UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE TANO DISTRICT

OF BRONG AHAFO REGION OF GHANA

BY

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Dissertation Submitted

to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration

University of Cape Coast in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of Master of Education Degree

in Educational Administration

JULY 2007

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:... Date:..02|07|07

Name: Prince Kusi-Quaidoo

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

The study was prompted by an observation made by the researcher about the apparent absence of involving students of senior secondary in the Tano District of Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana in school decision-making. The study explored the nature of the existing structures of decision-making and the factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making among others. The population for the study was made up of students, teachers and all headmasters from the six senior secondary schools in the Tano District. The sample consisted of 328 students, 66 teachers, and six headmasters from these schools.

A set of questionnaire was prepared for each of the sampled respondents namely, students, teachers and headmasters. Frequencies and percentages were the main statistical tools employed for the analysis of the study data.

The main findings among others are the following:

1. Students participate in school decision-making through the establishment of Students' Representative Council (SRC's). Their involvement is however, restricted to a few decisional areas.

2. Student participation in school decision-making has a lot of benefits to both students and school authorities.

The following recommendations are made for future practice and research;

1. It is suggested that school authorities and students should brainstorm and assess the current level of student participation in school decision-making.

2. It is also suggested that the nature of the existing structures of decision in the sampled schools should be restructured.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved children, Harriet, Shadrack, Courage and Percy. May they be inspired to achieve heights greater than this.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Students can be described as the direct clientele of the school system and the pivot around which everything else in the school revolves. Students therefore constitute the main body of the human resource that the school authorities have to manage.

According to Ozigi (1977), the student is the centre of the educational process and all activities in the school should aim at developing the student's total personality to the fullest. To achieve this, good curriculum and institutional programmes must be developed and implemented. He explains that the school should provide opportunities for students to develop responsible attitudes and to experience the type of moral training that will prepare them for future life. This philosophy requires the school head or administrator to show considerable concern for the students, to seriously look into the teaching and learning situation, try to understand and help solve students' personal problems and cater for their well being.

From the views expressed by Ozigi as stated above, it could be inferred that one of the major problems that school administrators have to grapple with is how to create a conducive ambience for retaining students in the school, guarantee their welfare and thereby promote smooth learning. The school head must therefore put a wide range of students personnel services such as effective

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classroom management, counseling, health services, security, student welfare, co-curricular activities, recreation, student social service, student feeding, student accommodation and student discipline.

The successful organization and implementation of these services require maximum cooperation and active participation of both staff and students of the school in the making of the decisions concerning the nature and direction of these services. The school head has to delegate duties to the staff and students and supervise them to perform them well. To achieve these objectives, it is commended that students are given opportunity to participate in at least some of the decision-making processes of the school.

Decision-making is so central in the achievement of every organisation's goals that the phrase is looked at as being synonymous with administration and management. To decide is to come to a resolution as a result of consultations or a considerable reasoning over the issue.

Literature on student participation in school decision-making in the Ghanaian milieu is scanty. Most of the available materials are foreign based experiences and conditions. According to Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) and Mandani (1983), the few studies on student participation in decision-making that are available were carried out in East Africa. Studies conducted on relevant public involvement in decision-making have focused on industrial organisations apparently leaving the educational sector untouched.

Decision-making is one of the important responsibilities of administrators. According to Gorton (1980) decision is a "complex exercise

involving analytic thought process which makes use of pertinent sources of information and assistance" (p. 15). He opines that decision-making involves selecting useful, alternative solutions which are in turn implemented with the view to achieving a set objective. He sees decision-making as a vital ingredient in administration, it is therefore imperative that those in administration should be circumspect when dealing with the subject matter, decision-making. The relevant publics that are affected by a decision must be allowed to make an input when such decisions are being made so that they are not seen as being marginalized in the decision-making.

Looking at school administration in the mid twentieth century, Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) says "in the past, student participation in school administration has been a matter of upholding the notion that children must be seen but must not be heard" (p. 55). According to him there seem to be no information flow from the students through the teachers to the head. The head is seen as the boss, "the key" figure. In a situation like this the head of the school is seen as operating under classical theory of administration. The head has complete control over all. He could get to the dormitory and order students who have been asked by their housemaster to scrub to stop work. Teachers and students will have to obey him and only do what he tells them. There must be a way to avoid this situation.

Students must be encouraged to participate in the decision-making process because they form a part of the "all" who are concerned in determining the ends and purposes to be attained, as Asiedu-Akrofi points out. Asiedu-

Akrofi suggests that student participation in decision-making could help them develop their civic competence or create the awareness of the negative side of democracy. He gives one example from Kenya where students assumed a militant approach to let their voices be heard. The students had this for the authorities: "to reject peaceful means is to invite hot ones; therefore a demonstration" (p. 132). Students want to be heard so a permissive atmosphere should be created to allow them participate in some aspects of the administration.

It is true that students are not implementers of decisions, but decisions that are implemented affect them directly or indirectly. It is becoming increasingly clear that the heads who refuse students' participation in school administration take to the classic mode of administration are likely to encounter problems. Such heads will invariably have agitation from students.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) says the cooperative approach of sharing, delegating, that is, getting students to participate in the day to day running of schools should be seen beneficial to the smooth running of school; this will offer the heads the opportunity and even time to manage their human resources. According to him majority of students in the second cycle schools would like to participate in decision-making. Those who do not want to participate form the minority, he concludes.

An incident happened at a senior secondary school in the Tano District in the 2002/2003 academic year which lends credence to the views expressed above. During the 2002/2003 sports competition, this school qualified to take

part in the super-zonal competition. The headmaster unilaterally felt that the students' participation in that competition would disturb the academic calendar since students had used about four weeks to prepare for the inter-house and zonal sports competitions. So using another week for the super-zonal competition would mean students would lose five weeks of serious classroom work. The headmaster only informed the teaching staff and was not ready to take opposing views from some members of staff. He insisted that as the head of the school he had a vision for the school and the teachers only had to support him to achieve that vision. No amount of persuasion from even senior members of staff could make the head reason with his colleagues towards his decision to stop the students from participating in the super-zonal competition. In his views if the students did not perform well in their final examination the board and the community would hold him responsible for the students' poor performance. Since the headmaster was bent on implementing that decision he did not invite the students' representative council for discussion on the issue.

The head at a meeting with the students and staff informed the gathering of the decision that the school had taken concerning their participation in the super-zonal sports competition. He added that if anybody or a group of people had anything to say, he would be at his office to welcome such individuals or groups. Three days after this announcement the students demonstrated against the head, accusing him of dictatorship and governing the school in an autocratic manner. The headmaster was investigated after the demonstration and was transferred from the school to another school.

However, in the same 2002/2003 academic year a school in the same Tano district had a similar problem. In this school, the students were involved in the decision-making and the way the message was conveyed to the students made them reason with the administration. At this school, the headmaster first called a staff meeting and discussed the issue with the teachers. He then invited the students' representative council and discussed the same issue with the students, asking them to make inputs. After a marathon deliberation, the students' leadership accepted the headmaster's decision. They told the head to give them two days so that they could consult their colleagues and bring him the feedback. The students' leadership came back on the third day to inform the headmaster that they had been able to explain the issue to their colleagues and had been able to convince them to accept the decision of the administration not to participate in the impending super-zonal sports competition. After these consultations the headmaster then arranged to meet the staff and student to officially inform them of the administration's intention of not making the school participate in the super-zonal competition. When the head finally met the student body they agreed not to participate in the said competition.

It could be seen that because the students in the second school were involved in the decision-making process, the leadership was able to convince the rest of the student body to reason with administration on the issue. However, because the headmaster of the first school felt that he was the "boss" and could take any decision without seeking the opinions of his staff and students he was proved wrong and was strongly resisted.

Different people have expressed different views on student participation in decision-making in senior secondary schools. Contrary to the belief that some people have cherished that student participation in decision-making process in senior secondary schools brings certain benefits to the students, staff and the school administration in general, another school of thought says such participation does a lot of harm to the students in particular and school administration in general.

Those who support student participation in decision-making process in school administration contend that such participation gives student the opportunity to contribute to decision-making. Not only that but they opine that such participation exposes the students to real life situations for which their training prepares them. Again, they consider such participation to enhance students' commitment to school programmes and their sense of belongingness, promote cordial relationship between students and teachers. They also argue that such participation helps promote collegial and congenial atmosphere that boost the teaching-learning process.

However, those who oppose to the assertion that student participation in decision-making process brings some benefits strongly think that the practice must be discouraged. They argue that when students are involved in decision-making process in school administration, those selected few who are privileged to be involved in the decision-making feel pompous and tend to look down on their colleagues. They also see themselves as people who are above the law and often flout school rules and regulations with impunity.

The group also thinks that such participation sometimes slows down the administrative process. They argue that in such situations, the student leaders tend to do a lot of consultations with the student body on every issue before bringing the feedback to the authorities for a final decision to be taken on an issue. Such a practice will invariably delay administrative process, since it normally takes a lot of time for students in large numbers to come out with a single acceptable decision on an issue. Again, they believe that when students are involved in the decision-making process in school administration, most of them tend to neglect their academic work.

Bush (1989) does not accept the practice where students are too much involved in the decision-making process in school administration. He argues that leadership goes with responsibilities and that the one who accepts a leadership position accepts additional responsibility. He explains that a good leader also serves the people he leads and this tends to bring additional work to the student who is already burdened with heavy academic load. He suggests that those who are academically good will even have to work extra hard to be able to cope up with their academic work. It therefore stands to reason that the average student who takes leadership position really goes in for a battle.

Another incident happened at a third school in the same Tano District during the third term of the 2002/2003 academic year which lends credence to the views expressed by the group that opposes the concept of student participation in decision making process in school administration.

The headmaster of this school listened to the grievances of his students and always gave in to the demands made by students. He took the students as his children always ready to please them. This headmaster was particular about students' meals and even involved the students leaders in the drawing of menu for the students, drawing entertainment and sports programmes for the school.

This headmaster felt by doing this his students would support him to build the school and maintain discipline in order to improve students' performance especially in the academic area. Contrary to the head's expectation, these students revolted against him. This was when he decided to take a disciplinary action against some boarders who broke bounds and some boys who sneaked to the girls dormitory in the night. Some of the culprits were student leaders. They were able to mobilize some of the students to demonstrate against the headmaster.

