School Districts must plan for growth and dealing with aging facilities. Classical planning theories describing the planning process as rational, fail to consider the social, political, and economic contexts within which facilities planning decisions are made. Research on school facilities planning reveals a body of potential factors used when deciding how to respond to changing conditions within a school District. Once the decision is made to build a new school, the decision of the location of the school must be made. This historical case study will examine decision making, informed by concepts from collaborative planning models and evidence based decision making at the school District level, through the case of a school District determining the location for a new high school (Ary, Jacobs and Razaviech, 1990).

Educational administrators may enhance decision-making capabilities by learning more about both qualitative and quantitative techniques, and understanding their contributions to the decision-making process. An administrator who is knowledgeable about decision-making procedures is in a much better position to compare and evaluate the qualitative and quantitative sources of information and, ultimately, to combine alternatives to make the best possible decisions. Behavioral methods and quantitative techniques in organizations are closely related, and when applied to problems they are essentially productivity tools (Choudhury, 2001). It is the underlying premise of this study that the uses of managerial techniques are of vital importance for a sound and effective decision-making process.

At present the practice of educational administration and management has changed in response to historical conditions and theoretic developments. The main purpose of administration and management is to help achieving the objectives of an institution. Unless administration or management of education is improved or it is geared to the new needs, changes and challenges, the system or organization cannot secure the desired results or reach the target (Gore, 2017). However, Griffin, (2000) argue that the university administration is highly reluctant to accept any change in the operation of the university. Administrative officers themselves often find it difficult to accept departure from the traditional way of doing things and making decisions.

Governance of education involves the authority to make decisions about fundamental policies and practices in several critical areas concerning universities. These areas stretch from their number and location, their mission, their enrolment size, access of students to their instructional programmes and access of the public to other auxiliary services on offer. Other issues of concern include degree requirements; standards expected in student performance, the quality of research and public service activities, the freedom available to individual faculty members in their instructional and research efforts, the appointment of staff, internal organizational structure, allocation of available resources to operating and support programmes (Jennings, D. and Wattam, S. 2014).

The dilemma is therefore the location of authority to resolve, manage and control these issues/contentions. This study is all about administrative and academic governance management of campus affairs. It focuses on managerial decision-making techniques and practices in management of higher education in Uganda

Uganda is a developing country and its educational system is facing many problems. The educational system may try to achieve maximum internal efficiency through the effective management, adequate allocations, and optimal use of available resources for improving the quality of education. The situation of education sector particularly educational administration in Uganda is open to question.

The school system is composed of people, buildings, equipment, furniture, library, resource centres, rules and regulations which are all interwoven and coordinated so that the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the school can be achieved. The administrative system in education is well structured at every level. All the people affected are involved directly or indirectly in decision making through representation on either the policy making organs or influencing bodies. The duties of the functionaries such as the Minister, Permanent secretary, Commissioner, District Education Officer, Inspector and the head teacher are clearly specified and made known to all those concerned. For school administrators, to achieve their educational goals, they are constantly involved in making decisions. In the process, they make big decisions, little decisions, easy decisions, hard decisions, unilateral decisions but always decisions (Johnson, and Christenson, 2000).

Lakha, (2002) defines "decision-making" as the process of choosing from among potential solutions to problems for the attainment of goals. If this perception is correct, then head teachers are confronted with the challenge of making good / right decisions for all categories of people in the schools they head. This is particularly important for the staff and learners.

In a school situation, decisions made by an executive do affect the school system, that is the staff, pupils, curriculum processes, parents and the school management committees in varying proportions and intensity. This, therefore, means that care must be exercised when it comes to making decisions in a group or school community. A school is a community/ institution which has two broad implications. The first is that it exists as a community and the second is that schools are integrated in their local communities. Because a school exists as a community institution, it means that the school population lives population lives together (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2000).

The school population consists of the head teacher, deputy head teacher, teachers, prefects, pupils, non-teaching staff and a group of employees. All these persons interact to achieve the goals of the school. It is these goals that guide the operations of the school which demand that decisions are made to determine them. Schools, as social institutions, are characterized by a communication system at the vertical and horizontal levels. Such a system enables members of the school community to share information and have a unity of objectives in their work all along, certain decisions are made in an effort to achieve the most out of the school activities at different times (Marvin, P. 2011).

As an institution, the school management has to plan for development, implement it and evaluate it. This demands a lot of cooperation and mutual support from all stakeholders without which the organizational targets may be difficult to attain Decision-making thus becomes a crucial consideration in management of learning programs particularly those involving young children. This is so essential because decision- making in schools forms a continuing pattern of relationships among administrators, teachers, pupils, non-teaching staff, the school management committees, the PTA and parents as a whole (Massie, 2012).

The study was carried in Kakumiro District. The District surrounded by: Hoima District to the north, Kyegegwa District to the north-east, Kiboga District to the east, Mubende District to the south-east, Kyegegwa District to the south, and Kibaale District to the west. The town of Kakumiro, the location of the District headquarters, is approximately 182 kilometres (113 mi), by road, north-west of Kampala, Uganda's capital city. This location is approximately 80 kilometres (50 mi), by road, south of Hoima, the nearest large town. (kakumiro District, 2017). The study focused on the following schools; Kakumiro Pubic Primary School, Kyabasaija Primary School, Kakumiro Boys Primary School, Nyansimbi Primary School, Kihumuro Primary School, Rwenseera Primary School, and Mpongo Primary School.

* 1. **Statement of the Problem**

Despite of the continuous efforts by the government to empower school management to make decisions, various situations have occurred where the school system has been paralyzed to an extent that raises concern among teachers, students and parents due to the manner in which particular head teachers make decisions that affect the school community. In some cases, there have been loud objections to decisions, approval, envy or admiration, contempt or condescension among either staff, students or the parents.

The researcher was concerned that certain decision-making practices might have a negative influence on learners’ education and sought to make mechanisms that are unproductive for learners in primary schools.

* 1. **Purpose of the Study**

The study aimed to examine the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study

* 1. **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the different decision-making practices that are characterized by primary school administrators in Kakumiro District.
2. To examine how decision-making styles influence on learning among pupils in the affected schools.
3. To examine the strategies used to eliminate educationally unproductive decision-making practices in Kakumiro District in primary schools.
	1. **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What different decision-making practices are characterized by primary school administrators in Kakumiro District?
2. How do decision-making styles influence learning among pupils in the affected schools?
3. What strategies are used to eliminate educationally unproductive decision-making practices in Kakumiro District in primary schools?
	1. **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study was divided into three sections as following:

* + 1. **Content Scope**

The study aimed at examining the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. It objectively focused on examining the decision-making practices are characterized by primary school administrators in selected schools, how the decision-making styles influence learning among pupils in the affected schools and the strategies are used to eliminate educationally unproductive decision-making practices in Kakumiro District in primary schools. The study focused on the influence of certain modes of decision-making by head teachers on learning.

* + 1. **Geographical Scope**

The study was conducted among selected primary schools in Kakumiro District. The findings, conclusions and recommendations were therefore relate to that geographical area specifically.

* + 1. **Time Scope**

The study aimed at analyzing decision-making practices on learning outcomes among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District for a period 2016-2018.

* 1. **Significance of the Study**

The study findings and the recommendations may be of benefit to the following categories of stakeholders:

1. To the head teachers, the study may provide useful information regarding the influence of decision making practices on pupils’ learning, awareness of which may stimulate their desire for adoption of more productive approaches in their leadership.
2. To the staff, the study may equip them with information about positive decision-making designs and prepare them as future administrators and in their teaching career generally.
3. Thirdly, if this study could be circulated, it may generate more positive attitudes towards decision-making among primary school administrators, teaching staff and heads of departments which may in turn influence quality in provision of education services for the maximum benefit of the pupils, parents, the community and the country as a whole.
4. The study may serve as a springboard for further research on the subject to its completion. Besides, this study is part of the requirement for researcher’s attainment of a Master Degree in Education Administration, Management and Planning.
5. Lastly, the study may add to the existing body of knowledge in the field of educational management and administration.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. **Introduction**

This chapter reviews some of the studies conducted by previous scholars on decision making practices and learning among children in primary schools. The literature reviewed the following themes: the different decision-making practices that are characterized by primary school administrators, the influence of any such style of decision-making on learning among pupils in the affected schools and the ways and lay strategies for elimination of educationally unproductive decision-making practices in order to improve teacher and learners’ performance.

## Theoretical Review

According to Robbins (2000), decision-making is traditionally presented as “the making of choices”. However, the simple act of making a choice is but one step in a much larger process. Decisions possess dimensions beyond mere resource implications—social and psychological, for example. Depending on the control of the process and the dimensions involved in the decision, the decision can be executed with relative ease. For example, if an individual gathers the necessary information, establishes the criteria under which the choice will be made, analyzes the data, and possesses the authority to make the decision, the process can be controlled from beginning to end. Of course, communicating the choice and implementing the course of action resulting from the decision represents another process entirely and, in certain instances, the resulting actions may be quite different from the original intentions.

Garvin and Roberto (2001) suggested, “Decision-making is arguably the most important job of the senior executive and one of the easiest to get wrong”. Their research revealed that although leaders are “made or broken by the quality of their decision. They get decision-making all wrong. Why is this, and can public relations managers help senior executives make better decisions? Garvin and Roberto said the primary reason executives make bad decisions is that they treat decision-making as a discrete event where choice takes place at a single moment. What is the relevance to public relations, though?

White and Dozier (2012) noted that “strategic public relations requires practitioner access to decision-making authority in an organization”. In trying to determine what role communication managers and public relations practitioners play in strategic decision-making, White and Dozier developed the concept of strategic decision-making for public relations and suggested ways “in which practitioners make useful contributions to decision-making”. Building on the efforts of Vari and Vecsenyi (2014), White and Dozier suggested that the following “five distinct participant roles” in the decision-making process were reflected in Broom’s early work on public relations roles, which characterized public relations practitioners as expert prescribers, problem-solvers, or communication facilitators:

1. Decision Makers: these participants have executive power to define the use of outputs from the phases of the decision-making process.
2. Proposers: participants who only have the power to make recommendations.
3. Experts: participants who primarily supply input to the currently modeled problem structure.
4. Consultants or Decision Analysts: participants who advise on methods of problem representation.
5. Facilitators: participants who do not have the direct role in the decision-making process but who facilitate collaboration of experts and the transmission of results within and between rounds of decision-making.

