UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING IN HEALTH TRAINING
INSTITUTIONS IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION OF
GHANA

NETTA FORSON ACKON

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BY

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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:…………………….

Name: Netta Forson Ackon

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was

supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down

by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's signature...Date…….……………….

Name: Dr (Mrs.) Janet Koomson

ABSTRACT

Decision-making is a tool of effective governance in all successful institutions whether it is corporate, educational or other. It was in line with that this study was undertaken to assess students' participation in decision-making in the health training institutions in Accra.

The accessible population, which comprised all students in all the health training institutions in Accra, was 860. Out of this the total sample used for the study was 394. The survey research quantitative paradigm was used and both purposive and random sampling techniques were used in collecting data using a questionnaire. After pilot testing the instrument used for data collection, the Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the reliability coefficient. The result was 0.7 and was accepted for use by my supervisor and other experts.

Some of the findings from the study included the views that students must be actively involved in taking decisions and to a large extent they perceived their participation in decision-making as a means of promoting students' commitment to decisions made. They had a priority in seeking to be included to plan their menu for each semester. They however feared being victimized if allowed participation.

Some of the recommendations made included the need for the principals to assess the current trend of students' participation in decision-making in their schools and make more student involvement in decision-making. In addition the Ministry of Health should come out with directives which will allow students opportunity to be involved in decision-making at their institution's level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my family especially, my husband and my sister through whose encouragement

and sacrifice of time I was able to complete this work.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Very often, decision-making is considered as a managerial function and the preserve of managers. It is often said that in the organization, if timely and good decisions are not taken, its effectiveness is not seen much. This can even affect the quality of the kind of product that the organization produces. Gorton (1980), states that decision-making is a complete exercise that needs much time and effort, employs analytical thought and utilizes relevant sources of information and assistance. Decision-making according to Musaazi (1982) is a "conscious choice from among a well defined set of often competing alternatives" (p.74). He goes on further to explain that it is a sequential process that culminates in a single decision or a series of choices that stimulates moves or actions. Not until the decisions are translated into actions they remain only good intentions. It is also a major responsibility of all administrators where decisions are made and implemented as the school like any other formal organization, is basically a decision-making structure (p.75).

The decision-making function can take place so long as there is a leader or manager with people functioning under him/her. It can take place within a

profit-oriented organization as well as a non-profit oriented organization. For

example, it can take place in both for-profit industries and corporations where goods

are manufactured and non-profit corporations such as churches and the health

training institutions.

While the manager is exercising this managerial function, the subordinates

must be involved. In the profit oriented organizations, usually the Board of Directors

and other stakeholders meet to take pragmatic decisions about how to deliver for

more profit to be made. Basically, the subordinates' interest is taken into account so

that effort to ensure the comfort of workers is reflected in their objectives. In the

non-profit oriented organizations decision-making involves almost all the executive

members of the organization. This kind of decision-making is often concerned about

welfare issues mainly. It is believed by managers in this category that if the

subordinates' welfare is taken care of there will be unity of purpose and therefore

some progress can be made towards achieving their set goals.

Looking at how schools have been administered up to the mid -twentieth

century, Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) says that, in the past student involvement in school

administration had been such that student involvement had been low or absent. His

argument has been supported by Hanson (1996), who states that school

administration has, for some time now been bureaucratic. This describes how

authority flows down from the head to the teachers then to the students in a one-way manner. The head had absolute control over the teachers and students. Teachers and students on the other hand had to obey irrespective of the outcome. Incidentally, health training institutions have no such documented information for reference but since they also train students academically the assumption is that students in this category will have' similar characteristics as those in other secondary and tertiary schools.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) and Hanson (1996) see the school as a community centre and social system respectively, where student involvement in decision-making must be encouraged. This is because they form part of all those concerned in determining the ends or purposes to be attained. Asiedu-Akrofi further suggests that their involvement could help develop their civic right or ensure their awareness of the negative aspects of democracy. Hanson (1996) maintains that though students are not implementers of decisions, decisions that are implemented invariably affect them. It is becoming increasingly obvious that school heads that do not involve students' in decision-making and resort to autocratic administration are likely to experience problems. This is likely to be in the form of agitations from students.