Blasé and Blasé (1994) conducted a study on the attitude and perceptions of heads of schools and teachers towards the implementation of school-based shared decision-making in an urban district in Florida in the United States. The study revealed that the attitude of heads of schools and teachers regarding the process of shared decision-making and their perceptions of areas of student participation or involvement differed significantly. Heads of schools were found to be more in favour of the following:

1. That students should have inputs in setting up goals and priorities;

2. That students are to be provided with requisite information to appropriate decisions;

3. That students are to be guided in their involvement in decisions.

Teachers who were identified as being faculty advisors to student councils, however, felt student councils should not be allowed increased roles in decision-making. Students on the other hand, were found to press for involvement in the following areas;

1. Involvement in matters that boarder on evaluation of teachers. Students perceived that they were the consumers of education, and therefore the outcome of teaching must be evaluated by them;

2. Getting involved in matters of student discipline. They perceived that as a preparation for, and, to a large extent a reflection of a world they will encounter after graduation;

3. Involvement in decisions that have to do with control of some extra-curricular funds without unnecessary administrative interference.

The differences above show that school heads, teachers and students do not have the same perception concerning student participation in school decision-making process.

The three incidents earlier described in this text create mixed feelings about student participation in decision-making process in school administration. Administrators or school heads who have gone through such experiences will be

quick to suggest that it is difficult to predict students' behaviours and also difficult to say whether involving students in the decision-making process in school administration actually helps the administrator to achieve the set goals or not. This is because each side of the coin appears to have its own merits and demerits.

Statement of Problem

Student participation in decision-making at the senior secondary school level seems to be a problem to both school authorities and students. The incidents described in the background are quintessence of global situations which can be linked with calls from students on one side to be involved in decision-making and administrators on the other to show circumspection when dealing with issue of student participation in school decision-making process.

According to Twumasi (1971) although committees of enquiry reports on students' grievances in Ghana, reveal that some heads do not involve students in the decision-making process, it appears some heads still feel skeptical about students' participation in school decision-making for various reasons. This is an issue which needs to be investigated. It is believed that if views from the two sides, that is, students and school authorities on the issue of student participation in decision-making are known the bottlenecks can be removed. This will pave way for some participations of a sort by students. It will help promote the building of congenial and conducive environment for effective teaching-learning in senior secondary schools in the Tano District.

Purpose of the Study

This study is consequently designed:

1. To investigate the perceptions of students, teachers and school heads concerning student participation in decision-making structures in all the six senior secondary schools in the Tano District.

2. To examine the extent of student participation in school decision-making process in the senior secondary schools in the Tano District.

3. To find the areas of decision-making that students in the district would like to be involved. .

4. To find whether students in the schools in the Tano District participation in school decision-making has adverse effects on the general school administration and on the students themselves.

5. To ferret out factors that relate to student participation and non-participation in school decision-making process.

Research Questions

The study is aimed at addressing the following questions.

1. Do students participate in decision-making process in senior secondary schools in the Tano District?

2. Which areas do students of schools in the district want to be involved in the decision-making process?

3. Does participating in school decision-making have some positive or negative effects on students in schools in the district?

4.   What are the factors that discourage student participation in school

decision-making process?

Significance of Study

It is the belief that the results of the study will provide the necessary

information for   headmasters in the schools in the Tano District to make

decisions.   Again, having in-depth knowledge in the dynamics of student

participation in school decision-making will invariably help both students and

school authorities in the Tano District to critically determine the desired level of

student participation in decision-making.   This condition will unequivocally

promote congenial atmosphere for the teaching-learning process.   Not only

these, but the results will contribute to knowledge since vital information in the

study can be accessed by other researchers who will be interested to further

research into student participation in decision-making   process in other

educational institutions elsewhere in the country.

Limitations of the Study

Notwithstanding the efforts put in by the researcher to conduct a

thorough study, certain limitations cannot be avoided. They include the

following:

1.   The sample size used for the study was relatively small. It is the belief of

the researcher that if a relatively large sample were used, the validity and

reliability of the result could have been improved tremendously.

2.   The study covered only senior secondary schools in the Tano District of the Brong-Ahafo Region; however, it is likely that many other interesting findings could have been made if more senior secondary schools in the Brong-Ahafo Region had been involved.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is a survey research restricted to senior secondary schools in the Tano district of the Brong-Ahafo region of Ghana. Considering the area of coverage in terms of the subject matter, findings for the study will apply to student participation in decision-making within the Tano District. However, districts which have similar characteristics as Tano district may adapt the findings to suit their educational need or take a lesson from the study.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of the study the researcher adopted the following definitions:

Administrator

One who is in charge of the day-to-day running of an institution or an organization.

Appellate decision

Decision which arises from matters referred from decisions by subordinates to the administrator for his disposition (Crane, 1993).

Consensus

A collective view or opinion arrived at by a group of individuals working together under conditions that permit communication to be open for all and sundry in the group to have a fair chance to influence the decision (Bolman & Neal, 1977).

Creative decision

Decision initiated by the administrator in an attempt to bring about a significant change in the system (Gorton, 1980).

Decision-making

A conscious and deliberate resolve that binds an individual or a group to take action in a specific way (Bush, 1989).

Deprived involvement

A situation where the current participation of a subordinate in decision-making process is less than he/she prefers (Alluto & Belasco, 1976).

Equilibrium involvement

A situation where the current involvement or participation of a subordinate in decision-making is the same as his desired participation or involvement (Alluto & Belasco, 1976).

Intermediary decision

A decision that does not originate from the administrator but is delegated to him by a superior in the organizational hierarchy (Drucker, 1970).

Involvement/Participation

Sharing or taking part in an activity according to one capability (Bernard, 1984).

Headmaster

The head of senior secondary school.

Non-programmed decision

An unstructured decision that is, no established procedure exists for handling the problem (Bradley, 1993).

Organizational decision

A decision that relates to the organizational goals and purposes and affect members of the organization (Richman & Farmer, 1975).

Personal decision

A decision that relates to the purpose of the decision-maker which does not necessarily affect other members of the organization (Richman & Farmer, 1975).

Programmed decision

A decision that relates to a particular situation that occurs so often that a routine procedure has been worked out to solve it (Bradley, 1993).

Organisation of the Study

This research work has been organized into five chapters.

Chapter one details such concerns as background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of terms and organization of the study.

Chapter two reviews relevant literature on decision-making and its effects on organisational management such as educational institutions.

Chapter three deals with the methodology for the study with such details as research design, population for the study, the sample and sampling technique, research instrument, pre-testing of instrument, data collection procedure and method of data analysis.

Chapter four looks at the results and discussion with such details as the structure of decision-making in schools, actual student participation in school decision-making in operational and managerial decisions and factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making among others.

Chapter five the last chapter examines the discussion of findings conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The chapter concerns itself with a review of related literature. The purpose of the review is to look at the observations made by researchers and writers on the subject, participation in decision-making, especially subordinate participation. It also looks at the relevance of the literature to this study and the specific direction it can give to the researcher as regards the methodology, collection and analysis of data and the final findings and recommendations of the study.

The literature review concentrates on the following areas:

1. The concept of decision-making

2. Decision-making process

3. Classification of decisions

4. The structure and mode of decision-making existing in the educational system.

5. Subordinate participation in decision-making

6. Student participation in decision-making

7. Specific areas requiring decision-making

8. Conclusion

The Concept of Decision-Making

Drucker (1970), defines decision-making as the process of choosing from among alternative ways of achieving an objective or providing a solution to a problem. He is of the view that there are many alternative ways of achieving objectives and the process through which this choice is made is termed decision-making

Richman and Farmer (1975) on their part define decision-making as "the selection of a course of action from available alternative" (p. 184). Unless a decision has been taken or generated into action, they point out, it is not a decision. If it does not result into action it may be described as a good intention.

Chapman (1990) explains that decision-making is the process of developing commitment to some course of action. According to him, three things are noteworthy about decision-making:

1.   Involves more than simply the final choice among alternatives – how the decision was reached;

2.   making a choice among several action alternatives, and

3.   the extent of committing resources such as time and personnel.

Cantelon (1980) states that whenever there is more than one way of doing things, a decision is needed. Any kind of choice, alternative or option calls for a decision. He says there is always a systematic approach to decision-making in order to solve an organisation's or institutions' problems. While there are a few exceptions to the rule, the best result is to be rational or systematic, he points out.

Bush (1989) defines decision-making as a conscious and deliberate resolve that binds the individual or the group to take action in a specific way. According to him decision-making is thus the act of determining a course of action following a more or less deliberate consideration of competing alternatives. Bush opines that decision-making is an administrative function that runs through the entire task of administration from the definition of goals through the definition of tasks or activities to the evaluation and control of performed activities. He further explains that decision should be thought of as means rather than ends to the administrator's objectives and that decisions are in effect responses to problems and the end result is therefore to achieve the desired state of the institution.

Decision-Making Process

Amabile (1983) says decision-making follows the same process as problem-solving. He outlines four main stages as follows:

1. Identification and clarification of problem. This stage demands a clear perception of the area where the problem lies or resides.

2. Collection of possible information. Here, opinion or ideas that are pertinent to the problem must be sought for.

3. Formulation of feasible alternative solutions. The solution should be consistent with the value systems of the institution, or the organisation or the society as well as the goals and the means

available. The available alternative must be evaluated one after the other.

4. Making the actual decision. This is the stage where the actual decision is made.

Amabile points out that the decision should be made in terms of its effectiveness in solving the problem identified and its implementation should be controlled and evaluated. According to him decision-making is a highly rational process devoid of emotionalism.

Classification of Decision-Making

Crane (1993) reveals that specialist in decision-making have developed several ways of classifying decisions. The first type is the personal decision. Personal decisions are personal to the decision-maker and are for his purpose. These decisions do not necessarily affect other members of the organization or the institution.