White and Dozier (2012) also noted: “Subsequent empirical studies indicate, however, that public relations managers (in their day-to-day work) shift easily from expert prescription, process facilitation, and communication facilitation”. Thus, there appears to be a logical nexus between decision-making in organizations and the practice of public relations. The challenge, however, is to understand the nature of strategic decision-making in a way that public relations professionals can use to help make organizations more effective in that process.

* + 1. **Game Theory**

Game theory represents an effort to address this state of nature in decision making. According to Plowman (2015), game theory is the "formal study of the rational, consistent expectations that participants can have about each other's choices. The basic premise is that social relationships can be modeled as games of strategy". The outcome of rational decision-making "depends on the choices both (individuals) make. There is no independently best choice that can be made; it depends on what others do". However, there are scholars who question the characterization of decision-making as the result of a rational process.

According to Robbins (2000), decision-making is traditionally presented as “the making of choices”. However, the simple act of making a choice is but one step in a much larger process. Decisions possess dimensions beyond mere resource implications—social and psychological, for example. Depending on the control of the process and the dimensions involved in the decision, the decision can be executed with relative ease. For example, if an individual gathers the necessary information, establishes the criteria under which the choice will be made, analyzes the data, and possesses the authority to make the decision, the process can be controlled from beginning to end. Of course, communicating the choice and implementing the course of action resulting from the decision represents another process entirely and, in certain instances, the resulting actions may be quite different from the original intentions.

Robbins (2000) suggested that such a characterization of decision-making as indicated above was inadequate to represent organizational decision-making. Seldom does one actor control all of these steps in an organization. A more realistic model of the organizational decision-making process would reflect the control by multiple actors over different parts of the process.

* + 1. **Organizational Theory**

Robbins (2000) defined an organization as “a consciously coordinated social entity, with a relatively identifiable boundary, that functions on a relatively continuous basis to achieve a common goal or set of goals”. Important to this definition are the concepts of coordination, social relationships, boundaries, and goals.

Robbins (2000) also noted that “conscious coordination” implied management. This is an important link because Mintzberg (2013) argued that management theorists have evolved from a traditional reliance on classical economic theory (one actor—one goal) to explain the goals of a business or firm to: an increasing attention to newer sociological themes [many actors—no goals], from the notion of given organizational goals to that of fluid power in and around the organization with no goals, from an organization devoid of influencers to one in which virtually everyone is an influencer, from the view that the organization as society’s instrument to that of it as a political arena .

According to Magretta (2002), “Management is the art of performance… management’s mission, first and foremost is value creation”. “Increasingly, value creation is happening across company borders”. Magretta said that “value” not only comes from utility, quality, availability, distribution, and service; but also from less tangible attributes such as image. In fact, she asserted “the more intangible the value appears, the more important it is to recognize that value is defined by customers, one person at a time”. An important distinction must be made between “value creation” as defined here and wealth creation—the more traditional framework for assessing company worth. Wealth creation implies enhancing tangible assets that firms use to increase economic power. In contrast, value creation consists of enhancing a broader range of a firm’s assets, including those less tangible, to increase the return on investment for its owners and shareholders.

* + 1. **Systems Theory**

Although there are many different ways of looking at organizations, this study conceptualizes organizations as “input-output transformation systems that depend on their environment for survival” (Robbins, 2000). Katz and Kahn (1967) suggested this “systems theory” approach possessed utility because it is “basically concerned with problems of relationships, of structure, and of interdependence rather than with the constant attributes of objects”. Further, Katz and Kahn (1967) advocated that organizations be viewed as open systems. Thus, organizations are entities that possess boundaries where actors compete internally and externally. The goal of the competition can vary from the most basic of instincts—to survive, to the most Machiavellian of instincts—to dominate.

Organizational theorists recognize the open nature and resource dependency of organizations. Pfeffer and Salancik (2018) observed: “organizations are inescapably bound up with the conditions of their environment. Indeed, it has been said that all organizations engage in activities which have as their logical conclusion adjustment to the environment”. Pfeffer and Salancik also argued: organizations survive to the extent they are effective. Their effectiveness derives from the management of demands, particularly the demands of interest groups upon which the organizations depend for resources and support… no organization is completely self-contained.

Contemporary organizational theorists argue in support of an open-systems perspective. However, in the mid-1970s, theorists recognized that organizations possessed a significant social dimension. Key to current theory is the notion that organizational structure is not the result of a rational process. Rather, organizational structure is “the outcome of political struggles among coalitions within the organization for control” (Robbins, 2000). Important for the purposes of this study is Littlejohn’s (2013) observation that “a primary aim of GST [general systems theory] is to integrate accumulated knowledge into a clear and realistic framework”. In addition, J. Grunig and Hunt (2014) acknowledged the importance of systems theory to public relations theory by formalizing the role of the environment in public relations (L. Grunig & J. Grunig, 2014). The struggles that Robbins acknowledged suggest that power is a significant determinant in the development of organizational structure. As a result, power is an important element to understanding organizational structure and behavior.

* + 1. **Public Relations Theory**

The previous discussion examined strategic management and the role that the constructs of collective action, power, and strategy served in enhancing or undermining organizational performance. Attention must now focus on what role public relations can and should play in these various domains with particular emphasis on strategic decision-making. However, it is important to briefly review the current state of public relations practice, theory and research.

Ledingham and Bruning (2000) observed that “public relations is a field more often characterized by what it does than what it is”. This has resulted in essentially four schools of thought reflecting major approaches to the practice of public relations—the management approach, the rhetorical approach, the journalistic approach and the Integrated Marketing Communication approach. Although these approaches are not mutually exclusive, they do possess different sets of assumptions and worldviews of public relations that influence the way the profession is practiced and, therefore, perceived by the larger business community and relevant customers. Each perspective emphasizes different constructs that have been central to the research. My research seeks to advance the argument that public relations is a management function that provides unique and non-redundant contributions to the strategic management of organizations. By better understanding strategic decision- making theory, public relations professionals can enhance organizational performance.

In general, most public relations scholars identified with the management typology of public relations recognize systems theory as integral to its practice and central to their research. Systems theory is important for several reasons as discussed earlier. Systems theory recognizes that phenomena occur within a defined boundary. It also acknowledges that within this boundary, processes contribute to the improvement, maintenance, or destruction of the system. Further, the system may operate as open or closed to the surrounding environment. Research within this domain examines issues that contribute to efficiency and effectiveness of the system and may be applied or positive—that is, reflective of what is actually occurring or observed—or normative—that is, reflective of what ought to happen. Public relations scholars within the management paradigm have examined research within both domains of positive and normative research. They also share the view that public relations must belong to an open systems approach that seeks to operate in balance with the environment

## Decision Making Process

Organisational members must make a variety of decisions each day that will affect a limited or wide range of people in the near future or the remote future. Furthermore, a group makes almost all organisational decision-making, rather than an individual, so decision making is primarily a social process whose outcomes are usually dispersed among an array of organisational members (Choudhury (2001) and Foxley (2015)).

Foxley (2015) noted that it is important to appreciate that organizational decision-making usually arises within turbulent, cacophonous or high-velocity environments in which change is ever present. There are a good many interruptions to any given decision activity and opportunities and problems keep streaming into or arising from within the organisation.

**Figure 2. 1: The decision-making process**



Source: Adapted from Stoner, Yetton, Craic & Johnston (1994) *Management 2nd edn*

Decision-making usually begins with the identification of an opportunity (anticipatory decision-making) or a problem (reactive decision-making). Already the concept is separated. In general, the more closely the decision-making group is to real time data (Matthai, et at.; 2012), the more likely they are to spot opportunities (such as new markets, organisational processes or technology) rather than focus on problems defined by historical or forecast data sets. Thereafter, the organisational member or decision-making group needs to determine if the focal situation is an important opportunity or problem that requires attention and action.

Steps 3 and 4 can be completed quickly or slowly, depending on the decision maker’s level of tolerance for risk. A high tolerance allows for more speedy decision-making. In considering different alternatives, decision-makers have focused on implementation issues, so there is a clear linkage between the process and outcome components.

In steps 5 and 6 there is a shift to what may be called right-to-left thinking in that the goal or anticipated outcome of the decision is now clearly stated and attention is given to plans of action that outline what specifically needs to be done, working backward from the goal to the present. This right-to-left thinking increases the anticipation of barriers and the development of strategies to deal with them. Once a decision is implemented, it is important to monitor the outcome measures (improved quality, reduced expense and shorter delivery time) carefully, for without systematic feedback it is impossible to determine the overall effectiveness of decision-making.

Clearly a deconstructed analysis of the process highlights the intricacies involved in the concept. Such details become more relevant when the process is separated amongst different types of decisions.

* 1. **The Different Decision-Making Practices**

To properly analyze characteristics of decision-making style in relation to empowerment and job satisfaction, a tool developed by Scott and Bruce (1995) and outlined in their article *Decision-Making Style: the Development and Assessment of a New Measure*, was selected. According to Simon H (2014), decision-making is “the study of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the values and preferences of the decision maker to resolve the problems”. Individuals make decisions each and every day that have a higher or lower degree of complexity (Rourke et al, 2013). Rourke et al focused on “the characteristics of the decision maker that might influence decision outcomes” rather than prioritizing situational decision characteristics or the decision task itself.

Valero (1997) originally identified four decision-making styles defined within behavior terms as: a rational decision-making style characterized by a comprehensive search for and logical evaluation of alternatives; an intuitive style exemplified by reliance on hunches and feelings; a dependent style distinguishable by a search for advice and direction from others; and, an avoidant style portrayed by attempts to avoid decision-making. What emerged from their study findings was a fifth category of decision-making style classified to be spontaneous where the decision maker has a desire to process through decision-making as quickly as possible (Mohanty, 1998).