It is worth noting that since the colonial times Ghanaian schools appear to be autocratically administered as has been supported by McWilliams and Kwamena-Poh

(1975) who attribute it to the influence of the colonial master. As a result of the

decentralization policy in all sectors, including health training institutions, it is

believed that its implementation will lead to much desired grassroots participation. It

is at this level that there will be student agitations if they are not involved in making

decisions that affect them.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) indicates that the majority of students in the secondary

and tertiary institutions would like to be very much involved in decision-making.

Their non-involvement only creates a communication gap which breeds

discontentment. They not only disobey school rules and regulation but are also not

committed to these. By this tension grow among students but may be suppressed for

sometime only to explode like a volcano.

This does not leave out the service delivery institutions like the hospitals and

health training institutions. Here, because of the sensitive nature of their work,

managers are cautious when taking decisions. However, decisions are often made

with the neglect of the basic component of their existence which is the patients in

the hospitals and students in the health training institutions. This situation has led to

the development of the patients' charter (rights), which is a set of rules and

regulations that guide the care and management of patients, which the hospital

management utilize. Patients are consequently educated to know their rights and

health delivery professionals have also been educated to respect these rights. Even if managers do not involve patients directly because of their turn-out, they are recognized indirectly when taking decisions generally. Decisions concerning how to deal with each individual patient are done with him/her.

However, in the health training institutions major decisions are taken from the headquarters level, and passed down to the various institutions for the heads to implement. For example, in making decisions about the intake of students for a particular period and programme, the heads are called together for a meeting and the information given to them and later followed up with a letter. Since this has been the practice from the headquarters over the years, the heads often neglect students when they also have to take decisions concerning the welfare of the school. According to Hanson (1996), the relevant publics that is affected by any decision made, must be involved in making such decision so that there might not be seen any trace of imbalance in the decision-making process. This is because "it is not the function of the chief executive to make decisions, it is his function to monitor the decision-making process to make sure that it performs at the optimal level" (p.228).

The health training institutions are scattered over the country's ten regions solely to train personnel to attend to the various health needs of the population. Intake is very similar for all and specific to the kind of specialization expected after

training. Decisions here are taken primarily by the Ministry of health who is the policy-maker and implemented by the principals of these institutions who are held accountable. Students in these institutions are therefore the materials that these principals together with their support staff both academic and non-academic utilize to yield results. Therefore what is true of organizations is also true of training institutions. Principals of these institutions like chief executives of organizations take decisions.

In a typical situation, students were previously fed three times in a day from the fees they pay towards feeding boosted by the government subsidy on feeding which is about 40% of the first year student nurse's allowance. When the cost of living went up in the year 2003, principals of the various training institutions met and decided to reduce the number of meals from three to one or two depending on each head's own discretion. Some principals came back after the meeting and informed their management committees and tutors before coming out with directives to students as to how often they would be fed. Some principals also chose to shelf the idea for sometime while others went ahead to implement it. This decision was taken with mixed feelings by the students at places where it was implemented. In one institution in the Greater Accra Region, students went on rampage as a result, claiming the single meal served is not tasty and convenient. The policy maker only came in to

support and avert any further student agitation by giving funds to cater for few provisions that students could use for breakfast. Students however complain from time to time about poor or insufficient meals.

In a most recent situation in the 2005/2006 academic year the post basic midwifery students were asked without any pre-information to sign bond forms as part of the requirements of their training. This met the displeasure of the students as always because some had not even completed serving what they signed for their basic nursing training. Though they resisted they had to sign the forms before being allowed to write their final examination because that is what the ministry wanted.

Statement of the Problem

Students are the bulk of human resource in any health training institution. In the health training institutions they are mainly admitted to the institution to learn to deliver service ranging from caring for the medically sick person, mentally deranged and taking care of pregnant women and their babies as well as helping to prevent diseases in people within the community. Students are admitted to acquire the knowledge and skills of the special fields for which they have entered; for example, general nursing, psychiatry, midwifery and public health. They learn to care for their clients and that becomes the main pre-occupation of the various heads and tutors.