The second type is the organizational decision which is related to organizational goals and purposes and affects members of the organisation. In most institutions, according to Crane, administrators make organizational decisions. Organisational decisions may be programmed or may not be programmed. Programmed decisions relate to particular situation that occurs so often that a routine procedure has been worked out for solving it. These decisions are programmed to the extent that problems are repetitive and routine and a definite procedure has been developed for handling them. He further

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explains that non-programmed decisions are those that are unstructured, which means no established procedure exists for handling the problems either because they have not risen in exactly the same manner before or because they are complex or extremely important. Such problems deserve special treatment.

Non-programmed decisions have been classified or categorized into creative, intermediary and appellate depending on their sources. He points out that decisions are creative when they are initiated by the administrator himself in an attempt to bring significant change in the system or decisions concerned with significantly improving some aspects of institutional set-up. These decisions according to him require insight, imagination, initiative and courage on the part of the administrator. Their implementation or execution requires tact and careful planning to ensure a relative acceptance by those affected by them since many people are resistance to change.

With regard to intermediary decisions, he says these decision do not originate from the administrator but are delegated to him by a superior in the organizational hierarchy, that is to say, they are made in response to an authoritative communication from a superior officer. The communication can come in the form of a request or a command and a committee can deliberate on them.

On the appellate decisions, he refers to them as decisions which arise from cases which subordinates refer to the administrator for his or her disposition. For example, cases brought to the headmaster by prefects.

The Structure and the Mode of Decision-Making Existing in the Educational System

The system adopted by an organisation in arriving at decisions may be considered as decision-making structure or mode (Asare-Bediako, 1990). For whatever type of decision that is made by administrators, whether intermediary, appellate or creative, Asare-Bediako identifies five types of modes that a group can adopt to formulate decisions. The modes of decision-making are as follows:

1. Decision by Authority

2. Decision by Majority

3. Decision by Minority

4. Decision by Unanimity

5. Decision by Consensus

Asare-Bediako refers to decision by authority as a situation where an individual in authority makes decisions for the group. The second type which is decision by majority refers to the approach where the group members freely express their views on a given situation or issue. In the end the majority feeling is taken as the decision. The third type which is decision by minority is a description of an occasion where a single person or a small group takes a decision on behalf of a larger group. The fourth one which is known as decision by unanimity is a situation where every group member agrees with the decision taken. This type is often considered to be the ideal.. Finally, there is what is referred to as consensus decision-making. This approach is where there is a lot

of collaboration, networking and decision, so that group members who do not favour the majority alternative yet understand it and are prepared to support it.

Bolman and Neal (1977) note that involving the relevant public in the affairs of an organisation be it bureaucratic, socio-political or open-system in nature, helps management to achieve set objectives. This ascertain is supported by Sergiovanni (1999). In his view such involvement through laid down decision-making structures, build a large commitment base: a commitment which leads to effective implementation of decisions.

Gorton (1980) opines that students are oftentimes not being involved in matters like discipline. He is also of the view that students have been denied involvement in decisions taken for the assessment of their teachers. He further states that students are the consumers of education and that the best way of determining whether the teaching they receive is good or not is to involve them in decision-making.

A high percentage of school heads, Shanahan (1987) points out, use participatory decision-making, at least, in some areas of responsibility such as establishing classroom disciplinary policies, determining appropriate teaching method(s), maintaining discipline in the school and allowing students to exercise control over funds contributed by the students themselves for projects. Hanson (1991) supports Shanahan by saying that majority of school heads involve their subordinates including students in the decision-making process of their schools. The studies of Shanahan (1987) and Hanson (1991) confirm that the use of

participatory decision-making mode, among other things, increase commitment and a higher level of cooperation from subordinates including students.

Hanson (1991) conducted a survey among San Francisco heads of schools. He found out that there existed in the schools collective decision-making structures. It was further revealed that most of the school heads had the fear that expanded subordinate influence through involvement, will undermind their work. On the contrary, it was explained that because collective work structures help to develop worker's professional competence, teachers showed much interest in such structures.

Bernard (1984) also came out with a finding from a study to the effect that the mode of decision-making of a school depends on the leadership style at the central office outside the school. Bernard investigated the way school heads perceive certain practices at the central office level and how these relate to the methods the heads use to involve their subordinates in the decision-making process. Bernard asked 120 heads to describe the decision mode which best characterized the way instructional decisions were made in their schools. A continuum was provided ranging from "boss centred" to "subordinate". It was revealed that a positive relationship existed between the heads' allocation of decisional power on one hand, and their perception of the leadership at the central office on the other.

Keith and Girling (1991) support Bernard by saying that decisions by heads are affected when the decisions are of the intermediary type. Keith and Girling in their study, looked critically at the results of decision-making games

played by volunteers from Hauston University. It was found that disagreement among members was likely; and that acceptance was a necessary decision-making method or process which allowed group involvement generates greater acceptance than the absence of it. The strong feeling among the subjects was that collective thinking resulted in higher quality decisions. The findings of Keith and Girling are a confirmation of earlier piece of research evidence; that increased subordinate involvement in decision-making generates greater acceptance of decisions thus made. The understanding is that such decisions are sound. They build large commitment base for smooth and effective implementation (Sergiovanni, 1987).

Subordinate Participation in Decision-Making

Crane (1993) conducted a study in Australia to find out the types of decisions administrators make. He found out that administrators in various institutions make decisions that involve subordinates, while others make decisions without their subordinates. According to Crane, regardless of the institution, there is a variation in the degree of employees' participation. He found out that the administrator is ultimately responsible for decision outcomes. This means that when an administrator faces several alternatives to the solution of a particular problem he may involve his subordinates or co-workers or take the decision alone. Whatever the situation, Crane concluded that the administrator has to evaluate the outcomes.

Patchen (1990) argues that increased participation in school governance promote discipline and improves the tone of the school as students develop the idea of right conduct, self control, co-operation and fairness among themselves. Patchen enumerates two systems by which students can be involved in decision-making process in school governance. These systems include prefectoral and the committee systems. According to Patchen, the prefectoral system is the most common means of involving students in decision-making process in school. He notes that there may be dormitory prefects, house prefects, dining hall prefects and similar positions, the number of which may depend on the culture and traditions of each school. He indicates that at a higher level the Student Representative Council (SRC) takes the place of the prefects. He explains that the second system is the committee system which deals with monitoring the control and management of certain aspects of school life. These committees should have student representatives on them.

Rebore (1982) notes that involving the relevant publics in the management of organisations is a very broad idea. It can be found in many forms depending on the society where the concept is found. Workers according to Rebore, have been found to be represented on consultative committees, working councils, Board of Directors and Union activities. He calls this "collective bargaining". In Britain, he says, the concept is called "Industrial Democracy". In Yugoslavia it is referred to as "Self Government". In the United States of America it is known as "Co-Management". The shades of difference,

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he remarks is depended on the social, political and economic structures of that particular society concerned.

Fullan (1991) studied the role of teachers and subordinates in school decision-making from the Montana school district. The analysis of the data revealed significant differences among teachers, heads and board members on their perception on the involvement of teachers and other subordinates in school decision-making. Subordinates in school including teachers, he stated, perceived that there ought to be the opportunity to participate in all types of school decisions. Administrators on the other hand, perceived that teachers and other subordinates should be fully involved in instructional decisions. The board members on their part, he stated, perceived that teachers needed to be involved in either operational and managerial decisions.

Blasé and Blasé (1994) conducted a study on "Empowering Teachers". They postulated that to bring about positive changes in education, heads must understand that both teachers and students must experience the school as a place that provides innovative and dynamic opportunities for growth and development. In other words, teachers and students have to be given the opportunity to develop their potentials and build capacity. Blasé and Blasé reported that the subordinates used in their study indicated that heads who practiced share governance used two strategies namely, (a) encouragement of subordinate innovation and (b) encouragement of subordinate autonomy.

These were primary factors which enabled them as subordinates to realize their potential. Blasé and Blasé explained "autonomy as the degree of

freedom that subordinates have in determining their work processes, and innovation as referring to the design and implementation of experimental processes and new content for use" (p. 72).

Student Participation in Decision-Making

Chapman (1990) observes that the Board of Governors in America schools were once strongly opposed to the idea of student involvements in educational decisions at even local levels. It was believed that such participation contravened the Board's constitutional rights. This situation led to the development of different perceptions and attitudes among the general public towards student participation in the affairs of the school. Parents those days considered that the students were in the school to learn and not to meddle themselves in administrative matters. With such a projection, administrators of educational institutions saw decision-making as their sole prerogative delegated to them by schools' Board of Governors. The result was that students were totally denied the opportunity of participation, he points out.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) agrees with Azarelli by saying that many heads of institutions abuse powers entrusted into their care by the state and as a result intimidate the very students they are supposed to work with, he indicates that such attitude of intimidation and abuse of power, do not augur well for the collaborative efforts needed for the smooth running of schools. He states further that in Africa, where the child does not and dares not question the actions of adults, coupled with the Christian belief that children must respect and obey

adults is a clear evidence to show why some heads look down on students and treat their request for participation in decision-making with contempt. "School administrators see students as inexperienced and therefore lacking the requisite knowledge for making managerial and operational decisions that could move the school in the achievement of set objectives" (p. 79).

Thomas (1983) observes that student unrest comes about as a result of not involving them in school administration and the general relationship factors as they exist on the campus between the administrators and the students. Again, the social relationship that exists among school community members also determines whether there would be conflict or not.

Cantelon (1980) supports the above notion by saying that students protest against postponement of pleasures and the widespread search for new kind of direct experience in life. He points out that "when students are relegated to the doldrums and are not treated as 'workers' with vested interests in the learning experiences in which they participate in school, the only alternative left to them is to kick against the established norm" (p. 155). Such situation as kicking against the established norm does not in any way promote congenial atmosphere for the teaching-learning process, he stresses.

Badu-Nkansah (1993) asserts that a positive relationship exists between the nature of interpersonal relationships and conflicts such as student agitations. He suggests that good human relationship should be stepped up on school campus; and that every effort must be made to eliminate ill-feeling among students and administrators, so that it will boost up psychological and moral

development for collegial and congenial atmosphere to prevail on campuses. On way of promoting such an atmosphere, he says is to allow students to be part of the decision-making process.