Managers have to vary their approach to decision-making depending on the particular situation (Mintzberg et al. 1994). In general, decisions can be classified as either programmed or non-programmed (Mohanty1998).

McGrath (1998) point out that programmed decisions usually involve highly repetitive and routine problems in which the procedures for decision making are well established, applied frequently, easily triggered and require immediate action. Ary et al (1990) suggested that in programmed decision-making, the focus is on the implementation of decision with the first steps highly standardized as represented in operating manuals and standard operating procedures.

Bartol et al. (1998) also suggested that programmed decisions are made in routine, well structured situations using predetermined decision rules. The decision may be based on habit, statistical techniques or established policies and procedures that stem from prior experience or technical knowledge about what works in a particular situation.

In contrast, non-programmed decisions are used when predetermined decision rules are impractical, as in novel or ill-structured situations (Bass 2013). Most significant managerial decisions are non-programmed and involve significant uncertainty (Bartol et al 1998; Lawson & Shen 1998; Robbins, Bergman, Stagg & Coulter 2000; Stoner et al. 1994). Decisions made under uncertain conditions involve risk (Bartol et al. 1998; Lawson & Shen 1998; Robbins et al. 2000; Stoner et al. 1994) and the possibility of chosen action leading to losses rather than the intended results. Experts on decision-making used to differentiate between uncertainty and risk, but now view uncertainty as the cause of risk (Bazerman 2016).

Northcrafe& Neale (1990) suggested that uncertainty stems from a variety of sources. For example, elements in the environment that are difficult to predict or control can affect the success of a decision and cost and time constraints can limit information collection. Bartol et al. (1998) points out that social and political organizational factors such as poor inter-unit communication, makes relevant information gathering difficult. Moreover rapid situational changes render information quickly obsolete.

The proportion of non-programmed decisions that managers make increases at each hierarchical level (Bartol et al. 1998). Because these decisions require effective decision making skills and creativity, they provide the biggest challenge to managers. Larrick(1993) points out that preferences for risk or certainty arises not only from the perceived value of outcomes and their probability, but more importantly from the belief that the outcomes will enhance or erode one’s self-esteem and efficacy as a decision maker.

In general, most people believe that they reason clearly, exercise sound judgment and make decisions rationally and logically. However, many investigators have identified a number of systematic errors and fallacies that people tend to commit when thinking and making decisions (Basic Behavioural Science Task Force, 1996). For example, people are influenced by whether a choice is framed in terms of gains or losses. Similarly, people often take risks because they do not assume that they will have to suffer the consequences. Thus, people’s choices are often unduly tilted in the direction of what they want to believe, the confirmatory bias effect. Last, in making decisions, people tend to overestimate how many other persons agree with their attitudes and beliefs, a judgmental bias known as the false-consensus bias (Larrick 1993). It is important to be aware of these forces that moderate decision-making so decision-makers can appreciate the value of both the rational, objective forces and the cognitive and affective forces that will shape the decision.

Larrick (1993) noted that people usually respond to the emotional consequences of decision making, which is reflected in their feelings of success or failure, enhanced or lowered self-esteem and self-efficacy, elation or disappointment. Decision-making is more than a cold cognitive experience; it also includes hot emotional components. According to Josephs, Larrick, Steele and Nisbett (1992), when feedback on a decision is poor, people often feel regret, which can tarnish their self-image and lead to self-doubt about the wisdom of the original decision. In this regard, risk preferences are shaped by the motivation to protect one’s self-image.

Joesphs et al. (1992) reported that when faced with risky decisions, persons with low self-esteem were more risk averse when they expected feedback on their decisions, whereas persons with high self-esteem never made regret-minimizing choices. It appears, then, that the ability to maintain a good self-image in the face of regret is an important determinant of a person’s preference for taking risks. Moreover, Browne (1993); Harrison (1987) suggested that decision-making involves perceived, rather than objective, measures of risk.

Larrick (1993) suggested that primarily cognitive forces determine risk preferences when a given decision poses little or no threat to self-esteem. However, as the potential of a threat to self-esteem increases (for example, when one regrets an earlier, publicly made, decision), risk preferences are determined mainly by the motivation to protect and enhance one’s self-image and self-esteem.

Thus multiple internal human forces are manipulated by external factors. All of this then will determine the capacity of a decision maker to undergo the process and arrive at an appropriate solution. When considering the impact that such societal and individual forces will have on decision-making it becomes clear that the national social system will fundamentally impact the quality of the decision-making. In order to best moderate and apply such factors it is necessary to summarise the models into essential parts.

Various administrative factors can influence a decision-making process (Ruby, 2006). According to Ruby (2006), circumstances can affect the decision-making process, both the context in which the decision is made, such as the expectations of peers, and the clarity of the goals involved. Decision makers‘ personal beliefs and interests also impact decision making. Variations in these factors can cause decision makers to place different value or, even, moral weight on the decision-making process (Ruby, 2006). Constraints are often placed around the motivations of the decision maker, created by the methods leaders use to establish objective standards and a clear understanding of the mission (Ruby, 2006).

* 1. **The Influence of Any Such Style of Decision-Making On Learning Among Pupils**

In today’s complex environment, even large amounts of information may not be sufficient to make transparent, objective decisions on multifaceted situations. A large number of interrelating factors are likely to influence complex decisions.

The culture and structure of the organization affect how decisions are made. Some organizations espouse the philosophy that problems are challenges and that members of organizations can learn to recognize novel problems. However, the decision-making processes and constraints, as well as the personal characteristics of individuals involved, also affect decision making. Klein (2005) argued that unexpected decisions in an organization make creating balance and order difficult. Similar to Wieck, Klein argued that good decision making can occur when an organization is ―loosely coupled‖ and allows all members some autonomy in their decisions making. However, more often than not, school bureaucracies are closely knit structures with tightly linked internal units, which hinders individuals‘ abilities to make decisions. Thus, by their nature, education organizations inhibit productive decision-making.

Fortunately, with the multiple influences on education organizations, principals, and educators, multiple solutions are possible. As an example, Klein (2005) studied and demonstrated different approaches to school discipline. He found that differing decisions produced the same desired results and that no decision was superior. However, Klein (2005) concluded that the nature of the decision corresponded with the values of the decision makers. In this context, therefore, the term *rationality* refers to the ability to translate underlying principles into appropriate decisions.

Del Favero (2006) examined how policy environments can compromise the leadership capacity of leaders. To offset the negative effects of organizational complexity, he argued that leaders must develop complex thinking and the ability to view the organization from a variety of perspectives. Multiple perspectives allow a leader to have a broader sense of the organization, which expands the decision-making process and increases decision-making options. Effective leaders apply a variety of frames to interpret their actions and decisions, and their decisions tend to be more beneficial. In a study of college presidents, Del Favero found that although the presidents used multiple frames to discuss their decisions, community college presidents more often used only one frame to describe their decisions. In general, the more experience a president had, the more frames he or she used to describe decisions. In addition to using more frames, complex thinkers in complex environments move from one frame to another, progressively, in the course of their careers

To support this assertion, Del Favero (2006) examined the administrative behaviors of academic deans in research and doctoral institutions to understand the relationship between academic discipline and cognitive complexity. Findings suggest that being from an applied field does contribute to a relationship and that the degree of exposure to a disciplinary paradigm is more important than affiliation with the paradigm. Overall, the findings indicate that any conclusions about administrators‘ perceptions of their leadership context must take into consideration the effects of discipline (Del Favero, 2006).

In contrast, Buchanan and O‘Connell (2006) found that the most subtle, yet strongest, contexts are hidden within the decision makers, often in the form of constraints. They reported that some researchers, such as Howard Raiffia and Peter Drucker, espouse the philosophy that internal members cannot make effective decisions, whether due to organization constraints or lack of personal decision-making abilities; therefore, internal members seek external assistance. Human constraints that affect decisions include complex circumstances, limited time to make decisions, and inadequate computation power. Emotions, moods, and intuition also affect one‘s ability to make good decisions, leading to erroneous framing, bounded awareness, and excessive optimism (Buchanan & O‘Connell, 2006).

Within these contexts, and with these constraints and influences, leaders are expected to make decisions that benefit the organization and support the organization‘s goals and mission. The degree to which these conditions are addressed is an individual attribute of the decision maker. Researchers (Buchannan & O‘Connell, 2006) concluded that intuition needs to be balanced with analysis of the situation. Thus, individuals need to analyze not only the problem at hand but also the context in which the decision must be made.

* 1. **The Strategies for Elimination of Educationally Unproductive Decision-Making Practices in Order to Improve Teacher and Learners’ Performance**

Numerous decision-making models are revealed in the literature. For example, Eisenhardt (1998) acknowledged that there are essentially three fundamental paradigms in strategic decision-making theory: bounded rationality, power and politics, and the “garbage can” model. However, she suggested a fourth for consideration that she called “improvisational”.

Cray, Inglis, and Freeman (2007) argued that in order for an organization to succeed, the goals and environment of the organization, as a whole, needs to match closely the leaders‘ leadership and decision-making styles. Still, board members have encouraged schools to adopt strategic planning and total quality management processes to improve the performance of schools (Cray & Inglis et al., 2007). As they noted, research on strategic decision making reveals that many decision-making processes depend on both the conditions within the organization and the context of the organization (Cray & Inglis et al., 2007).

Garvin and Roberto (2001) believed that executives should design and manage decision-making processes that favor the “inquiry” approach in order to make better decisions. Unfortunately, the skills necessary to create such a decision-making process do not come naturally. Participants who approach decisions from an advocacy perspective are generally more passionate about their solutions and seek information consistent with their positions while minimizing information inconsistent with their positions. On the other hand, those who approach decision-making from an inquiry perspective seek to consider a greater variety of options, share information more readily and objectively, and allow others to draw their own conclusions from the information that is presented. The researchers claimed that conflict was a natural part of both processes; however, in inquiry, the disagreements were about ideas and interpretations rather than personalities and “entrenched” positions. To move toward an inquiry-based process, Garvin and Roberto suggested “careful attention to three critical factors, the three ‘C’s’ of effective decision-making: conflict, consideration, and closure”.