However, students are often left out in major decision-making concerning

their welfare when undergoing this training; for example, changing their ward

schedule for various reasons like making up for lost theoretical periods. They only get

to know when the ward in-charges have been written to and copies of these letters

posted on their notice boards. When they attend lectures or classes they are then

informed without allowing them to make alternate suggestions about the changes

which have been arranged. Currently, there exists food and welfare committees and

there are students represented on it. Occasionally, these students are called for

meetings without giving them information of the agenda for them to ask for the

views of their colleagues and articulate them at such meetings. The representatives

only come to the meeting with their own personal views and leave whether satisfied

or not having to communicate results or information to their colleagues.

Such situations leave the principals in the health training institutions with

more difficult situations to solve. Some of them resort to the authoritarian style of

leadership to handle such volatile incidents. Others decide to inform the students but

this often comes late when student agitations have come to their notice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to analyze students' understanding of the

concept of decision-making in the health training institutions in the Greater Accra

Region of Ghana. It also seeks to identify those areas of students' involvement in

decision-making, how they want to be involved in the process of making decisions

and the kind of problems they encounter as they strive to be part of the

decision-making process.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. Which groups of people should be involved in decision-making in the health

    training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

2. How do the students perceive their participation in decision-making in

    health training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

3. How would the students like to be involved in decision-making in health

    training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

4. What problems do students encounter as they strive to be part of the

    decision-making process in health training institutions in Greater Accra

    Region?

Significance of the Study

This study will go a long way to add to the broad knowledge of educational

administration in health training institutions when it is able to answer why and how

students participate in decision-making. It will further assist educational

administrators to understand the essentials of student participation in

decision-making in health training institutions. This is because it has not been easy identifying research in the area of student participation in decision-making in the health training institutions. Since students form quite a large percentage of the people in the institutions who may revolt if unfavourable decisions are taken for them, the researcher found it necessary to conduct a research into this sensitive area.

It is the hope of the researcher that the study will assist health training educational administrators to know some of the specific areas in which to motivate students to assist in the day-to-day running of the school. In addition it will enhance teaching and learning in the health training institutions because administrators will prevent students unrest by providing students opportunities to be part of the decision-making process.

Delimitation of the study

The study was conducted in the health training institutions in the Greater Accra Region of the country. The study also concentrated on the participation of students in the decision-making process in their institutions. As a result the findings cannot be generalized as a true reflection of what happens in all other institutions outside the Greater Accra Region. However any institution which has similar problems can make use of the findings. The study also concentrated on the

participation of students in the decision-making process in their institutions.

Limitations of the study

The researcher, being a tutor in one of the institutions in the Greater Accra Region, may influence the results in a way since students may want to "please" the researcher with their responses. The responses of the participants are also likely to be influenced by other students because of the closeness of the institutions to each other and the fact that all the data gathering tools will not be completed in a day whereby students might consult others who are not involved in the study to assist them with the responses.

Operational Definition of Terms

Students' unrest: Agitation among students which can lead to violence in the institution.

Educational administrators: Heads or principals of health training institutions and their management teams.

Patients' charter: Set of rules and regulations that guide the care and management of patients.

Post basic: Specialized one year nursing training offered after the three - year basic nursing and/or midwifery programme, it could be midwifery or public health training.

Policy maker: The division in the Ministry of health that sees to the running of the

service area (clinics, hospitals, training institutions).

Organization of the rest of the study

This work will include the following chapters:

Chapter 2: This will discuss related literature in relation to the concept of decision-making, models of decision-making, students' involvement in decision-making, perception of students' participation in decision-making, and students' participation in decision-making.

Chapter 3: This will deal with the methodology of the study. It will try to explain how the study was conducted with reference to the purpose of the study, research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection, and data analysis procedure.

Chapter 4: In this chapter an interpretation of the findings of the study in reference to the literature review will be discussed. Chapter 5 will include the summary of the key findings of the research, conclusions drawn, and recommendations made for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on

decision-making in educational institutions. The literature review would be

concentrated on the following areas of study - the concept of decision-making,

models of decision-making, theories on decision-making, students' involvement

or participation in decision-making, and perception of students' participation in decision-making.