It is with the above view that Antwi (1992) states that students must be empowered; where student empowerment is defined as "the opportunities a student has for autonomy, choice, responsibility and participation in decision" (pp 57-58). Bernard (1984) finds out that students who are empowered, are able to initiate and carry new plans, because they are allowed to be part of decisions, they take more responsibility for their learning and exhibit higher level of engagement and learning experiences.

Specific Areas Requiring Decision-Making

Ozigi (1977) says, in the school, decisions have to be made about work direction, leaderstyle, the planning process, pattern of communication, mode of supervision and nature and content of public relation programmes. Again, decisions have to be made about work operation in terms of source of funds, financial control procedures, rewards and punishment systems, professional development programmes and assignment of responsibilities not losing sight to make decisions about services concerning equipment facilities and record keeping. According to Ozigi, the school administrator must spell out the strategy by which the best decision can be made in his own school. He says, the administrator will normally make or develop his decision-making process, basing it largely on the value judgements he holds with regard to the

participation of others in shaping the school's decisions and skills with which

he organizes this participation into a decision-making process within the school.

Merrit (1997) observes that co-operation is the key to survival in an

organisation and therefore suggests that effort towards school improvement

should take place on a co-operative basis. This calls for a meaningful co-

operation between the head of institution, the staff and the student. He argues

that participation is an amazingly simple way to inspire people, and its

simplicity lies in the definition of that work to share in common with others. He

emphasizes that:

> Sharing, then is the secret. You must share knowledge
>
> and information with others in order to attain their co-
>
> operation. You must share your own experiences so that
>
> employees will benefit from it. You must share the
>
> decision-making process itself so that employees can do
>
> something the way they will like to do. And you must
>
> share credit for achievement (p.57).

Merrit concludes that in today's employer-employee relations few

techniques have been successful in developing harmony and the attainment of

common goals as has the development of management by participation and

supervision.

Conclusion

Different writers have expressed different views on subordinate

participation in decision-making. Also, a considerable research has been made

on student participation in school-based decision-making. Some writers are of the view that generally, involving the relevant public in the affairs of an organisation be it bureaucratic, socio-political or open-system in nature helps management to achieve set objective. They believe that students are the consumers of education and the best way to determine whether the teaching they receive is good or not is to involve them in decision-making. Such writers and authors include Gorton, Shanahan, Asare-Bediako and Bolman and Neal.

Secondly, another group of writers and authors including Crane, Blasé and Blasé, and Hanson believe that to bring about positive changes in education, heads must understand that both teachers and students must experience the school as a place that provides innovative and dynamic opportunities for growth and development and for that matter they should be involved in the decision-making process.

Thirdly, there is group of researchers, such as Chapman, Levin and young, Keith and Girling and Fullan who consider that participation in decision-making is concerned with sharing power to allow subordinates to influence decisions which may be specific or general. They also allude to the philosophical and political belief that participation in every social institution is the pursuit of democracy; that education is too important to be left to educators only; and that without participation by the relevant publics like students the interest of those less well-served by public schools will not improve.

Another group of researchers like Patchen, Mandani and Merrit argue that increased participation in school governance promotes discipline and

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improves the morale tone of the school as students develop the idea of right conduct, self control, cooperation and fairness among themselves. They think putting decision-making as close to the point of delivery as possible make the implementation of those decisions not only possible but successful.

Finally, there is a group of researchers like Thomas, Patchen, Field and Piper who consider that even though subordinate or student participation in school decision-making is a laudable idea, administrators or school authorities must be circumspect with the extent and areas students are allowed to participate. They believe that student participation in school decision-making must be guided and directed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is concerned with the description of the research method used for the study. It describes the various processes and procedures that were used to collect empirical data and the method of analysis employed. The main areas considered comprise the research design, the population, the sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, data collection procedure and method of data analysis.

Research Design

The design employed for the study is the descriptive survey, which consists of collection of data to facilitate the answering of questions concerning the current state of the subject under study. Specifically this research was conducted using the descriptive survey design to facilitate the collection of data in an attempt to establish the incidence of how students, teachers and headmasters perceive student participation in school decision-making and the extent of their participation. Ary, Jacobs & Razaviah (1985) observe that an explanatory survey design is a form of research that goes beyond the mere collection of data on variables, as it attempts to explain the relationship that exists among variables.

The descriptive survey was chosen for this study to enable conclusions to be drawn on the extent of student participation in school decision-making. Again, it was to enable conclusions to be drawn on the perception of students,

teachers and headmasters on student participation, the decisional areas in which students would like to participate and factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making.

There are some inherent weakness with the survey design. If the questions are not clearly written, respondents find it difficult to respond to the items in the questionnaire. Again, some respondents also answer the questions to suit their convenience. That is, they say something to please themselves or to protect their interest. Not only these, but another weakness associated with the survey design is that some respondents cause undue delay in the submission or return of completed questionnaire.

To reduce these weaknesses to a minimum, certain strategies were planned. For example, the items in the questionnaire were clearly written to enable respondents understand them. With regard to the situation where respondents could answer the questions to suit their convenience, views were collected from all the different groups used for the study. This was to cross check the responses given by the various respondents. Again, a number of visits were make to the respondents to collect the completed questionnaire. This was done to avoid unnecessary delay of submission of completed questionnaire.

Population for the Study

The population for the study was made up of students from all the six public senior secondary schools in the Tano District, teachers from these schools and all the six headmasters. All the schools had a total student population of

2,885. Out of the total, 1,676 were males and 1,215 were females as at the 2003/2004 academic year. Table 1 shows the population of the sampled schools for the study. The breakdown is as follows:

Table 1

Population of Sampled Schools

Schools	Male	Female	Total
Presby Secondary School, Bechem	565	304	869
Duayaw Nkwanta Secondary School	273	497	770
Boakye Tromo Sec/Tech. Sch. Duayaw Nkwanta	307	122	429
Presby Sec/Com. School, Techimantia	244	140	384
Yamfo Anglican Secondary School	218	102	320
Bomaa Secondary School	69	44	113
Total	1,676	1,215	2,885

All the 128 teachers made up of 107 males and 21 females formed part of the teachers population. The study was therefore limited to the Tano district where the researcher is a teacher in one of the schools.

The Sample and Sampling Technique

The research was carried out in all the six public senior secondary schools in the Tano District of the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. For the students, all the Student Representative Council members were selected as part of the sample. The SRC members were considered for two main reasons. Firstly,

the council members were representative of the student body as its members represented all the formal sections or groupings of the student such as Classes, Forms and Houses. Secondly, members of the council (especially the prefectorial board) were the students who were expected to be directly involved in the school decision-making process. The Student Representative Councils were made up of 88 members. Apart from this number, 240 other students were sampled to bring the total number of students sampled for the study to 328. this means that the SRC members constituted 26.8% of the student population sampled for the study. For the other category 40 students were selected from each school to form a total of 240.

In the case of the teachers 66 were used for the study. This number represents 51.6% of the total teaching staff populations of the six schools which were used for the study. This selection made it possible to include all teachers who matter most in school decision-making process; like assistant headmasters, senior housemaster, guidance and counselling coordinators, housemasters and heads of departments. Generally, this category of teachers participated more actively in administration than those outside this group. The respondents also included other teachers who were not deeply involved in the administration of the school such as teachers who apart from the classroom teaching do not have additional specific responsibilities. In the headmasters' category, all the six heads were selected as part of the sample.

In order to obtain more detailed, accurate and less-biased information, selection was guided by purposive sampling methods. However, the quota and

random sampling methods were also used for other categories of students and teachers.

Those respondents who were purposively selected included all the assistant headmasters, guidance and counseling coordinators and senior housemasters from all the six schools. Also, all the SRC members were purposively selected. The student leaders were all selected because they performed most of the delegated duties and served on school committees to take vital decisions. They were therefore in a position to provide relevant information for the study.

The random sampling and quota sampling techniques were used for the bulk of students who did not form part of the SRC. Again random sampling and quota sampling techniques were used to select the heads of departments, housemasters, form masters and the other 12 teachers who were not deeply involved in the day-to-day administration of the school.

For the students, the quota sampling technique was used because it was believed that students who had spent at least one academic year could give more relevant and vital information on school decision-making process. In view of this first year students were given 20% quota while the second and the third year groups were given 40% quota each. For example, eight first year students were selected from every school, while 16 students each from the second year and third year groups were selected from every school used for the study.

In the random sampling, the class registers were used. Since 40 students who represented the rest of the bulk of students who did not form part of the

SRC were sampled from each of the six schools, it implied that eight students were sampled from the first years and 16 students were sampled from the second and third year groups in each school. Apart from the teachers who were purposively sampled, others like the heads of departments, housemasters, form masters and the other 12 teachers were randomly sampled.

Research Instrument

After choosing the population and sample, it was necessary to design and develop an appropriate instrument to collect the information necessary for the research. The main instrument used was questionnaires. The reason for using questionnaires was that it afforded the students, teachers and headmasters opportunity to express their views and opinions in writing about decision-making process in school administration. It is also known to be quite valid and reliable if well constructed. It is also economical in terms of money and time. The respondents were too many to be interviewed individually within the limited time for the research. Since they were literates, the questionnaire method was used instead of interviews. The use of the questionnaire was also preferable because it did not reveal the identity of the respondents.

There were three main sets of questionnaire, one for students, one for the teachers and the third for the headmasters. The reason was to get different views from the respondents to make the study more representative, reliable and valid.

The questionnaire was developed after intensive review of related literature and guidance from my dissertation supervisor. Opinions of a few

experienced Directors. of Education and School Heads were sought through consultation in designing the questionnaires.

In designing the questionnaires. 20 items were constructed to elicit responses from students, teachers and headmasters. The three sets of questionnaire (refer to Appendices B to D) were divided into four sections. The first section, Section A consisted of items on the views of the structure of decision-making process in the school. The items in section B were about the actual student participation in operational and managerial decisions that students would like to participate in school decision-making process. In section C, the items consisted of the perception of students', teachers' and headmasters' perception of student participation in certain decisions and their effects on the student and the administrative process. The items in section D consisted of items on the factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making process. The sets of questionnaire for the three categories of respondents had 12 closed-ended items, two open-ended items while six items consisted of the four Likert scale type.