* 1. **Knowledge Gaps**

Grunig (2005) states in his study that as a boundary spanning function in organizations, public relations can enhance strategic decision-making by introducing relevant information that addresses decision-making consequences on stakeholders to the process. The premise for the study was that effective communication that attends to certain communication aspects of decision-making through organizational strategic decision-making initiatives can enhance the likelihood of more effective decisions. The method of investigation was active interviews. The results of this study revealed several patterns or themes associated with more effective strategic decision-making. First, organizations that view decision making as more continuous and connected to other important goals find their efforts to be more effective. Second, transparency is an important quality in strategic decision-making because it leads to higher levels of trust among participants. Greater participation by stakeholders also enhances the likelihood of more effective decision making. Robust alternatives resulting from an inquiry-based approach rather than an advocacy-based approach can contribute to more effective decisions. Relationships between organizations and stakeholders that possess higher degrees of trust, familiarity, commitment, loyalty, cooperation, transparency persistence, and dispersed power contribute to more effective decision-making. Finally, organizations that seek to minimize affective conflict and maximize cognitive conflict among all decision-making participants during the process can improve the likelihood of better decision-making.

* 1. **Conceptual Framework**

In order to understand the relationship between decision-making practices and learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District. A conceptual framework was developed, which is shown below (Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2. 2: Conceptual framework**

**Independent variable Dependent variable**

**Decision making**

* Decision-making practices
* Decision-making styles
* Strategies in decision making

**Learning outcomes**

* Class results
* Productivity
* Efficiency
* Effectiveness
* Instructional materials
* Environment(social/physical
* Professionalism(ethics)
* Selection of pupils
* Teachers
* Head teachers
* Local leaders
* Government policy on parenting
* Government

**Intervening variables**

**Source: Researcher (2019)**

As the conceptual diagram shows the variables under study which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District. Low level of education for instance would constitute a major cause of lack of employment ultimately leading to poverty or low income. This in turn would have repercussions on parents’ involvement because parents who are illiterate hardly assist their children in academic matters. Parents’ involvement would thus be high or low depending on the existing factors. When parents are highly involved in children’s education, children are likely to perform and develop well in general and vice versa when they are least involved.

## 2.8 Conclusion

Decision-making in schools should focus on making of choices to develop and improve pupils learning. These include: recruitment of qualified and competent teachers, provision of reading and study materials, co-curricular activities to mention. However, the simple act of making a choice is but one step in a much larger process. The control of the process and the dimensions involved in the decision can be executed with relative ease if persons involved in decision making have the right and relevant information to base on.

# CHAPTER THREE

# METHODOLOGY

1. **Introduction**

This chapter described the process through which the study was conducted. It outlines the design of the research area of study, study of the population, sample size, sampling procedure, data collection methods, construction and administration of instruments testing of validity and reliability of instruments, field work arrangements and how the data was processed and analyzed. The chapter described also the challenges the researcher faced in the course of the study and how they were overcome.

* 1. **Research Design**

The study was of a descriptive research design. Basically, it was a cross-sectional survey using different categories of people at the same time. This design was used because it permitted a random selection of respondents to describe the state of affairs at that point in time so as to obtain adequate information about the study topic.

* 1. **Area of the Study**

The study was conducted in Kakumiro District selected primary schools. This area was identified due to its convenient location and school population relatively easy to reach by the researcher. The number of schools in the District permitted strategic sampling.

* 1. **Study Population**

The Study population is a study of a group of individuals taken from the general population who share a common characteristic, such as age, sex, or health condition (Bell 2009). The group of 200 respondents was studied for different reasons, such as their response towards decision making practices on learners in primary schools. The population of interest comprised of; head-teachers, teachers, parents, school management committee members and District officials.

* 1. **Sample Size**

Sample size is the act of choosing the number of observations or replicates to include in a statistical sample. The sample size is an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal was made in references about a population from a sample. In practice, the sample size used in a study was determined basing on the expense of data collection, and the need to have sufficient statistical power. The sample size for this study was selected basing on the criteria set according to Roscoe’s rule of thumb (cited in Sekaran, 2003). A sample size of 133 respondents was selected, because it is manageable in that it minimized costs and time.

$$n=\frac{N}{1+Ne^{2}}$$

$$n=\frac{200}{1+200\*0.05^{2}}$$

$$n= \frac{200}{1+200\*0.0025}$$

$$n=\frac{200}{1+0.5}$$

$$n=\frac{200}{1.5}$$

$$n=133$$

Where: n= Sample Size

N = Population

e = 0.05

**Table 3. 1:** **Distribution of respondents**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category of respondents**  | **Number of respondents**  |
| District education office | 5 |
| Head Teachers  | 20 |
| Parents  | 78 |
| Teachers | 30 |
| **Total**  | **133** |

**Source: primary data**

However, 133 questionnaires were distributed, but only 69 were returned and considered for the study.

* 1. **Sampling**

This study employed the purposive sampling model to select the sample population. It is criterion-based sampling or strategic sampling (Kitzinger, 1994). The research questions and the objectives of the research determine the criterion for choosing samples. It is important to mention here that purposive sampling had been used to select sample population owing to such factors as the individual or organization’s responsibility and knowledge of Decision making issues.

* 1. **Data Collection Instruments**

The study used a number of data collection instruments as indicated below:

* + 1. **Structured Interviews**

This study used structured interviews to understand concepts from the sample population’s points of views (Kvale, 1996). These interviews were administered to parents and District officials. Data was collected through one-to-one structured interviews because they had predetermined questions which could be recorded, modified, clarified to the respondent, or left out if suitable to do so (Robson 2002). The use of structured interviews is important to this research in that the researcher and respondents were allowed flexibility because qualitative interviewing tends to be flexible, responding to the direction in which respondents take the interview and perhaps adjusting the emphasis in the research as a result of fundamental issues that arise in the course of interviews.

### Self-Administered Questionnaires (SAQs)

The self-administered questionnaires had questions that were keyed to probing into all organizational departments and the extent to which the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. SAQs were administered to head teachers, teachers and school committees. It was comprised of questions on the background information of the respondents, the independent variables (decision making) and also the dependent variable (learning). The questionnaire method was used because it is an appropriate instrument for any survey research (Kothari, 2003 and Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Closed ended questionnaires were used in this study.

* + 1. **Documentary Review**

The study reviewed both published and unpublished documents that served as both primary and secondary sources of data for the present study. These sources of data were particularly imperative for the identification of Kakumiro District’s documented activities and strategies for elimination of educationally unproductive decision-making practices in order to improve teacher and learners’ performance in Kakumiro District primary schools.

## 3.7 Access to Data Collection Sources

The researcher obtained the consent of potential respondents, and explained to them the purpose and nature of the research, not only to ensure that participation in the research was voluntary, and also given to the full. When respondents that participated in the research, were assured of confidentiality, and the assurance of their rights to withdraw from the research especially if and when questions asked, or if the process in general, should tend to trigger emotional responses and affect self-understanding.

## 3.8 Ethical Considerations

During the study, the researcher got a letter from the dean of school which helped her get permission from Kakumiro District and the primary schools understudy. As a result, the researcher stated during the face to face interview that all information that was provided by the respondents was for research purposes only, and was treated with strict confidence. This was ensured to protect privacy and confidentiality, the dignity and welfare of all participants particularly the community of Kakumiro District.

## 3.9 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability is directly related to the validity of the measure. There were several important principles. First, tests were considered reliable, but not valid. To ensure the appropriate of the research instrument, content validity index was determined. Content validity referred to the degree to which the test actually measures or is specifically related to the traits for which it was designed. It showed how adequately the instrument samples the universe of knowledge, skills perceptions and attitudes that the respondents are expected to exhibit.

## 3.10 Data Processing

For case of reporting and interpretation, the data obtained was checked, edited, coded and reduced into tables and figures for validation before processing for the presentation of the findings. The questionnaire data were converted into numbers one for each of value, so that analysis that only accepted numerical data was used. Frequencies, percentages and correlation analysis were also used to determine the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study.

## 3.11 Data Analysis

After the process of data collection, the researcher summarised the data and analyse it. The data was categorised and entered in to the computer by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 22 for processing the data. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency and presented in frequency tables.

Qualitative data on the other hand was analyzed using content analysis following Amin (2005) in line with the research questions. Observed data including photographs of poverty activities were taken and presented.

## 3.12 Data Presentation

The researcher then presented the data got from the primary and secondary source using the SPSS software and the results were presented in tables for easy interpretation.

## 3.13 Limitations to the Study

The researcher was faced with some problems which were constrains to the study. Some of the problems were as mentioned below.

The study needed sufficient time, because the researcher had many other activities and obligations to meet. However the researcher endeavored to re-allocate and fix time to meet all obligations including completing the research report in time.

Most of the secondary data was out dated and the current one is somehow difficult to access. This made it hard for the researcher to compare existing data with current issues. However, the researcher focused on the current information.

Another challenge was financial constraints. The researcher used the available resources with maximum control to allow completion of the research project.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

## Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, presentation and interpretation of finding. The data presented in this chapter were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). All themes discussing the same research questions were presented and analyzed together. The analysis of data was presented in both narrative and tabular forms. The analyses of the report are derived from observations of the respondents and documentary evidences on the the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study.

## Background Information

The basic socio-demographic characteristics of respondents were probed, key among them included the following; gender, age, school for the child, level of education and position held at work.

### Sex of Respondents

The gender of the respondents was necessary in order to examine the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. The results are indicated in table 4.1 below:

**Table 4. 1: Gender**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male | 36 | 52.2 | 52.2 | 52.2 |
| Female | 33 | 47.8 | 47.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data (2019)**

According to the figure above, majority of the respondents 52.2% were generally male and 47.8% were female. This implies that more male participated in the study than the female respondents because fathers are more likely than mothers to be social arrangers on behalf of the family. It is expected that fathers are more active in their children’s education. The data about gender reflects gender balance between men and women meaning the research was not gender biased.