The concept of decision-making

The pioneers of scientific management were the first to institute the concept of participatory decision-making. Scientific thought with its strong emphasis on logical rationality has become virtually ingrained in the institutions of culture. Very often the solutions to most problems require the application of "engineering" approaches.   Much of decision-making revolves around issues of participation in solving problems and making decisions. Participation here means the mental and emotional involvement of a person in a group situation that encourages the individual to contribute to group goals and to share responsibility for them. According to Owens (2001) participative decision-making requires the interaction of power and influence from two sources: 'the power and influence of the administrator and the power and influence of others in the organization' (p.284). He further states that in educational organizations these "others" are generally faculty members, students and/or community members.

One of the most common, and most serious, errors that leaders can make in organizational decision-making is to confuse participative decision-making with democratic decision-making. The concept of democracy is a political one which refers

to government by the people, either directly or through representatives. It generally

implies majority rule as determined by voting. It also rests on a very specific concept

about the relationship between the government and the governed: the governed

that is the body politic, exercise ultimate power over the government at voting

(Owens, 2001). Though government is typically seen as being at the top of a

hierarchical organization with the people at the bottom, this concept does not

translate to educational institutions.

Owens (2001) sees participation as mental and emotional involvement. To

him this is the sense of ownership of or buying into decisions. The use of

participative decision-making according to Owens has two major benefits namely,

arriving at better decision; and enhancing the growth and development of

organizations. He further argues that in participative decision-making all the

organizational members have the right to be heard, have their views considered, and

express feelings and offer knowledge and information. Therefore all the members

have a right to be part of the process.

There are two main approaches to the study of organizational

decision-making namely the prescriptive as found in classical decision-making model

and the descriptive or the Linblom's Theory of Muddling through. The former

describes how administrators ought to make decisions while the latter presents how

executives do in fact make decisions. An essential characteristic of an effective leader

is to know when to delegate, take action and involve the group in decision-making

(Atta, Agyenim-Boateng, & Baafi-Frimpon, 2000,).

Hoy and Miskel as cited in Atta et al (2000) consider school climate as a set of

internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the

behaviour of people in it. They point out that the climate is an end product of the

school groups - students, teachers and administrators, the formal and informal

organizations, leadership and personalities of participants as they work in balance

the organizational and individual aspects of a social system. Their end products

include stored values, social belief and social standards. It is said that improving on

an organization's climate can be a useful strategy to improve group relations within

the organization (Atta et al, 2000). According to Musaazi (1982) decision-making is

recognized as a major management function of all administrators.

Having received a lot of input from other areas of study like psychology,

sociology, and philosophy varying interpretations of decision-making have been

propounded by different authors. As collaborated by Rebore (1982) and Dixit as cited

in Pepra-Mensah (1999) the concept of involving the relevant publics in the

management of the organization is very broad. Various terminologies are used to

describe virtually the same decision-making process such as "collective bargaining"

(Rebore, 1982). Peprah-Mensah (1999) further cites Dixit referring to decision-making as 'co-management' in America; 'industrial democracy' in Britain and 'self government' in Yugoslavia.

Dorsey (1957) views decision-making as a series of interrelated communication events. His belief is supported by Rogers and Shoemaker (1971). Owens (2001) is however of the view that decision-making may be seen as a key function or activity of administrators. March &Simon (1958) maintain that decision-making is the process of choosing from among alternative ways of achieving an objective or providing a solution to a problem. Decision-making therefore can be described as the act or process of making choices from a set of identified alternatives in order to solve a problem or to achieve an objective or goal.

With regards to the educational administrator, decision-making occurs in areas such as work direction, leadership style, patterns of communication, planning process, supervision, public relations, school community relations, curriculum institution and appraisal, pupil staff personnel, school plant, financial and business management (Musaazi, 1982; Owens, 2001).

Costey and Iodd (1981) have outlined the potential disadvantages of participation in decision-making to include making disruptive contributions or an individual dominating the process, time consuming approach for the leader,

compromises resulting in decisions that are not the best, making the least offensive

conflict resolution rather than the most effective one, and development of situations

where responsibilities are not clear cut.

On the same note Makoe (2002) identifies seven barriers to participation to

include prevalence of closed organizational climate, pressure from daily assignments,

lack of technical knowhow on the part of heads of institutions, fear of some heads

that sharing of their authority over certain decisions will diminish their power,

non-preparedness of subordinates to take up additional responsibilities, professional

incompetence of staff, and lack of additional resources which participation may

require. Notwithstanding, the climate of a school is heavily dependent on the

leadership. The leader is expected to diagnose structures properly and adopt an

appropriate style.