In order to strengthen the content and construct validity of the items, the dissertation supervisor and other lecturers read through the questionnaire and made useful suggestions. This ensured that the items in the questionnaire were clear and relevant. This also helped to avoid double barreled, negative and biased items and finally, it ensured respondents' competency to answer the questions.

The different types of items were included in the questionnaire in order to obtain frank and reliable information of student participation in school decision-making process. The varied nature of the questionnaire items was also to give respondents the freedom and opportunity to express their views as freely and candidly as possible on the issues.

Pre-Testing of Instrument

The questionnaire was pre-tested to further test its validity and reliability. That is, it was believed that the data of the pre-testing would reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the items in the draft questionnaire. The pre-testing was carried out at Sunyani Secondary School also in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. This school was used for the pre-testing because it is a public mixed senior secondary school which has experienced students' demonstration before. Again, the school is the nearest secondary school to the schools used for the study in term of location and accessibility.

The pre-testing was useful because it enabled the researcher to add to or delete items which were not relevant to the study. For example, some of the items which were originally the Likert scale type were changed to yes or no response type. The data deleted were not used in the study.

Data Collection Procedure

Before the respondents were given copies of the questionnaire, the researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA), University of Cape Coast to the heads of

the sampled senior secondary schools in the Tano district to enable him carry out the study (see Appendix A).

Due to the unreliable nature of the country's postal system and since the selected schools were easily accessible, copies of the questionnaires were delivered to respondents by hand by the researcher. This method involved a lot of movement on the part of the researcher to these sampled schools in order to facilitate direct contact with the respondents. Prior arrangement was also made with the heads before the researcher administered the questionnaire.

Before students responded to the questionnaire items, the researcher explained the essence of the research and the meaning of the questionnaire items to them. This was to ensure that the students actually understood the individual questions. If the items were well understood, it would enhance reliability of the responses.

In order to ensure maximum return of the copies of questionnaire, the selected students were assembled in five classrooms about 12 students in each classroom and allowed time to respond as independently and frankly as possible to the items. The copies of the questionnaire were collected as and when individual students completed them. This method was used in all the selected schools and it ensured 100% return of completed questionnaire from the students.

Teachers and headmasters were given three days to complete the questionnaire after the researcher had stressed the need for them to respond candidly to the questionnaire items. This approach was to enable teachers and

heads have enough time to deliberate on the issues to bring out genuine opinions without unduly delaying the programme. In all 72 copies of questionnaire were given out and all were completed and returned, giving a return rate of 100% here also.

The procedure used helped to minimize the problems associated with the administration of the instrument. At the beginning, few students and teachers from all selected schools were either unwilling or afraid to express their views on the issues raised in the questionnaire. This might be due to fear of intimidation. The researcher had to re-assure them of the confidentiality of whatever information or opinion was given. A number of teachers also delayed submission of the questionnaire but they eventually returned them.

Method of Data Analysis

The first stage of the data analysis was that the data gathered from the three sets of questionnaire were edited. The completed questionnaire were serially numbered and considered one after another. The major items were tabulated and frequency distribution tables were drawn from the various responses. The frequencies were converted into percentages. Percentages were used for the data analysis because it is simple to use and helps in representing facts clearly.

In order to draw conclusions from the results, the responses obtained from the survey were summarized. The conclusions were used to make the recommendations for the study.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In general, the research aims at finding the structure of decision-making process in senior secondary schools in the Tano District of Brong Ahafo Region. It also looks at the perception of students, teachers and headmasters about student participation in school decision-making process, the extent of student participation and the areas of decisions in which students desire to participate. The research also aims at finding whether such participation promotes congenial atmosphere for teaching and learning or has a negative effect on both the school authorities and the students. Finally, the study looks at factors that discouraged student participation in school decision-making in these schools.

This chapter deals with the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the views and opinions of students, teachers and headmasters on the subject matter. The data for discussion were obtained from the responses of students, teachers and headmasters to questionnaire administered during the research.

The Structure of Decision-Making in the School

In considering research question one, that is, whether students participate in decision-making process in senior secondary schools in the Tano District, the researcher listed structures that normally exist in many senior secondary schools in the country and asked the respondents to indicate the structures that exist in their schools. This section also looked at the procedures adopted by these schools to get students involved in school decision-making. The details are provided in Table 2.

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Table 2

Structure of Decision-Making in the Schools

Existing Structures of Decision-Making in School	Students				Teachers				Headmaster			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Establishment of SRC	328	100	-	-	66	100	-	-	6	100	-	-
Election of Student Leaders	328	100	-	-	66	100	-	-	6	100	-	-
Student Representation on Disciplinary Committee	-	-	328	100	4	6.1	62	93.9	2	33.3	4	66.7
Option of Appeal by Students on Disciplinary Matters	20	6.1	308	99.3	8	12.1	58	87.9	2	33.3	4	66.7
Expression of Students' Opinion on Students' Welfare	50	15.2	278	84.8	40	60.1	26	39.9	6	100	-	-
Consideration of Students' Views of Final Decision	39	11.9	289	88.1	36	54.5	30	45.5	6	100	-	-
Welcoming Students' Opinions	68	20.7	260	79.3	50	75.8	16	24.2	6	100	-	-

Table 2 shows that with the exception of two structures, that is, student representation on disciplinary committee and the option of appeal by students on disciplinary matters, respondents acknowledged that the other structures exist. All the respondents said there are student representative councils in their schools.

Involving students in decision-making process is a fact that has been accepted by many school administrators as a practice worthwhile and which helps to bring to the barest minimum unrest and agitations in senior secondary schools. Since all students cannot be present at a meeting with school administration, there has been the need for the establishment of student representative councils on various school campuses to facilitate student administration in the schools.

Studies conducted by scholars like Asiedu-Akrofi (1978), Shanahan (1987) and Sergiovanni (1987) reveal that student involvement in decision-making reduces agitations, improves the quality of decision and builds a large commitment base for the implementation of decision. Shanahan says it is with such participation that meeting points are found between the young and the middle age, experienced and inexperienced, the enthusiastic and the cynic, the optimists and the pessimists.

As to whether student leaders were selected through elections, all the respondents answered in the affirmative. Elections have these days become the most popular means of choosing leaders in a society, group or an establishment. Through this means the electorates are given the opportunity to select people or

leaders of their own choice. Undoubtedly, election is one of the indicators of democratic governance. Aseidu-Akrofi (1978) says in this democratic era, it is proper that students choose their own leaders.

Less than 10% of the students said there is an option of appeal by students on disciplinary matters. A little over 12% of the teachers said students are allowed to make an appeal on disciplinary issues. A little over 66% of the headmasters said students do not have any option to appeal against any disciplinary decision. All the student respondents said they do not have any representative on the disciplinary committee. About 94% of teacher respondents also said students are not represented on the disciplinary committee. A little over 66% of the headmasters indicated that students do not have any representation on the disciplinary committee. Disciplinary matters are the preserve of school authorities. They are mandated to enforce discipline in schools. It is therefore unacceptable to allow students to appeal against disciplinary decisions and also serve on disciplinary committees. This observation is supported by the views of Levin and Young (1994) who say certain administrative decision are the preserve of the administrator. They are of the view that those who break rules and regulations in institutions like the school should be disciplined and such decision must be taken by the authorities of the school and not the authorities and students who are been punished.

There were varied views expressed by students, teachers and headmasters on the issue of "expression of opinion by students on students' welfare". While only 15.2% of the total number of student stated that students

had the option to expressing their views on students' welfare, as many as 60.1% of teacher respondents and all the six heads (100%) stated that students' views are considered before decisions are taken on their welfare.

Many senior secondary school students in the Tano District, like many students in other schools are adolescents. These students will like to have things their own way if not guided or checked. It is not surprising that students think the authorities do not consider their views on welfare issues. According to Alluto and Belasco (1976), since students have been entrusted into the hands of teachers, issues concerning their welfare must be addressed by teachers.

As to whether school authorities consider the views of students when effecting changes in the school, students, teachers and headmasters expressed divergent views. While 88.1% of the students said their views are not considered, 54.5% of teacher respondents and all the six headmasters (100%) said student's views are considered on the issue of effecting changes in the schools. School authorities may ask students to make inputs when the administration wants to take a decision to effect a change in the school. This does not mean that such inputs should form the basis of the final decision that would be taken. The authorities may use their own discretion when arriving at final decision. According to Fullan (1991), those in administration should be circumspect when they want to effect changes that will affect their subordinates. He opines that the relevant publics must be allowed to make inputs when such decisions are being taken. He, however, says the final decision lies with the administrator.

The Extent of Actual Student Participation in School Decision-Making

The researcher tried to find out the extent of actual student participation in operational decisions like assigning specific duties to students, for example, prep supervisors and managerial decisions like planning sports and entertainment programmes in the school. This was investigated to find answers to research question two which tries to examine the areas of decision-making students are involved. Respondents were asked to indicate Yes or No to three operational decision areas and three managerial decision areas which were listed in the questionnaire. The details are provided in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents in all the three categories (students, teachers and headmasters) said students are not involved in the supervision of school projects. This fact is attested by the percentage levels of respondents who said no. The levels were 95.4%, 77.3% and 83.3% for students, teachers and headmasters respectively. With regard to the purchasing of school items like the public address system for the school 93.3% of students respondents, 62.2% of teacher respondents and 100% of headmaster respondents said that students are involved in this operational decision. On the issue of assigning specific duties like prep supervision to students all the respondents agreed that students were assigned such duties.

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Table 3

Student Participation in Operational Decisions

Operational Decisions	Students				Teachers				Headmaster			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Supervising School Projects	158	4.5	313	95.5	15	22.7	51	77.3	1	16.7	5	83.3
Purchasing of School Items like P. A. System	308	93.5	20	6.5	43	65.2	23	34.8	4	66.7	2	33.3
Assigning Specific Duties to Students (e.g. Prep Supervisor)	328	100	-	-	66	100	-	-	6	100	-	-

It can be deduced from the responses that students are not involved in sensitive operational decisions such as supervision of school projects which requires technical know-how and experience. They are, however, involved in operational decisions like purchasing of public address system that does not require a lot of experience and technical know-how to make decision and also not sensitive to administrative process. This revelation is in harmony with the views of Piper (1974), who states that sensitive decisions in administration should be left in the hands of people who have expert knowledge on such matters. Piper further states that since there is high risk in such decisions, it is proper if people who are involved in making decision on such issues are endowed with rich experience and really have the expertise to do so.