* + 1. **Age of Respondents**

The study also considered the age characteristic to be very essential in examining the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. The results are indicated in table 4.2 below:

**Table 4. 2: Age group**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | 20-29 | 19 | 27.5 | 27.5 | 27.5 |
| 30-39 | 22 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 59.4 |
| 40-49 | 22 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 91.3 |
| 50+ | 6 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data (2019)**

According to the table above, 31.9% of the respondents were between 30-39 years and 40-49 years respectively, 27.5% were between 20-29 years and 8.7% were of 50+ years. This represents those years when people are most active in their children’s education, hence providing relevant information necessary for the study.

* + 1. **Responses on Position Held in School**

The study considered the position of respondents at work to be relevant in examining the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. Therefore the results are indicated in table 4.3 below:

**Table 4. 3: Position held in School \* School of Employment Cross tabulation**

|  |
| --- |
| Count  |
| Position held in School | School of Employment | Total |
| Kakumiro Pubic School P/S | Kyabasaija P/S | Kakumiro Boys P/S | Nyansimbi P/S | Kihumuro P/S | Rwenseera P/S | Mpongo P/S |
|  | Head Teacher | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Teacher | 7 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 23 |
| Class Teacher | 3 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 25 |
| Music Teacher | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Sanitation Teacher | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| SMC Member | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| SMC Chairperson | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Education Assistant | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Deputy Head teacher | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Total | 15 | 8 | 13 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 69 |

**Source: Primary data (2019)**

According to the table above, 10.1% of the respondents are head teachers, 36.2% are class 33.3% are teachers, 5.8% are SMC members and deputy head teachers respectively, 2.9% are SMC chairperson and Education assistant respectively and 1.4% are Music teachers and Sanitation teacher respectively; working in Kakumiro public school Primary school, Kyabasajja Primary school, Kakumiro boys Primary school, Nyansimni Primary school, Kihumioro Primary school, Rwensera Primary school and Mpongo Primary school. The nature of school was considered important as different schools have different mode of leadership and education system.

### Education of Respondents

The study considered education level to be relevant in examining to examine the ways through which decision-making practices influence learning among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. Therefore the results on the education of respondents are as indicated in table 4.4 below:

**Table 4. 4: Education Level**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Primary | 20 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 29.0 |
| O' level | 5 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 36.2 |
| A' Level | 19 | 27.5 | 27.5 | 63.8 |
| Diploma | 9 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 76.8 |
| Degree | 16 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data (2019)**

According to the table above, 29% had attained a primary certificate as their highest level of education, 27.5% had an A’ level, 23.2% had a Degree, 13% are diploma holders and 7.2% are O’ level holders. This implies that the respondents to the study had attended school and could understand the questionnaire and interview guide effectively, hence providing relevant information necessary to the study.

* 1. **DECISION MAKING PRACTICES SCHOOLS**

##### Making effective decisions as a manager is a very significant challenge in a fast-moving world. Increasingly managers are expected to act under conditions of uncertainty or limited information, which have a considerable impact at every stage of the decision making process.

Decision making skills enable a manager to consider alternatives and use judgement to choose an appropriate and timely course of action. The terms ‘decision making’ and ‘problem solving’ are often used interchangeably but are not identical. As the term suggests ‘problem solving’ starts with the identification of a problem or difficulty. The resolution of a problem may require decision making skills, but these are also relevant in other situations - where there is a desire to plan for the future or develop new areas of business, for example.

### Decisions Focus on Improving Pupils’ Academic Performance

The study asked respondents whether most decisions made in school focus on improving pupils’ academic performance and well-being. The results are indicated in table 4.5 below:

**Table 4. 5: Most decisions made in school focus on improving pupils’ academic performance and well-being**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 4 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.8 |
| Rarely | 8 | 11.6 | 11.6 | 17.4 |
| Sometimes | 9 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 30.4 |
| Often | 39 | 56.5 | 56.5 | 87.0 |
| Always | 9 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 56.5% stated often when asked whether most decisions made in school focus on improving pupils’ academic performance and well-being. This implies that all decisions are in line with the school’s vision statement. However, 13% of the respondents stated always and sometimes respectively, while 11.6% stated rarely and 5.8% stated never. During the study interviews, one of the respondents stated that:

*The vision of the school describes why it is important to achieve the mission statement while looking to the future. It portrays what will be achieved if the school is successful in achieving its goals*.

Another respondent argued that:

*Everyone involved in decision making is a data analysis; from the administration to the teachers. The secret to data analysis is to do something with the data.*

It should be noted that many schools analyze the data and do not do anything with it. Celebrate your strengths, keep the focus on improvement and draw up plans on how you’re going to improve on your weaknesses and implement it.

### Gathering Relevant Information

The study asked respondents whether before any conclusions on pupils concerns, relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options. The results are indicated in table 4.6 below:

**Table 4. 6: Before any conclusion on pupils concerns, relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Rarely | 6 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.7 |
| Sometimes | 24 | 34.8 | 34.8 | 43.5 |
| Often | 22 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 75.4 |
| Always | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 34.8% stated sometimes when asked whether before any conclusions on pupils concerns, relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options. This implies that the information gathered is timely. However, 31.9% of the respondents stated often, 24.6% always and 8.7% rarely. During documentary review, it was discovered that lack of timely and accurate information can create significant problems for school as motivations behind decisions and actions are questioned or challenged outright. More and more, organizations are beginning to understand the necessity to be open in their culture, architecture, and decisions; however they also struggle with increased risks as key internal processes are subject to influences or challenges by competing interests or stakeholders. As companies become increasingly global, they find the environments increasingly complex.

### Involving Stakeholders in Appropriate Meetings

The study asked respondents whether stakeholders are involved in appropriate meetings to identify the best alternatives options on pupils learning. The results are indicated in table 4.7 below:

**Table 4. 7: Stakeholders are involved in appropriate meetings to identify the best alternatives options on pupils learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Rarely | 11 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 17.4 |
| Sometimes | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 42.0 |
| Often | 20 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 71.0 |
| Always | 20 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 29% stated always and often respectively when asked whether stakeholders are involved in appropriate meetings to identify the best alternatives options on pupils learning. This implies that when organizing meeting stakeholders’ effectively participate and their decisions are taken seriously. However, 24.6% of the total respondents stated sometimes, 15.9% stated rarely and 1.4% stated never. During interviews, it was discovered that:

*Stakeholders whether they represent school personnel, students or parents, health professionals, academia, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, industry, media or marketing interests – may have important information about an issue, be affected by a policy decision or be in a position to affect a policy decision.*

In relation to this another respondent commented and said that:

*Other voices, including parents, students, individuals of color, immigrant communities, school administrators, communities with fewer resources, individuals/groups with business acumen, educational researchers, health and mental health professionals, social workers, and child development specialists should be considered as well*

### Making Benchmarks to Gather Evidence of Best Practices

The study asked respondents whether bench marks are done to gather evidence of the best practices before decisions are implemented. The results are indicated in table 4.8 below:

**Table 4. 8: Bench marks are done to gather evidence of best practices before decisions are implemented**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 5 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 7.2 |
| Rarely | 11 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 23.2 |
| Sometimes | 23 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 56.5 |
| Often | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 81.2 |
| Always | 13 | 18.8 | 18.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 33.3% stated sometimes when asked whether bench marks are done to gather evidence of best practices before decisions are implemented. This implies that the school compares its pupils’ performance with other schools. However, 24.6% of the respondents stated often, 18.8%stated always, 15.9% rarely and 7.2% stated never. During study review, it was discovered that individual schools and teachers may work alone to review and select materials; in other cases, communities and states may review and recommend materials for adoption lists. Since the applicable policies and logistical arrangements are highly variable, this guide cannot address all situations. Rather, the guide is based on principles and processes those individuals, committees, and communities may adapt for their unique circumstances and needs.

### Involving Teachers and Staff in Choosing Among Alternatives

The study asked respondents whether school management involves teachers and staff in choosing among alternatives for pupils learning improvements. The results are indicated in table 4.9 below:

**Table 4. 9: School management involves teachers and staff in choosing among alternatives for pupils’ learning improvements**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Rarely | 6 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.7 |
| Sometimes | 21 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 39.1 |
| Often | 18 | 26.1 | 26.1 | 65.2 |
| Always | 24 | 34.8 | 34.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 34.8% stated always when asked whether school management involves teachers and staff in choosing among alternatives for pupils’ learning improvements. This implies that the school involves teachers and stakeholders in decision making. However, 30.4% of the respondents stated sometimes, 26.1% often and 8.7% rarely. During interviews, it was discovered that;

*Teachers are the very ones who teach and instruct students in the classroom and who were responsible for their learning directly. They therefore can realize the authentic need of students’ learning within the classroom instead of those administrators outside it. Thus it is of vital importance for a school leader to empower teachers to support with each others to acquire knowledge and skills to meet the needs of student learning, which would improve the quality of decision making*

Top Management encourages the employees to become involved in the decision-making but still believed there was room for increased involvement at the Lower Management levels. This is summarized below:

*At present, all employees can suggest ideas and make decisions. In the case that* *the suggested idea is applicable or acceptable, it will still need to be approved by supervisor or manager. Once approved, the idea will be implemented.* *Decentralisation has been undertaken in the Legal Department. For example, if* *we do not understand a problem then we will hold a group meeting to brainstorm* *the solution.*

It had been a global trend to invite teachers to join in school boards or to participate in influential meetings through the movement of school restructuring. It was believed that teachers would gradually have more input, influence, and autonomy to make school decisions as school administrators (White, 1992).

### Decisions are taken into Effect with Teachers

The study asked respondents whether decisions are taken into effect with teachers and parents involvement. The results are indicated in table 4.10 below:

**Table 4. 10: Decisions are taken into effect with teachers, and parents’ involvement**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 5 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 7.2 |
| Rarely | 12 | 17.4 | 17.4 | 24.6 |
| Sometimes | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 49.3 |
| Often | 15 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 71.0 |
| Always | 20 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 29% stated always when asked whether decisions are taken into effect with teachers and parents’ involvement. This implies that parents and teachers ideas are given some importance. However, 2.6% of the respondents stated sometimes, 21.7% stated often, 17.4% stated rarely and 7.2% stated never. During interviews, one of the respondents commented;

*Educational leaders should promote forms of participation in decision making that increase teachers' actual involvement in decisions concerning their duties and opportunities for development and also provide for more sharing on issues concerning the school management, particularly for women.*

The major reason for involving teachers in participative decision making is to improve the quality of decisions that a school makes and the effectiveness of the school in achieving its goals. (crowther et al., 2002).