Theories and Models of decision-making

To be able to discuss fully the models of decision-making the theoretical

perspectives would be considered with reference to the following Linblom's theory of

muddling through; the classical decision-making model; the rational model; Simon's

normative model; and the garbage can model.

Maximization of expected value

The first rational theory of decision-making is maximization of expected value.

According to the theory, an option's expected value is the sum of the product of the probability and the value of each of its consequences. A rational decision maker chooses the option with the highest expected value. The fact that rational decision-making can be defined in more than one way-for example, as maximization of expected value or expected utility-has been interpreted both as the weakness and the strength of the theory. With a few exceptions, rational theories of decision-making largely disappeared until their revival in the 1950s and 1960s. Only then did the major species of rational theories, the maximization of subjective expected utility and Bayesian's theory, become influential in the social and behavioral sciences.

Optimizing versus Non-optimizing Theories

Rational theories rest on the ideal of optimization; non-rational theories do not. Optimization means the calculation of the maximum (or minimum) of some variable across a number of alternatives or values. For instance, according to a rational theory known as Subjective Expected Utility (SEU) theory, an agent should choose between alternatives (e.g., houses, spouses) by determining all possible consequences of selecting each alternative, estimating the subjective probability and the utility of each consequence, multiplying the probability by the utility, and summing the resulting terms to obtain that alternative's subjective expected utility.

Once this computation has been performed for each alternative, the agent chooses

the alternative with the highest expected utility. This "subjective" interpretation of

SEU has been used to instruct people in making rational choices, but was criticized by

decision theorists who argue that preferences are not derived from utilities, but

utilities from preferences. There are several motives for abandoning the ideal of

optimization. First, in many real-world situations, no optimizing strategy is known.

Second, even when an optimizing strategy exists, it may demand unrealistic amounts

of knowledge about alternatives and consequences, particularly when the problem is

novel and time is scarce. Acquiring the requisite knowledge can conflict with goals

such as making a decision quickly; in situations of immediate danger, attempting to

optimize can even be deadly. Third, strategies that do not involve optimization can

sometimes outperform strategies that attempt to optimize. In other words, the

concept of an optimizing strategy needs to be distinguished from the concept of an

optimal outcome. In the real world, there is no guarantee that optimization will

result in the optimal outcome.

Normative versus Descriptive Theories

Non-rational theories are descriptive, whereas rational theories are

normative-this common distinction is half-true. Indeed, non-rational theories are

concerned with psychological plausibility, that is, the capacities and limitations of

actual humans, whereas rational theories have little concern for descriptive validity

and tend to assume omniscience. But non-rational theories have sometimes been

interpreted as normative as well. For instance, if an optimization strategy is

nonexistent, unknown, or dangerous to perform because it would slow

decision-making, a simple heuristic - such as copying the behavior of others is the

best decision-making strategy. Rational theories typically do not assume that agents

actually perform optimization or have the knowledge needed to do so. Their purpose

is not to describe the reasoning process, but to answer a normative question: what

would be the best strategy for one to adopt? Non-rational theories aim to describe

both the process and the outcome of decision-making. In certain situations, they can

be seen as characterizing the best an organism with limited time and knowledge can

do. Rational theories are primarily normative. They are often seen as descriptive in

the sense of predicting behavior, but not as models of underlying processes.

Search versus Omniscience

Search can concern either of two kinds of information, alternatives (such as

houses and spouses) or cues (such as reasons to choose a given house). Two different

classes of non-rational theories deal with these types of search: aspiration level

theories with the search for alternatives and fast and frugal heuristics with the search

for clues. One class of rational theories, known as "optimization under constraints,"

models limited search but retains the ideal of optimization. These theories posit an optimal stopping rule that requires the organism to stop search when the costs of further search exceed its benefits. Therefore, optimization under constraints can lead to models that are descriptively even more unrealistic than rational theories that ignore search.