Table 3 shows that with the exception of planning school projects like buying of new uniform, tables and chairs and farming projects, majority of the respondents said students are actually involved in the other two managerial decisions namely, planning of school menu and planning of sports and entertainment programmes. With regard to planning school projects, the percentage levels of 92.7, 87.9 and 66.7 by students, teachers and headmasters respectively who said no, attest to the observation that students are not involved in taking decision in this area.

Table 4

Student Participation in Managerial Decision

Managerial Decision	Students				Teachers				Headmaster			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Planning School Menu	285	86.9	43	13.1	50	75.5	16	24.2	5	83.3	1	16.7
Planning Sports and Entertainment Programmes	301	94.5	18	5.5	60	90.9	6	9.1	5	83.3	1	16.7
Planning School Projects e.g Farming Project	24	7.3	304	92.7	8	12.1	58	87.9	2	33.3	4	66.7

The responses reveal that students are not involved in managerial decision which involves the giving of contract to contractors which invariably involves business transactions. This activity requires a lot of managerial competence and knowledge in business transaction. Here too, it is observed that cognizance is given to the sensitive nature of this specific managerial decision. This assertion is in line with the views of Short, Greer and Michael (1991) who say students lack the requisite knowledge to make certain financial managerial decisions which can help the school achieve its financial administration objectives.

Perception of Student Participation in Decision-Making

In considering research question three which tried to find out the positive and negative effects of student participation in school decision-making on students in the Tano District, about six effects were examined. In this section, respondents were required to express their agreement or otherwise to the statements about the positive and negative effects of student participation in school decision-making. The four-point Likert scale was used. The score 4 was labelled "Strongly agree", 3 "agree", 2 "disagree" and 1 labelled "strongly disagree" as they are stated in the tables.

In analyzing the data, two columns or scales under "strongly agree" (4) and "agree" (3) were put together to indicate agreement while "disagree' (2) and 'strongly disagree" (1) were combined to indicate disagreement also indicated in the tables. This method of combining scales was adopted to provide a clear

distinction between those who, in general terms, agreed and those who disagreed.

Respondents' Perception of Students Participation as Opportunity to Contribute to School Decision-Making

The researcher tried to find out respondents' perception of student participation in decision-making as an opportunity for students to contribute to school decision-making. This was investigated to find answers to research question three which tries to examine the positive and negative effects of students participation in decision-making. The details are shown in Table 4.

Table 5

Perception of Student Participation as Opportunity to Contribute to Decision-Making

Student participation contribution to Decision- Making	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly Agree	265		28		4	
		97.6		87.8		100
Agree	55		30		2	
Disagree	2		8		-	
		2.4		12.2		
Strongly disagree	6					
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents from all the three categories, that is, students, teachers' and headmasters, agreed that student participation should be an occasion for students to contribute to school based decision-making in order to enhance the quality of decisions.

Less than 3% of students and 13% of the teachers disagreed to this perception. None of the headmasters disagreed. Students could be considered, in school administration as part of the administrative machinery. Their views could be considered as the consensus view of the administrative body. Consensus decision-making is a democratic approach to decision-making, where the head involves members of staff in decision-making. The head may ask subordinates like students to make inputs.

The finding supports the views of Dunham (1995). He states that consensus in decision-making follows democratic principles. Consensus in decision-making has been identified by Asare-Bediako (1990) as a method of arriving at effective decisions.

Perception of Student Participation in Decision-making as a Means of Enhancing Commitment and Sense of Belongingness of Students

Item number 15 in the questionnaire examines whether student participation in decision-making enhances their commitment to school programmes and their sense of belongingness. The details of the perception of respondents are provided in Table 6.

Table 6

Student Participation in Decision-making Enhances Commitment and Sense of Belongingness

Student participation encourages commitment and belonging-ness	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly Agree	200		30		2	
		80.8		93.9		100
Agree	65		32		4	
Disagree	43		4		-	
		19.2		6.1		
Strongly disagree	20		-		-	
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

Table 6 shows that majority of the students and teacher respondents and all the headmasters agreed that student participation in school decision-making enhances students' sense of belongingness and their commitment to school programmes. Only less than 20% and 10% of student and teacher respondents respectively disagreed to this perception. None of the headmaster respondents disagreed.

In school administration, one of the relevant publics could be said to be students. Involving them in decision-making is therefore appropriate

development and must be encouraged. When people are involved in making decision, they become committed to the implementation of such decisions.

This finding supports the views of Keith and Girling (1991). They say that when the relevant publics are involved in the decision-making process they become more committed to the decision taken. They further state that their commitment is seen when such decisions are being implemented.

According to Van de Van and Delbeacq (1974) subordinates work hard to successfully implement programmes in which they participated in its drawing. They point out that when people take decisions they become more committed to their decisions thus enhancing their sense of belongingness.

Perception of Student Participation in Decision-making as a Means of Promoting Workable Relationship between School Authorities and Students

The researcher sought to find out whether student participation in decision-making promotes workable relationship between school authorities and students. This question is item number 16 in the questionnaire. The details of respondents' perception are provided in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that majority of the respondents agreed that student participation in decision-making promotes workable relationship between school authorities and students. Less than 10% of the student and teacher respondents disagreed to this perception. None of the headmaster respondents disagreed to the perception.

When subordinates like students are allowed to influence decisions in school administration, they tend to cooperate with school authorities. They are also ready to support the authorities to implement such decisions. This finding is in line with the views of Chapman (1990). He says participation in decision-making is concerned with power sharing to allow subordinates to influence decisions which may be specific or general. In a study conducted in 12 districts in California, he observed that cordial relationship existed between staff and students when students were, in a way, involved in decision-making process.

Table 7

Student Participation in Decision-making Promotes Workable Relationship between School Authorities and Students

Student participation promotes workable relationship between school authorities and student	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly Agree	240		30		6	
		91.5		93.9		100
Agree	60		32		-	
Disagree	20		4		-	
		8.5		6.1		
Strongly disagree	8		-		-	
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

Respondents' Perception of Student Participation as a System that Slow Down School Administrative Process

In considering item number 17 of the questionnaire, that is whether student participation slows down administrative process, the details are provided in Table 8.

Table 8

Student Participation in Decision-Making Slows Down Administrative Process

Student participation slows down administrative process	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly Agree	49		-		1	
		45.5		21.2		16.7
Agree	100		14		-	
Disagree	29		26		-	
		54.5		78.8		83.3
Strongly disagree	150		26		2	
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

As is evident in the table, majority of the respondents disagreed to the view that student participation in school decision-making slows down school administrative process. The 54.5%, 78.2% and 83.3% disagreement levels by student, teacher and headmaster respondents respectively testifies to this.

The school administrative system is such that involving students in the decision-making process will in no way slow down administrative process. The role students play supplement the efforts of school authorities. This implies that student participation will rather expedite the administrative process. This finding is collaborated by the work of Mussazi (1982) when after a study in school administrative process, he suggested that when subordinates are given specific roles to play, their involvement rather speeds up administrative process.

Respondents' Perception of Student Participation as a Form of Governance that Retards Academic Performance of Student Leaders

Through item number 18 of the questionnaire, the researcher sought to find out whether student participation in decision-making retards academic performance of student leaders. Table 9 provides the details.

Table 9 shows that majority of the respondents in all the three categories disagreed to the view that involving students in school decision-making retards the academic performance of student leaders. It is observed from the data that majority of the respondents rejected that view. The 53%, 66.7% and 100% disagreement level by student, teacher and headmaster respondents respectively attests to this fact.

Table 9

Student Participation Retards Academic Performance of Student Leader

Student participation retards academic performance	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly Agree	98		6		-	
		47.0		33.3		-
Agree	56		16		-	
Disagree	108		20		2	
		53.0		66.7		100
Strongly disagree	66		24		4	
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

It has been observed that most of the students who take up leadership positions are academically good. Since these leaders have their reputation at stake, as regards their academic performance, they study hard to always be among the best students in their class. These leaders are also responsible generally and try to budget their time properly so that their involvement in administrative work may not hamper their academic performance.

Mandani (1983) and Merrit (1997) also disagree with this view-point. Studies by these researchers revealed that there was a strong correlation between the attitude of student leaders towards their academic work and their academic

performance. Data on academic performance of student leaders that were sampled by both researchers revealed that 82% of the student leaders were in the top 5% of their class. Again, results of past student leaders sampled also indicated that these leaders formed the majority of students that produced good results for their schools.

Respondents' Perception of Student Participation as an Opportunity for Student Leaders to Break School Rules and Regulations

In respect of item number 19 of the questionnaire, the researcher tried to find out whether student participation in decision-making gives student leaders the opportunity to break school rules and regulations. The details are provided in Table 10.

Table 10

Whether Student Participation makes Student Leaders Break School Rules

Student participation makes student leaders break school rules	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
Strongly Agree	130		2		-	
		46.9		24.3		-
Agree	24		14		-	
Disagree	54		28		4	
		53.1		75.7		100
Strongly disagree	120		22		2	
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

The table shows that 53.1%, 75.7% and 100% of student, teacher and headmaster respondents disagree to the view that student participation in decision-making gave student leaders the opportunity to break school rules and regulations.

Normally student-leaders are disciplined and will not like to break school rules and regulations which they are supposed to protect. The finding is in line with views of Brain and Spinks (1992). They say participation in decision-making is concerned with power sharing and the concept of power sharing goes with responsibility. They are of the view that this makes the subordinates responsible for their actions, omissions and commissions. Such leaders, according to Brain and Spinks become conscious about the responsibility entrusted into their care. These leaders would therefore not advertantly break rules and regulations which protect their office and which they are to guide.