### Scheduling Quarterly Meeting with Stakeholders

The study asked respondents whether quarterly meetings with stakeholders are scheduled to review effectiveness of decisions made on pupils learning and any consequences are checked. The results are indicated in table 4.11 below:

**Table 4. 11: Quarterly meetings with stakeholders are scheduled to review effectiveness of decisions made on pupils learning and any consequences are checked**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Rarely | 25 | 36.2 | 36.2 | 39.1 |
| Sometimes | 20 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 68.1 |
| Often | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 82.6 |
| Always | 12 | 17.4 | 17.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 36.2% stated rarely when asked whether quarterly meetings with stakeholders are scheduled to review effectiveness of decisions made on pupils learning and any consequences are checked. This implies that stakeholders’ meeting are organized on annual basis. However, 29% of the respondents stated sometimes, 17.4% stated always, 14.5% said often and 2.9% said never. During interviews it was discovered that:

*A meeting cadence works very much the same way by setting a pace that keeps a group pulling together fast enough to win the race, but not so fast that they wear out before they cross the finish line.*

It should be noted that Stakeholder meetings give all of those with an interest in your business a chance to stay involved in the operations of the company. The meetings are typically targeted at the most influential stakeholders, such as shareholders, executives or partnering companies. Therefore the school should organize quarterly meetings for stakeholders so as to acquire ideas that help in decision making.

* 1. **DECISION MAKING STYLE ON PUPILS LEARNING IN SCHOOLS**

Decision making style basically depends on managers’ approach to decision making. Decision making can be grouped into four main styles. The four styles are, Directive style, Analytic style, Conceptual style, and Behavioral style. Decision making style proposes that people differ in two dimensions when they approach decision making. The first is an individual’s way of thinking and second is individual’s tolerance for ambiguity.

Managers who use directive decision making style have low tolerance for ambiguity and they rational in the way they think. This form of decision making relies on a rational and autocratic style that results in the employee using his own knowledge, experience and judgment to choose the best alternative. This type of leader is very rational, but thinks mostly about the short-term. John believes that a shopping mall is the best type of development for the land. They are very logical, efficient and take quick decisions within a short time. They assess few alternatives and also consider limited information while taking any decision. Basically such managers use their logic and idea while taking decisions.

Managers using analytic decision making style have much greater tolerance for ambiguity and rational way of thinking. They want more information before making a decision and also consider more alternatives. Analytic style decision-making has high tolerance for ambiguity and is rational. The decision-making style is due to uncertainty, and lack of information. Such managers are more careful decision makers as they consider factual and detailed information before taking any decision. They have the ability to adapt or cope with unique situations.

* + 1. **Decisions are Directed to Pupils’ Learning Improvements**

The study asked respondents whether all decisions made are directed to pupils learning improvements and stakeholders’ use their knowledge, experience and judgment to choose the best alternative. The results are indicated in table 4.12 below:

**Table 4. 12: All decisions made are directed to pupils learning improvements and stakeholders’ use their knowledge, experience and judgment to choose the best alternative**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Rarely | 13 | 18.8 | 18.8 | 20.3 |
| Sometimes | 24 | 34.8 | 34.8 | 55.1 |
| Often | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 79.7 |
| Always | 14 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 34.8% stated that all decisions made are directed to pupils learning improvements and stakeholders’ use their knowledge, experience and judgment to choose the best alternative. This implies that top management does all it takes to improve the performance of its pupils. However, 24.6% of the respondents stated often, 20.3% stated always, 18.8% stated rarely and 1.4% stated never. During the study review, it was discovered that:

*The top management asks pupils to share information about each other's backgrounds and academic interests.*

Another respondent stated that:

*Top management encourages pupils to prepare together for classes or exams.*

Another respondent reported that:

*Teachers encourage pupils to create study groups. And that the management asks them give constructive feedback on each other's work and to explain difficult ideas to each other.*

It should be noted that Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one’s own ideas and responding to others’ reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding.

* + 1. **Decisions are Analyzed Through Strategic and Operational Meetings**

The study asked respondents whether decisions on pupils learning are always analyzed through strategic and operational meetings based on direct observations, facts and data to determine the best outcome. The results are indicated in table 4.13 below:

**Table 4. 13: Decisions on pupils learning are always analyzed through strategic and operational meetings based on direct observations, facts and data to determine the best outcome**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14.5 |
| Rarely | 14 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 34.8 |
| Sometimes | 24 | 34.8 | 34.8 | 69.6 |
| Often | 12 | 17.4 | 17.4 | 87.0 |
| Always | 9 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 34.8%stated rarely when asked whether decisions on pupils learning are always analyzed strategic and operational meetings based on direct observations, facts and data to determine the best outcome. This implies that top management creates and updates the strategic management plan. They are long term, big picture decisions about growth. The school analyses and decides how it’s going to set the school up for success in the long term. However, 20.3% of the respondents stated rarely, 17.4% stated often, 14.5% stated never and 13% said always. During documentary review, it was discovered that operational decisions used by the school are about how they are to carry out the strategic decisions. They’re considered medium-term decisions versus strategic long-term decisions. Like strategic decisions, they're focused on growth but they target the production process.

* + 1. **Decisions Made are Conceptual**

The study asked respondents whether decisions made are conceptual because they focus on long term results on pupils learning. The results are indicated in table 4.14 below:

**Table 4. 14: Decisions made are conceptual because they focus on long-term results on pupils learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 6 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.7 |
| Rarely | 8 | 11.6 | 11.6 | 20.3 |
| Sometimes | 30 | 43.5 | 43.5 | 63.8 |
| Often | 15 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 85.5 |
| Always | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 43.5% stated sometimes when asked whether decisions made are conceptual because they focus on long term results on pupils learning. This implies that decisions are made at every level of management to ensure school goals are achieved. As such, decision making process can be further exemplified in the backdrop of the following definitions. However, 21.7% of the total respondents stated often, 14.5%. During study reviews, it was discovered that decisions are taken to support organizational growth. The whole fabric of management, i.e. its day to day operation is rightly built on managerial decisions. Top notch companies, as evidenced by their functions, effective communication tools are utilized in addition to normal consultation process to make decisions that would have large scale implications on the company’s prospects.

It should be noted that Managers using conceptual decision making style have high tolerance for ambiguity and have intuitive in their way of thinking. They look at many alternatives. They focus on the long run and are very good at finding suitable solutions. This kind of decision making is for a long term, and subjected to changes.

* + 1. **Decisions on Pupils Learning are Behavioral in Nature**

The study asked respondents whether decisions made on pupils are behavioral in nature, all stakeholders are involved in meetings and everyone’s views are always accepted. The results are indicated in table 4.15 below:

**Table 4. 15: Decisions on pupils learning are behavioral in nature, all stakeholders are involved in meetings and everyone’s views are always accepted.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14.5 |
| Rarely | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 39.1 |
| Sometimes | 25 | 36.2 | 36.2 | 75.4 |
| Often | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 89.9 |
| Always | 7 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 36.2% stated sometimes when asked whether decisions made on pupils are behavioral in nature, all stakeholders are involved in meetings and everyone’s views are always accepted. This implies that the top management values its staff more so the teachers. However, 24.6% of the total respondents said rarely, 14.5% stated never and often respectively and 10.1% stated always. During documentary review, it was discovered that; the design of educational programs is always guided by beliefs about how students learn in an academic discipline. Whether explicit or implicit, these ideas affect what students in a program will be taught, how they will be taught and how their learning will be assessed. Thus, educational program designers who believe students learn best through memorization and repeated practice will design their programs differently from those who hold that students learn best through active inquiry and investigation.

It should be noted that Managers using conceptual decision making style have high tolerance for ambiguity and have intuitive in their way of thinking. They look at many alternatives. They focus on the long run and are very good at finding suitable solutions. This kind of decision making is for a long term, and subjected to changes.

* + 1. **Motivating Teachers to Take Action to Ensure Pupils Improve Learning**

The study asked respondents whether Top management motivates and convinces teachers and staff on need for take action to ensure pupils improve learning. The results are indicated in table 4.16 below:

**Table 4. 16: Top management motivates and convinces teachers and staff on need for take action to ensure pupils improve learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 7 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 10.1 |
| Rarely | 14 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 30.4 |
| Sometimes | 28 | 40.6 | 40.6 | 71.0 |
| Often | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 85.5 |
| Always | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 40.6% said sometimes when asked whether top management motivates and convinces teachers and staff on need for take action to ensure pupils improve learning. This implies that teachers are given a good in relation to their performance. However, 20.3% of the total respondents said rarely, 14.5% said often and always respectively and 10.1% said never. During study interviews it was discovered that:

*The top management of the school helps the teachers as much as possible when they have a heavier workload. They normally ask the teachers what they need help with before jumping in;* One of the respondents reported*.*

Another respondent stated that:

*The head teacher makes sure to also help the teachers through monotonous tasks with software tools.*

It should be noted that if a teacher feels valued, you won’t need to worry about motivating them. These teachers will know how to stay motivated. Making each teacher feel valued can be as simple as including an announcement in the morning, thanking the teacher for something that they have done recently.

* + 1. **Top Management is Flexible**

The study asked respondents whether top management is flexible, by taking teachers and staff views on pupils learning, if such decisions are better than what management had put forward. The results are indicated in table 4.17 below:

**Table 4. 17: Top management is flexible, by taking teachers and staff views on pupils learning, if such decisions are better than what management had put forward**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Rarely | 20 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 31.9 |
| Sometimes | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 56.5 |
| Often | 21 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 87.0 |
| Always | 9 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 30.4% argued often when asked whether top management is flexible, by taking teachers and staff views on pupils learning, if such decisions are better than what management had put forward. This implies that the administration of the school is not stiff on matters concerning children. However, 29% of the total respondents said rarely, 24.6% sometimes, 13.4% always and 2.9% said never. During study interviews, one of the respondents reported that:

*The Head teacher generally prefers to take a flexible or reversible position when there is uncertainty about the future. This allows opportunity for changing the course of action as those making strategic decisions receive more information over time.*

Decision making is an essential component of leadership. Top management should take a flexible or reversible position when there is uncertainty about the future. This allows opportunity for changing the course of action as those making strategic decisions receive more information over time. Even when the ultimate goal is unpredictable, the actions that decision makers take can lead to a satisfactory solution.