Aspiration Level Theories

Aspiration level theories assume that an agent has an aspiration level, which is either a value on a goal variable (e.g., profit or market share) or, in the case of multiple goals, a vector of goal values that is satisfactory to the agent. When choosing among a large (possibly even infinite) set of alternatives, agents search until they find the first alternative that meets or surpasses their aspiration level, at which point search stops and that alternative is chosen. For instance, agents might set a lower limit on the price at which they would be willing to sell their shares in a company (the aspiration level). In this satisfying model, the agent makes no attempt to calculate an optimal stopping point, in this case, the best day on which to sell. The aspiration level need not be fixed, but can be dynamically adjusted to feedback. Thus, aspiration level theories model decision-making as a dynamic process in which alternatives are encountered sequentially and aspiration levels stop search. The challenge is to understand where aspiration levels come from in the first place.

Fast and Frugal Heuristics

In a different class of problems, the set of alternatives is given (i.e., need not be searched for), and the agent needs to search for clues that indicate which alternative to choose. For instance, an employer might want to decide which of three job applicants to hire or a bettor to predict which of two soccer teams will win a game. Fast and frugal heuristics employ simple stopping rules to make such inferences with little computation ("fast") and information ("frugally").

Ecological Rationality versus Internal Consistency

A classical criterion for rational choice is internal consistency or coherence. Numerous rules of consistency have been formulated, for instance, transitivity and additively of probabilities. Non-rational theories, in contrast, place less weight on internal consistency; for instance, some fast and frugal heuristics can violate transitivity. Instead, non-rational theories emphasize performance in the external world, both physical and social. Measures of external performance include the accuracy, speed, frugality, cost, transparency, and justifiability of decision-making. Note that internal consistency does not guarantee that any of these external criteria are met. For instance, the statement "there is a 0.01 probability that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer and a 0.99 probability that it does not" is internally consistent in that the probabilities add up to 1, but according to relevant research, it

is not accurate. How can heuristics be simple and accurate at the same time? Two

major answers have been proposed: They can exploit the structure of environments,

and simplicity can entail robustness.

Structure of Environments

The term "ecological rationality" refers to the match between a heuristic and

the structure of the information in a particular environment. The more closely a

heuristic reflects important aspects of this structure, the more likely it is to succeed

in that environment. Simple heuristics can succeed by exploiting the structure of

information in an environment. In other words, the environment can do part of the

work for the heuristic. For instance, consider the problem of predicting which of two

soccer teams will win a game, which of two cities is larger, or which of two colleges

provides the better education. Assume a fairly ignorant agent who has heard of only

one of the two teams, cities, or colleges. He can use the "recognition" heuristic,

which infers that the recognized object will win the game, have the larger population,

or provide the better education (Gigerenzer, Todd & the ABC Research Group, 1999).

Such ignorance-based decision-making works well in environments where ignorance

(e.g., lack of name recognition) is not random but systematic, as in competitive

environments where the sequence in which the names of objects are first

encountered is correlated with their performance, power, or size. The structure of such environments does part of the work in the sense that it allows the recognition heuristic to glean information from ignorance. If the correlation between recognition and the criterion is sufficiently large, a counterintuitive result is observed: Less knowledge leads to more accurate predictions than more knowledge, because people who recognize both alternatives cannot use the recognition heuristic.

Robustness

A second reason why a simple heuristic can make accurate predictions is robustness. To understand this point, it is necessary to distinguish between data fitting (i.e., determining the best fitting parameter values for a model given a specific body of data) and prediction (i.e., using these parameter values to predict new data). For data fitting, it generally holds that the more parameters one uses in a model, the better the fit; for prediction; however, there can be a point where less is more (Forster & Sober, 1994). An alternative route to robustness is to use the computational power of modern computers to search through large numbers of models to find one that is robust by a given criteria. But one often does not have the time and knowledge to proceed this way.

Emotions, Imitation, and Social Norms

Like rational theories, most non-rational theories rely on cognitive building

blocks, such as aspiration levels, search heuristics, and stopping rules. However,

Homo sapiens is not only the most intelligent, but also the most emotional and social

species—one of the very few in which unrelated members of the same species

cooperate. Theories of decision-making have often neglected emotions and

sometimes even cast them as the very opposite of rationality however, emotions can

aid decisions making just as fast and frugal cognitive heuristics do. Like emotions,

social norms and social imitation can function as decision-making guidelines that

keep individual learning and information search to a minimum (Gigerenzer & Selten,

2001). Social systems foster not only individual but distributed intelligence. That is,

by cooperating with one another, myopic individuals can exhibit collective rationality.