Factors that Discourage Student Participation

In this section, respondents were required to indicate factors that in their views discourage students from participating in school-based decision-making process. This was investigated to find answers to research question four which tries to examine the factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making. The respondents were given possible hindrances like fear of victimisation by school authorities, authoritative of some school heads and uncooperative attitude of fellow students to indicate whether or not those factors

discourage student participation in decision-making. Additionally, respondents were to state other possible hindrances. Table 11 captures the details.

Table 11

Factors that Discourage Student Participation in Decision-Making Process

Factors that Discourage	Students		Teachers		Headmasters	
Student Participation	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fear of victimization by school authorities	222	67.8	26	39.4	2	33.3
Authoritative nature of some heads	80	24.4	18	27.3	-	-
Uncooperative attitude of fellow students	36	10.8	22	33.3	4	66.7
Total	328	100	66	100	6	100

Table 11 shows that majority of the respondents indicated that the major factor that discourage students from participating in school decision-making is student leaders' fear of being victimized by school authorities. From the Table 67.8%, 39.4 and 33.3% of student, teacher and headmaster respondents respectively said fear of victimization by school authorities discourages students participation from school decision-making.

None of the headmasters said the authoritative nature of some headmasters is a factor that discourages student participation. A little 24% of the student respondents said students are discouraged from participating in decision-

making because of the authoritative nature of some school heads. A little over 27% of the teacher respondents said the authoritative nature of some heads discourages student participation.

Students sometimes pressurize their leaders to take certain actions like demonstrations or riots instead of using dialogue to get their grievance through. In such situation student leaders who lead such demonstrations or riots fall prey to the law. Instead of facing the realities such leaders feel they have been victimized by the school authorities. Again in school administration, heads at times stamp their authority on certain issues especially when student want to have things their own way. This is also done to bring sanity into the system. Such an action by the heads may be misconstrued by the students and their leadership as authoritative administration. Some of these action may undoubtedly scare other students from taking up leadership positions. According to Costly and Todd (1987) school authorities are mandated to control all activities in the school including student discipline. Heads of institutions must enforce discipline and see to it that students adhere to school rules and regulations at any point in time. School authorities must explore all available means to enforce discipline in schools and endeavour to keep academic activities on course, they point out.

With regard to the uncooperative attitude of fellow students towards student leaders as a factor that discourages student participation, 36%, 10.8% and 66% of student, teacher and headmaster respondents respectively said that was factor that discourages student participation in decision-making. Some

students deliberately make the work of student leaders difficult. Such students do not give the student leadership the needed cooperation to enable them work successfully. According to Fullan (1991) leaders must be given the needed cooperation. He says if leaders are not given the needed cooperation by the very people who elected them into office, they become frustrated and find it difficulty to make inroads in their leadership carriers. Such leaders lose focus on and fail to make impact in the lives of the electorates, he points out.

Apart from the hindrances listed in the questionnaire, students and school authorities further advanced various reasons for which students are discouraged from participating in decision making. The school authorities said, students lack the knowledge base and experience in life to make meaningful contribution during decision-making. They also said students lack the ability to express their views in a coherent and concise manner during decision-making session.

The students on their part said school authorities are not willing to accept students contribution during decision-making sessions for varied reasons such as:

i.   Students sometimes express naïve sentiments

ii.   Students lack coherency and precision in articulating their
       thoughts.

Summary

In analyzing the data, the researcher looked at the structure of decision-making process in the school. The results reveal that there are Student Representative Councils in all the sampled schools, and that students elected their own leaders. The results also showed that students were not represented on school disciplinary committee. Students also do not have the option of appeal on any disciplinary matters. While the students indicate that they are not allowed to express their views and opinions on matters concerning their welfare, the school authorities say students' views and opinions are considered on such issues. This gave a powerful picture of the polarization that exist between students and school authorities.

The analysis of data in section B looked at respondents' views on actual student participation in operational and managerial decisions. The results reveal that apart from supervising school projects, students are involved in other operational decisions like purchasing of public address systems and assigning of specific duties to students such as organizing weekend morning jogging. On managerial decisions the results indicate that with the exception of purchasing items like new school uniform, outing dresses, tables and chairs, students are involved in the planning of school menu, sports and entertainment programmes.

The section C of the analysis looked at the respondents' perception of student participation in school decision-making. The principles of participatory decision-making as advocated for by Short and Greer (1977), stipulate that participatory decision-making involves psychological as well as physical

representation in relevant decision-making scenarios. The results indicate that student participation in decision-making gives students the opportunity to contribute to decision-making, enhances students' commitment to school programmes and their sense of belongingness. In addition, student participation also promotes workable relationship between students and school authorities. The result further reveal that student participation in decision-making does not slow down administrative processes, does not retard student leaders' academic performance and also does not serve as an opportunity for student leaders to break school rules and regulations.

Section D which is the last section of the analysis found out factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making. Different reasons were advanced by the respondents. While majority of the student and teacher respondents think students are discouraged from participating in decision-making for fear of victimization by school authorities and the authoritative nature of some school heads, the headmasters think otherwise. Majority of the headmaster respondents are of the view that students are discouraged because of the uncooperative attitude of their fellow students. Some of the headmasters do not rule out fear of victimization by school authorities as a factor.

The students and school authorities, that is, teachers and headmasters further advanced various reasons for which students are discouraged from participating in decision-making. The school authorities are of the view that students lack the knowledge base and experience in life to make meaningful

contribution during decision-making session. They also think that students do not have the jurisdiction to be involved in some decision-making bodies like the academic board and disciplinary committee. School authorities also think that student lack the ability to express their views in a coherent and concise manner during decision-making session.

The students on their part say school authorities are not willing to accept students' contributions during decision-making session for varied reasons such as:

i.   students sometimes express naïve sentiments

ii.   students lack coherency and precision in articulating their thought.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated student participation in decision-making in senior secondary schools in Tano District of Brong Ahafo Region. Several studies which have been conducted into subordinate participation in decision-making, including student participation were reviewed (Gorton, 1980; Mandani, 1983; Chapman, 1990; Peprah-Mensah, 2000), which formed the basic framework for the study.

The researcher became interested in the study by an observation he made about the apparent absence of involving students in taking decisions that affect them. While students press for greater involvement in decision-making, some administrators think that such involvements must be guided.

The population for the study was made of students from all the six public senior secondary schools in the Tano District, teachers from these schools and all the six headmasters. All the schools had a total student population of 2885 students.

The research sample was 400 respondents, made up of 328 students, 66 teachers and six headmasters drawn through simple random, and purposive sampling techniques from the six senior secondary schools in the Tano District of Brong Ahafo Region. The instrument used for the data collection was

questionnaire. A set of questionnaire was prepared for each category of sampled respondents namely, students, teachers and headmasters. The questionnaire consisted of four sections which examined some facets of student participation including the structure of decision-making process in the school, actual students participation in school decision-making, students', teachers' and headmasters' perception of student participation and factors that discourage students from participating in school decision-making.

In sum there were 20 questions for all the three categories of respondents namely students, teachers and headmasters. The researcher administered the instrument personally. There was 100% return rate.

This study is a descriptive survey. Quantitative methods involving frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the data collected. Copies of the questionnaire were delivered to respondents by hand by the researcher. For the students, copies of the questionnaire were collected as and when the students completed them. The teachers and the headmasters were given three days to complete the questionnaire. The 72 copies of questionnaire were all completed and returned.

Findings of the Study

The results of the survey are discussed in line with research questions designed for the study. The study reveals that students participate in decision-making in schools through the establishment of Student Representative Councils which meet frequently with school administration. This medium is undoubtedly the most accessible means for student's participation in the affairs of the school.

However, opinion and views of students were oftentimes not accepted by school authorities. This answers the research question whether students participate in decision-making process in senior secondary schools in the Tano District.

The study also reveals that students are involved in some operational and managerial decisions in school. These decisions included the purchase of items like public address system, choosing their own representatives, planning school menu, sports and entertainment programmes. They were, however, not involved in the planning of new projects in the school and the purchasing of supplementary textbooks for students. This answers the research question which seeks to find the extent of student involvement in school decision-making.

In relation to research question three, which areas of decision-making do students of schools in the Tano District want to be involved in, the study has found out that areas of decision in which students would like to participate include:

    i.   planning of school menu

    ii.   planning sports and entertainment programmes

    iii.   purchasing of items sold to student and

    iv.   disciplining students, that is, being allowed to sit in disciplinary committee meetings.

Respondents consider student participation in decision-making as a means of:

    i.   offering opportunity for students to contribute to school decision-making

ii.   enhancing a workable relationship between students and school authorities

iii.   making students to become committed to school programmes and also increase their sense of belongingness and

iv.   making students responsible and hard working.

Students and school authorities, that is, teachers and headmasters, advanced different reasons why students are discouraged from participating in school decision-making process. Some of the opinions the students expressed are that school authorities are not willing to accept students' views during decision-making session for various reasons like:

i.   students express naïve sentiments

ii.   student lack coherency and preciseness in articulating their thoughts

iii.   students' busy academic schedules do not permit their active involvement in school decision-making.

School authorities on their part say students are discouraged from participating in decision-making because they lack the knowledge base and experience in life to make informed decisions. The school authorities also think students lack the ability to express their views in a coherent and concise manner during decision-making session. Not only these but they also said students do not have jurisdiction to be involved in some decision-making bodies like the academic board and the disciplinary committee.

Conclusions

By comparing the results of the research with the relevant scholarly expositions on the subject matter as reviewed so far, the following conclusions could be made. Firstly, the existing decision-making structures in senior secondary schools in the Tano District are not adequate to facilitate effective student participation in school decision-making. This is, because most of the Student Representative Councils are not well coordinated. Again, students' views on students' welfare are not usually considered. The students are not consulted on decisions like purchasing of school uniform. Students are characterized by limited knowledge and experience in transacting business like purchasing uniform. Some will price such items without taking cognizance of the quality of the product. Students are too many and choices will also be many. In such situations the school authorities decide not to involve them in such decisions since a decision on the choice of colour for the uniform can even take days to be arrived at.

Secondly, jurisdiction is given to students to be involved in some decision bodies like the academic board and the disciplinary committee. This has invariably limited the students to few decisional areas. The school authorities do not allow students to sit on these committees because they conform to policies laid down by the Ghana Education Service (GES).