* + 1. **Balancing Decision Making Process**

The study asked respondents whether top management balances decision making process and resist inherent biases on pupils learning. The results are indicated in table 4.18 below:

**Table 4. 18: Top management balances decision making process and resist inherent biases on pupils learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14.5 |
| Rarely | 14 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 34.8 |
| Sometimes | 12 | 17.4 | 17.4 | 52.2 |
| Often | 15 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 73.9 |
| Always | 18 | 26.1 | 26.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 26.1% stated always when asked whether top management balances decision making process and resist inherent biases on pupils learning. This implies that the school management is flexible to take up any decision that improves the pupils’ learning and performance. However, 21.7% of the total respondents said often, 20.3% rarely, 17.4% sometimes and 14.5% said never. During interviews, one of the respondents argued that:

*Balanced decision making offers an opportunity for greater intellectual input in the decision making process. It also provides an opportunity for greater commitment to implementing the decision once it is made. Here is how it will work for you. You, as the decision maker, retain the authority to make decisions.*

Another respondent suggested that:

*Top management of the school must select the actions, determine how they will be carried out, and be accountable for the implementation of the decision and for the subsequent results.*

It should be noted that by pushing out decision making closer to the people who are affected, they become empowered and engaged. At the end of the day, not only have employees played a role in making the best choice, they are more accepting of the consequences.

* 1. **STRATEGIES TO ELIMINATE UNPRODUCTIVE DECISION MAKING IN SCHOOLS**

Numerous decision-making models are revealed in the literature. For example, Eisenhardt (1998) acknowledged that there are essentially three fundamental paradigms in strategic decision-making theory: bounded rationality, power and politics, and the “garbage can” model. However, she suggested a fourth for consideration that she called “improvisational.

Cray, Inglis, and Freeman (2007) argued that in order for an organization to succeed, the goals and environment of the organization, as a whole, needs to match closely the leaders‘ leadership and decision-making styles. Still, board members have encouraged schools to adopt strategic planning and total quality management processes to improve the performance of schools (Cray &Inglis et al., 2007). As they noted, research on strategic decision making reveals that many decision-making processes depend on both the conditions within the organization and the context of the organization (Cray &Inglis et al., 2007).

* + 1. **Identifying and Discussing Pool Learning Issues**

The study asked respondents whether pool learning issues are identified and discussed in all appropriate meetings. The results are indicated in table 4.19 below:

**Table 4. 19: Pool learning issues are Identified and discussed in all appropriate meetings.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Rarely | 14 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 23.2 |
| Sometimes | 28 | 40.6 | 40.6 | 63.8 |
| Often | 15 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 85.5 |
| Always | 10 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, 40.6% of the total respondents said sometimes when asked whether pool learning issues are identified and discussed in all appropriate meetings. This implies that the school management identifies the problem, assesses it before making a decision. However, 21.7% said often, 20.3% rarely, 14.5% said always and 2.9% argued never. In relation to this, one of the respondents argued that:

*Schools need to adopt strategic planning and total quality management processes to improve the performance of schools*

*Before making an effective decision, the issue should be understood. Besides, information has to be complete before making the decision. But in a real situation, sometimes the decision-making cannot be done before the deadline due to the rules. In any event, it is quite often a decision made by one person in the department.*

Moreover, they believed that suggestions from Top Management were also important for effective decision-making. One member of Lower Management also suggested:

*“In my opinion, effective decision-making requires persons who are concerned with that problem taking part in the decision making process. In addition, before decisions are made the decision-makers should receive some directions or guidelines from Top Management for clarity. Then they can make appropriate decisions.”*

* + 1. **Considering Stakeholders Interests**

The study asked respondents whether school management considers every stakeholder interests as concerned to pupils learning. The results are indicated in table 4.20 below:

**Table 4. 20: School management considers every stakeholder interests as concerned to pupils learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Rarely | 5 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 7.2 |
| Sometimes | 31 | 44.9 | 44.9 | 52.2 |
| Often | 4 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 58.0 |
| Always | 29 | 42.0 | 42.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 4.9% argued sometimes when asked whether school management considers every stakeholder interests as concerned to pupils learning. This implies that the school management puts into consideration all ideas of the parents, teachers and other stake holders. However, 42% of the respondents stated always, 7.2% said rarely and 5.8% said often. In regards to this, one of the respondents stated that

*Decisions made by stakeholders include perspectives from all sectors and elements of the community affected thus giving a clearer picture of the community context and potential pitfalls and assets.*

Another respondent stated that

*All stakeholders have a say in the development of an effort that may seriously affect the school and the community*

It should be noted that, when stakeholders are involved, it creates bridging social capital for the community. Social capital is the web of acquaintance, friendships, family ties, favors, obligations and other social currency that can be used to cement relationships and strengthen community.

* + 1. **Calling of Meetings to Solve Problems**

The study asked respondents whether meetings are called upon and lists of the possible solutions (options) are discussed extensively, in case of pupil learning problems. The results are indicated in table 4.21 below:

**Table 4. 21: In case of pupil learning problems, meetings are called upon and a list of the possible solutions (options) are discussed extensively**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Rarely | 11 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 18.8 |
| Sometimes | 14 | 20.3 | 20.3 | 39.1 |
| Often | 17 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 63.8 |
| Always | 25 | 36.2 | 36.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 36.2% stated always when asked whether meetings are called upon and a list of the possible solutions (options) are discussed extensively. This implies that top management aim at maximizing the performance of pupils. However, 24.6% of the total respondents stated often, 20.3% sometimes, 15.9% said rarely and 2.9% said never. During study interviews, one of the respondents stated that:

*The school administration lists and brainstorms on every potential cause for the problem.*

In response to the above, another respondent argued that

*Meetings are carried out because we want to make sure that we solve the structural issues first.*

* + 1. **Evaluating the Options for all Decisions Implemented**

The study asked respondents whether for all decisions implemented, school management evaluate the options taken to check for effectiveness on pupils learning. The results are indicated in table 4.22 below:

**Table 4. 22: For all decisions implemented, school management evaluate the options taken to check for effectiveness on pupils learning.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Rarely | 4 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 7.2 |
| Sometimes | 21 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 37.7 |
| Often | 28 | 40.6 | 40.6 | 78.3 |
| Always | 15 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 40.6% stated often when asked whether for all decisions implemented, school management evaluate the options taken to check for effectiveness on pupils learning. This implies that the top management creates a constructive environment for decision making. However, 30.4% of the respondents stated sometimes, 21.7% always, 5.8% rarely and 1.4% stated never. During study review it was discovered that, decisions can be complex when they involve or affect other people, so it helps to create a constructive environment in which to explore the situation and weigh up your options.

In support to this, one of the respondents stated that

*Top management relies on others to implement the decisions made and so it pays to gain their support.*

Another respondent stated that:

*The decision making committee takes a long dispassionate look at it to be sure that they have been thorough and that common errors haven’t crept into the process.*

In regards to this, one of the respondents stated that:

*The top management discusses the preliminary conclusions with important stakeholders to enable them to spot flaws, make recommendations and support the conclusions.*

The manager argued:

*“Group decision-making is very important because all staff can suggest their ideas no matter what their position is. Their suggestions can be raised up to their leader to make decisions by applying the group decision-making method. However, group decision-making is not appropriate for all cases. It depends on the significance of work and time. The MS4 Department has to consider when group decision-making is appropriate before using it.”*

* + 1. **Selecting Decisions for Implementation**

The study asked respondents whether decisions for implementation are selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders. The results are indicated in table 4.23 below:

**Table 4. 23: Decisions for implementation are selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Rarely | 5 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 10.1 |
| Sometimes | 11 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 26.1 |
| Often | 21 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 56.5 |
| Always | 30 | 43.5 | 43.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 43.5% stated always when asked whether decisions for implementation are selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders. This implies that the management evaluates the alternatives before making a final decision. However, 34.4% of the respondents stated often, 15.9% sometimes, 7.2% rarely and 2.9% stated never. During study reviews, it was discovered that the school normally uses decision trees. This is useful when choosing between different options. These help to lay options out clearly and bring out the livelihood of th problem succeeding.

* + 1. **Documenting all Decisions Agreed Upon**

The study asked respondents whether all decisions are agreed upon are documented for future references and reviews. The results are indicated in table 4.24 below:

**Table 4. 24: All decisions agreed upon are documented for future references and reviews.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Rarely | 4 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 8.7 |
| Sometimes | 7 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 18.8 |
| Often | 11 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 34.8 |
| Always | 45 | 65.2 | 65.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 65.2% stated always when asked whether all decisions agreed upon are documented for future references and reviews. This implies that the administration of the school keeps track of every meeting they engage in. However, 15.9% of the respondents stated often, 10.1% stated sometimes, 5.8% rarely and 2.9% never. During interviews, it was discovered that:

*Documenting informal decisions is one way to demonstrate that someone is able to make decisions with support. It is important to document how the decision was made, what support was provided and what the decision is. Some things they include when documenting a decision are who is making the decision.*

Another respondent reported that:

*Some decisions are documented formally using the appropriate forms.*

It should be noted that documenting how decisions are made is one way of safeguarding the process of decision making and demonstrating how support was provided.