Communities of social insects are one example of such intelligent "super-organisms,"

as is division of labor in human industry and politics. The intelligence of a

super-organism can be seen as the emergent property of a few adaptive heuristics of

its members. Honey bees, for instance, make intelligent collective decisions about

where to build a new hive that seem to emerge from individual bees' application of a

few simple, well-adapted heuristics. Complex phenomena need not to be modeled in

terms of complex knowledge and computation.

Non-rational theories take account of what we know about humans' and

other species' capacities rather than assuming unlimited knowledge, memory, time, and other resources. They model heuristics - cognitive, emotional, and social - that exploit the structure of information in real environments.

Linblom's theory of muddling through

According to Ettling and Jago (1988) this model sees the decision maker as an administrative 'man' rather than a rational economic man who makes the most logical decisions he can being limited by inadequate information and his ability to utilize the information. Rather than the ideal or best decision, administrators more realistically battle for a decision that will adequately serve their purpose or appears reasonably to be based on their past experience and knowledge. With this it may not be easy to reach the best decision because the best could only be arrived at after following a course of action that is satisfactory or good enough.

The classical decision-making model

Ettling and Jago (1988) see this model as one that calls for rational, systematic, and deliberate approach in the decision-making process. This is based on the assumption that people are economically rational and attempt to maximize output in a sequential and orderly manner. Each step is considered to be indispensable and must be followed in a specific order. Though these steps vary from one writer to the

other Ettling and Jago (1988) has come out with five basic steps which are

identification of the problem; statement of the desired state of affairs; generation of

alternative courses of action; formulation and selection of the preferred course of

action; and implementation.

The rational model

According to Krietner (2001) this model is a four-step sequential procedure of

making decisions which are identifying the problem; generating solutions; selecting a

solution; and implementing and evaluating the solution. He further adds that

according to this model administrators are completely objective and possess

complete information to make a decision. It is also analytical and breaks down the

decision-making process and serves as a conceptual anchor for newer models.

Simon's normative model

In contrast, Simons as cited in Krietner (2001) mentioned some constraints to

decision-making as limited capacity of the human mind, problem complexity and

uncertainty, amount and timeliness of information at hand, criticality of the decision

and time demands. He rather suggests a normative model characterized by limited

information processing; use of judgmental heuristics, and "satisfiers".

The garbage can model

This model was developed from the rational model's inability to explain how

decisions are actually made. It presumes organizational decision-making to be a sloppy and haphazard process. According to this model, decisions result from a complex interaction between four independent streams of event namely problems, solution, participants, and choice opportunities. Krietner (2001) explains that the interaction of these events create "a collection of choices looking for problem, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision makers looking for work". This model assumes further that decision-making does not follow any ordered steps rather attractive solutions can get matched up with whatever handy problems exist at a given period. It however attempts to explain how problems, solutions, participants, and choice opportunities interact to arrive at a decision. Herbert Simon as cited in Owens (2001) identified three major phases in the process of decision-making as follows - intelligence activity that is, the search of the environment that reveals circumstances that call for a decision; design activity, that is, the processes by which alternative courses of action are envisioned, developed and analyzed; and choice activity, that is, the processes of actually selecting a course of action from among the opinions under consideration;

Two basic assumptions from these are that decision-making is an orderly, rational process that possesses an inherent logic; and that the steps in the process follow one

another in an orderly, logical, sequence.

Owens (2001) again cites Peter Drucker, who was very influential in corporate circles in the 1950s as having come out with decision-making steps such as defining the problem; analyzing the problem; developing alternate solutions; deciding on the best solution; and converting decisions into effective actions. Such a formulation was seen as helping the administrator organize decision-making, make it more systematic, as an alternative to intuitive, perhaps haphazard, responses to the flow of events in the busy environment of organizational life. This was accepted as the essential logic of administrative thought.

From the fore-going it is evident that decision-making does not terminate with either a decision or the action to implement a decision. Decision-making is usually an iterative ongoing process whereby the results of one decision provide new information on which to base yet other decisions. The decision-making model that is used by the manager depends on the circumstances.