Thirdly, students in senior secondary schools in the Tano District are asking for a greater participation in school decision-making. When students are given greater participation it will increase their commitment base and let them

become more responsible in the schools. It will also pave way for them to make their grievances known, to the school authorities without resulting in demonstrations and other unacceptable means.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made for future practice.

1. The study has revealed that the existing decision-making structures in senior secondary schools in the Tano District are not adequate to facilitate effective student participation in school decision-making. There is therefore the need for school authorities as a group and students and their leadership as another to brainstorm and assess the current student participation in decision-making in the schools in the Tano District. This will enable the two parties to identify increased desirable levels or interphases where students' inputs to the governance of senior secondary schools in the Tano District could be harnassed.

2. It is observed from the study that certain decisions are the preserve of school authorities. Students are therefore not allowed to serve on committees like the academic board and the disciplinary committee. To ensure a democratic governance in senior secondary schools in the Tano district, the calls by students to let them serve on the academic board and disciplinary

committee should be given attention by school authorities. Some pertinent efforts should be initiated to achieve the tenets of democratic governance in senior secondary school in the Tano District.

3. Since the existing channels of communication in the schools do not facilitate effective student participation in school decision-making as the study observes, further avenues, such as the introduction of suggestion boxes and informal consultation by heads or school authorities with student leadership should be encouraged. Suggestion boxes should be placed at vantage points on school campuses for submission of suggestions to the administration. This may help the school authorities to know what the students would like them to do. The informal consultation will make student leadership freely express their views and opinions on pressing issues in the school. This may probably get rid of the situation where for fear of intimidation and victimization such views may not be expressed by the students.

4 School authorities in senior secondary schools in the Tano District should endeavour to consult students on decision like purchasing of school uniform, house jerseys and other clothing for students. Such consultation will provide students the opportunity to express the sentiments on reasonable and

affordable prices for such items without compromising for quality of such products.

Recommendation for Future Research

1. The results of the study relate to only senior secondary schools in the Tano District of the Brong Ahafo Region. If the study could be replicated in other senior secondary schools it would bring out information that would help reveal the generalizability of the findings. The study could be modified and the scope widened to cover the whole of Ghana. This would increase the generalizability of the results.

2. There is the need for other intensive researches to establish the relationship between student participation in school decision-making and the extent of student unrest.

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`EL.: 042-33824

University Post Office
Cape Coast, Ghana

)ur Ref.: EP/144.9/ 163

August 16, 2005

:eads of Senior Secondary Schools
ano District
rong Ahafo Region

ETTER OF INTRODUCTION

1e bearer of this letter, Mr. Prince Kusi-Quaidoo is a graduate student of the University
`Cape Coast. He is collecting data/information in your outfit for the purpose of writing
Thesis as a requirement of the programme.

hould be grateful if you would help him collect the data/information from your outfit.
ndly give the necessary assistance that Mr. Kusi-Quaidoo requires t · collect the data.

A. L. Dare
ector

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Please, respond to all statements in this questionnaire. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the confidentiality of respondents' responses. So you are requested not to write your name.

SECTION A

The Structure of Decision-making Process in the School

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response.

1.   There is a Student Representative Council (SRC) in my school.

   Yes/No

2.   Students choose their leaders through elections. Yes/No

3.   Students serve on the school's disciplinary committee. Yes/No

4.   Students have the option to make appeal in disciplinary matters. Yes/No

5.   Students are asked by school authorities to express their opinions on students' welfare. Yes/No

6.   The school administration considers the views of students before arriving at final decisions affection students. Yes/No

7.   Students' opinions on bringing about changes are welcome by school authorities. Yes/No

SECTION B

ACTUAL STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

Operational Decisions

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response.

8.   Are student involved in the planning of projects for the school? Yes/No

9.   Do student plan for the purchase of public address system for your school? Yes/No

10.   Are students assigned specific duties like compound overseer? Yes/No

Managerial Decisions

Students have been involved in the following decisional situation:

11.   Planning the school menu. Yes/No

12.   Planning sports and entertainment programmes for the school. Yes/No

13.   Purchasing items that are sold to students (e.g. school uniform, house jersey and other clothings). Yes/No

SECTION C

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

Please circle the number on the scale given below that best describes your response for the following items.

4 means Strongly Agree   3 means Agree   2 means Disagree

1 means Strongly Disagree

Student participation in school decision-making

14.   Offers an opportunity for students to contribute to decision-making   4 3 2 1

15.   Enhances students' commitment and sense of belongingness

    4 3 2 1

16.   Promote workable relationship between school authorities and students   4 3 2 1

17.   Slows down administrative process   4 3 2 1

18.   Retards academic performance of student leaders   4 3 2 1

19.   Makes some student leaders break school rules and regulations

    4 3 2 1

SECTION D

FACTORS THAT DISCOURAGE STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

20.   Which of the following factors do you think discourage students from participating in school decision-making?

(a)   For fear of being victimized by school authorities   [ ]

(b)   Uncooperative attitude of fellow students   [ ]

(c)   Authoritative nature of some school heads   [ ]

(d)   Any other. Please specify.......................................

....

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Please respond to all statements in this questionnaire. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the confidentiality of respondents' responses. So you are requested not to write your name.

SECTION A

The structure of decision-making process in the school.

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response.

1. There is a Student Representative Council (SRC) in my school. Yes/No

2. Students choose their leaders through elections. Yes/No

3. Students serve on the school's disciplinary committee. Yes/No

4. Students have the option to make appeal in disciplinary matters. Yes/No

5. Students are asked by school authorities to express their opinions on students' welfare. Yes/No

6. The school administration considers the views of students before arriving at final decisions affecting students. Yes/No

7. Students' opinions on bringing about changes are welcome by school authorities. Yes/No

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Please respond to all statements in this questionnaire. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the confidentiality of respondents' responses. So you are requested not to write your name.

SECTION A

The structure of decision-making process in the school.

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response.

1.   There is a Student Representative Council (SRC) in my school.
      Yes/No

2.   Students choose their leaders through elections. Yes/No

3.   Students serve on the school's disciplinary committee. Yes/No

4.   Students have the option to make appeal in disciplinary matters.
      Yes/No

5.   Students are asked by school authorities to express their opinions
      on students' welfare. Yes/No

6.   The school administration considers the views of students before
      arriving at final decisions affecting students. Yes/No

7.   Students' opinions on bringing about changes are welcome by
      school authorities. Yes/No

SECTION B

ACTUAL STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

Operational Decisions

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response

8.   Are students involved in the planning of projects for the school?

       Yes/No

9.   Do student plan for the purchase of public address system for

       your school? Yes/No

10.   Are students assigned specific duties like compound overseer?

       Yes/No

Managerial Decisions

Students have been involved in the following decisional situation

11.   Planning the school menu.   Yes/No

12.   Planning sports and entertainment programmes for the school.

        Yes/No

13.   Purchasing items that are sold to students (e.g. school uniform,

       house jersey and other clothings) Yes/No

SECTION C

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL

DECISION MAKING

Please circle the number on the scale given below that best describes your response for each of the following items.

4 means Strongly Agree 3 means Agree 2 means Disagree

1 means Strongly Disagree

Student participation in school decision-making

14. Offers an opportunity for students to contribute to decision-making   4 3 2 1

15. Enhances students' commitment and sense of belongingness

               4 3 2 1

16. Promote workable relationship between school authorities and students   4 3 2 1

17. Slows down administrative process   4 3 2 1

18. Retards academic performance of student leaders   4 3 2 1

19. Makes some student leaders break school rules and regulations

               4 3 2 1

SECTION D

FACTORS THAT DISCOURAGE STUDENTS

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

20. Which of the following factors do you think discourage students from participating in school decision-making?

    (a)   For fear of being victimized by school authorities [ ]

    (b)   Uncooperative attitude of fellow students [ ]

    (c)   Authoritative nature of some school heads [ ]

    (d)   Any other please specify.......................................

....

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QUESTIONAIRE FOR HEADMASTERS

Please, respond to all statements in this questionnaire. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the confidentiality of respondents' responses. So you are requested not to write your name.

SECTION A

The Structure of Decision-making Process in the School

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response.

1.   There is a Student Representative Council (SRC) in my school.

      Yes/No

2.   Students choose their leaders through elections. Yes/No

3.   Students serve on the school's disciplinary committee. Yes/No

4.   Students have the option to make appeal in disciplinary matters.

      Yes/No

5.   Students are asked by school authorities to express their opinions

      on students' welfare. Yes/No

6.   The school administration considers the views of students before

      arriving at final decisions affection students. Yes/No

7.   Students' opinions on bringing about changes are welcome by

      school authorities. Yes/No

SECTION B

ACTUAL STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

Operational Decisions

Please circle the alternative that best describes your response.

8. Are student involved in the planning of projects for the school?

   Yes/No

9. Do student plan for the purchase of public address system for

   your school? Yes/No

10. Are students assigned specific duties like compound overseer?

    Yes/No

Managerial Decisions

Students have been involved in the following decisional situation:

11. Planning the school menu. Yes/No

12. Planning sports and entertainment programmes for the school.

    Yes/No

13. Purchasing items that are sold to students (e.g. school uniform,

    house jersey and other clothings). Yes/No

SECTION C

HEADMASTRERS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

Please circle the number on the scale given below that best describes your response for the following items.

4 means Strongly Agree   3 means Agree   2 means Disagree

1 means Strongly Disagree

Student participation in school decision-making

14.   Offers an opportunity for students to contribute to decision-
      making   4 3 2 1

15.   Enhances students' commitment and sense of belongingness

                                                      4 3 2 1

16.   Promote workable relationship between school authorities and
      students   4 3 2 1

17.   Slows down administrative process   4 3 2 1

18.   Retards academic performance of student leaders 4 3 2 1

19.   Makes some student leaders break school rules and regulations

                                                      4 3 2 1

SECTION D

FACTORS THAT DISCOURAGE STUDENTS PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

20. Which of the following factors do you think discourage students from participating in school decision-making?

    (a)   For fear of being victimized by school authorities   [ ]

    (b)   Uncooperative attitude of fellow students   [ ]

    (c)   Authoritative nature of some school heads   [ ]

    (d)   Any other. Please specify.....................................