* + 1. **Scheduling Meetings Per Term for Contingencies**

The study asked respondents whether meetings are scheduled per term for contingencies, monitoring and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning. The results are indicated in table 4.25 below:

**Table 4. 25: Meetings are scheduled per term for contingencies, monitoring, and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Never | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Rarely | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 2.9 |
| Sometimes | 36 | 52.2 | 52.2 | 55.1 |
| Often | 16 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 78.3 |
| Always | 15 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 69 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

**Source: Primary data**

According to the table above, majority of the respondents 52.2% stated sometimes when asked whether meetings are scheduled per term for contingencies, monitoring and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning. This implies that the school keeps track of its performance. However, 1.4% of the respondents stated never and rarely respectively. During interviews on how meetings are schedules, one of the respondents stated that:

*The scheduler determines who should be attending the meeting.*

It should be noted that scheduling meetings on a term-basis is a way to keep the school on track with the activities that lead to success. Coming into the office with the intention of getting as much done as possible leaves no way to determine if you are using your time wisely. It is easy to be distracted by impromptu phone calls and meetings when you don't block and schedule your time.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Introduction**

In this chapter, discussion, conclusions and recommendations were made. Under this chapter summary of the main points which encompass over all study topics particularly on stressing at the introduction and discussions including results were target areas of this chapter. Conclusions including results and findings were elucidated. Based on discussions and results findings were illustrated and described. Finally based on findings, demerits of this thesis had been recommended.

* 1. **Discussion**

The study aimed at examining the ways through which decision-making practices influenced learning outcomes among primary school pupils using Kakumiro District as a case-study. In view of this, the study attempted to find out the different decision-making practices that are characterized by primary school administrators, how decision-making styles influence on learning among pupils in the affected schools and the strategies used to eliminate educationally unproductive decision-making practices in Kakumiro District in primary schools. The summary of the key findings of the study is presented as follows.

* + 1. **Decision Making Practices in Schools**

According to the study results above, it indicated 56.5% of the respondents stated often, 13% of the respondents stated always and sometimes respectively, while 11.6% stated rarely and 5.8% stated never when asked whether most decisions made in school focus on improving pupils’ academic performance and well-being, is indicated in table 4.6. This implied that all decisions are in line with the school’s vision statement. It further found out that some timesbefore any conclusions on pupils concerns, relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options.

The study further found out that stakeholders are often involved in appropriate meetings to identify the best alternatives options on pupils learning, bench marks are sometimes done to gather evidence of best practices before decisions are implemented, school management always involves teachers and staff in choosing among alternatives for pupils’ learning improvements, decisions are sometimes taken into effect with teachers and parents’ involvement, and quarterly meetings with stakeholders are sometimes scheduled to review effectiveness of decisions made on pupils learning and any consequences are checked. This implies that stakeholders’ meeting are organized on annual basis. However, 29% of the respondents stated sometimes, 17.4% stated always, 14.5% said often and 2.9% said never.

* + 1. **Decision Making Style on Pupils Learning in Schools**

According to the study results above, 34.8% of the total respondents stated sometimes 24.6% of the respondents stated often, 20.3% stated always, 18.8% stated rarely and 1.4% stated never that all decisions made are directed to pupils learning improvements and stakeholders’ use their knowledge, experience and judgment to choose the best alternative; as indicated in table 4.12. It also found out that decisions on pupils learning are rarely analyzed strategic and operational meetings based on direct observations, facts and data to determine the best outcome.

The study further found out that decisions made are sometimes conceptual because they focus on long term results on pupils learning, decisions made on pupils are sometimes behavioral in nature, all stakeholders are involved in meetings and everyone’s views are always accepted, top management sometimes motivates and convinces teachers and staff on need for take action to ensure pupils improve learning, and top management is often flexible, by taking teachers and staff views on pupils learning, if such decisions are better than what management had put forward; top management always balances decision making process and resist inherent biases on pupils learning.

* + 1. **Strategies to Eliminate Unproductive Decision Making in Schools**

According to the study results above, 40.6% of the total respondents said sometimes .7% said often, 20.3% rarely, 14.5% said always and 2.9% argued never, when asked whether pool learning issues are identified and discussed in all appropriate meetings; as indicated in table 4.19. the study further found out that school management sometimes considers every stakeholder interests as concerned to pupils learning, meetings are always called upon and a list of the possible solutions (options) are discussed extensively; for all decisions implemented, school management often evaluate the options taken to check for effectiveness on pupils learning.

The study findings show that decisions for implementation are always selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders, all decisions agreed upon are sometimes documented for future references and reviews, and meetings are sometimes scheduled per term for contingencies, monitoring and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning.

* 1. **Conclusion**

This study examined the existing literature and results obtained from the responses of the respondents established that proper decision making practices contributed to improved learning outcomes among primary pupils. The current study contends that integration of decision making would contribute greatly to education management in primary schools.

An empirical analysis of 69 respondents on the decision making practices and learning outcomes in primary schools in Kakumiro District was done. The analysis revealed that, relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options before any conclusions on pupils concerns. The study further found out that stakeholders are often involved in appropriate meetings to identify the best alternatives options on pupils learning, and bench marks are done to gather evidence of best practices before decisions are implemented.

However despite that, decisions made are sometimes conceptual because they focus on long term results, strategic and operational meetings based on direct observations, facts and data to determine the best outcome are rarely done.

The study noted that decisions for implementation are always selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders, all decisions agreed upon are sometimes documented for future references and reviews, and meetings are sometimes scheduled per term for contingencies, monitoring and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning.

* 1. **Recommendations**

The following are the recommended ways to improving on learning outcomes though effective decision making in Kakumiro District:

All stakeholders should be involved in appropriate meetings for a smooth decision-making process. This will help on proposing ideas, and taking positive criticism of these ideas before conclusion on any decision.

Top school management should encourage group decision making as the ideal decision-making style.

Kakumiro District should offer some assistance to primary schools in the areas of education management by instilling appropriate decision making practices to be followed in running pupil’s learning programmes.

Decisions made need to focus on long term results, strategic and operational to determine the best learning outcomes for pupils.

For effective management of pupils learning, decisions for implementation should be selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders, all decisions agreed upon should be documented for future references and reviews, this will encourage monitoring and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning.

## 5.4 Areas for further research

* Decision making and Financial management in schools
* Decision making and communication in primary schools
* Role of School management in decision making implementation
* Decision making and gender mainstreaming in primary schools

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## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRES TO RESPONDENTS (Head teachers, teachers, and management committees)

Dear respondent,

I am **Kyofuna Mary** a student of Nkumba University conducting a study on The Influence of decision making practices on learning outcomes among children in selected primary schools in Kamumiro District. As part of the award of a Master degree in Education Administration, Management and Planning, I am required to conduct research for partial fulfillment of the award. You are kindly requested to respond to the various questions in the questionnaire attached. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and for the purpose for which it is intended only. I would be grateful for your cooperation in this regard.

 Signed:

…………………………

**PART 1: Background information**

**Please tick where applicable**

**1). Gender**

1. Male
2. Female

**2). Age Group**

1. 20-29 Years
2. 30-39 Years
3. 40-49 Years
4. 50+ years

**3. School of employment**....................................................

**4. Highest level of education**

1. O’ Level
2. A’ Level
3. Diploma
4. Degree
5. Others (please specify)……………………………..

**5. Position held……………………………..**

**PART II**

Please use the rating below and tick in the box containing the most appropriate rating of your choice:

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Always

**SECTION B: Decision making practices in my school**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Question** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 6 | Most decisions made in school focus on improving pupils academic performance and well-being |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | * Before any conclusion on pupils concerns, relevant information is gathered through consultations with teachers and staff for purposes of weighing available options
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | * Stakeholders are involved in appropriate meetings to Identify the best alternatives options on pupils learning
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | * Bench marks are done to gather evidence of best practices before decisions are implemented
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | School management involves teachers and staff in choosing among alternatives for pupils learning improvements |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Decisions are taken into effect with teachers, and parents involvement |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | * Quarterly meetings with stakeholders are scheduled to review effectiveness of decisions made on pupils learning and any consequences are checked
 |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION C: Decision making style on pupils learning in my school**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Question** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 13 | All decisions made are directed to pupils learning improvements and stakeholders’ use their knowledge, experience and judgment to choose the best alternative |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Decisions on pupils learning are always analysed through strategic and operational meetings based on direct observations, facts and data to determine the best outcome |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Decisions made are conceptual because they focus on long-term results on pupils learning  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Decisions on pupils learning are behavioral in nature, all stakeholders are involved in meetings and everyone’s views are always accepted. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | Top management motivates and convinces teachers and staff on need for take action to ensure pupils improve learning |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | Top management is flexible, by taking teachers and staff views on pupils learning, if such decisions are better than what management had put forward  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | Top management balances decision making process and resist inherent biases on pupils learning  |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION D: Strategies to eliminate unproductive decision making in my school**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Question** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 20 | 1. Pool learning issues are Identify and discussed in all appropriate meetings.
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | 1. School management considers every stakeholder interests as concerned to pupils learning
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | 1. In case of pupil learning problems, meetings are called upon and a list of the possible solutions (options) are discussed extensively
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | 1. For all decisions implemented, school management evaluate the options taken to check for effectiveness on pupils learning.
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24 | 1. Decisions for implementation are selected through meetings with appropriate stakeholders.
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25 | 1. All decisions agreed upon are documented for future references and reviews.
 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | 1. Meetings are scheduled per term for contingencies, monitoring, and evaluation to review decision effectiveness on pupils learning
 |  |  |  |  |  |

## APPENDIX 1I: INTERVIEW GUIDE (Parents and District Officials)

1. Do you think most decisions made in school focus on pupils well-being
2. When are parents as stakeholders involved in school decision making
3. Do schools contact parents on quarterly meetings
4. What is your take on long term decisions for students learning
5. How often do school management invite parents on pupils learning improvements
6. Do think decisions agreed upon are documents properly by school management
7. Do schools implement all decisions agreed upon by stakeholders
8. Do think schools have professional decision making processes
9. Does to management motivate teachers on improving pupils’ learning
10. Do these schools bench mark on improving pupils learning

## C:\Users\PRIVATE\Desktop\map of uganda showing kakumiro.jpgAPPENDIX III: MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING KAKUMIRO DISTRICT

## APPENDIX IV: MAP OF KAKUMIRO DISTRICT SHOWING THE SAMPLED PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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