The three theories of decision-making are generally different, but they all share one common goal: making rational decisions. While the descriptive theory focuses on how things are, the normative theory concentrates on how things should be in a philosophical way. Behavioral theory, on the other hand, stands in the middle of descriptive and normative theory in order to counter-balance their strengths and

weaknesses of decision-making. There is no right or wrong method to

decision-making because it all depends on the type of management, type of an

organization structure, and the goals. In a large organization, it is necessary to have

all of the three theories available to achieve both the short and long term goals set

by the company: successful organization should deploy all legal and ethical tools in

order to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. This will ensure the greatest possible

platform for organizational success and survival, which in turn creates a platform for

responsible corporate governance and increased satisfaction of all stakeholders.

Perception of Participation in Decision-making

Owens (2001) asserts that "decision-making style of the administrator is

important in so far as it gives rise to the ways in which the organization as an entity,

goes about the processes of identifying problem, ... and finding ways to deal with

them" (p.267). He illustrates an instance where in one university in the USA, when

the heating system was constantly malfunctioning, classrooms were chronically

unkempt and student seating typically in disrepair nothing seemed to have been

done about it. In the spring of that same year, there was a project to beautify the

campus by planting flowers and shrubs and setting sculptures among the trees.

These prompted outcries from students such as: "What is wrong with this university?

It obviously doesn't care what happens in the classrooms. All that matters is what

visitors see on the outside" (Owens, 2001, p.267). This implied that regardless of the

persons who might be involved, somehow the decision-making processes of the

university, as an organization, had gone wrong.

According to Bolman and Neal (1984) it was commonplace to refer to the

wartime Manhattan Project as a model for conceptualizing and solving problems

since they saw themselves capable of solving problems once they had been able to

build an atomic bomb. As such government expenditure for research increased on

the premise that the production of new scientific knowledge could be used to create

wealth, achieve national goals, improve human life and solve social problems.

March and Simon as cited in Owens (2001) assert that

it has long been obvious that people in an organization do not tend to

search endlessly and relentlessly for the best way of achieving goals. They

engage in decision-making procedures to seek alternative ways of doing

things only when the organization's performance seems to be falling below

some acceptable level. This 'acceptable level' of performance is usually not

the highest level of performance possible; rather it is one that is good enough

to fit the organization's perception of reality and values … they tend to make a

decision that will relieve the proximate problem but are unlikely to seize the

moment as occasion for moving to some optimal level of performance (p.

271).

Owens (2001) mentions ambiguity and uncertainty as being characteristic of

real world of the educational administrator. These are manifest in terms of the

complex nature of the organization's goals, their technologies, and their environment

which have made it difficult to connect causes with effects and actions with

outcomes. Therefore it is difficult to predict with any certainty the course of future

events. As was noted by Drucker (1974) and cited in Owens (2001):

> decision-making for example usually does not terminate with either a
>
> decision or the action to implement a decision; it is usually an iterative,
>
> ongoing process whereby the results of one decision provide new information
>
> on which to base yet other decisions (p 270).

It can be argued that administrators are thinking all the time; that their

thinking is closely intertwined with the actions (decisions) they take, and that

everyday thinking almost never represents a sequence of steps. This suggests that

emphasis on holistic thought which seeks understanding of the complexities,

interconnections, ambiguities and uncertainties of educational organizations might

be more fruitful in decision-making (Pondy, 1983).

Blasé and Blasé (1994) assessed schools where shared governance was

practiced to find out whether students and other subordinates would be ready to get

involved in the decision-making process and assume responsibility. The results of this assessment showed that both teachers and students strongly wished to be involved in the schools' affairs as well as take responsibility for their decisions. This confirmed earlier study of schools with similar characteristics (Sergiovanni, 1991).

Gorton (1980) asserts that to involve others in decision-making, administrators must be sure to involve those who have been given some training in participation in decision-making. This was as a result of the fact that administrators thought students were a group of "tableaux rasa" in decision-making matters and should not be involved whereas students thought themselves to be "experts" who could be trusted with such responsibility.

Considering that most educational workers entered school at the age of five or six years and have remained in the educational organization with only brief absences throughout their formative years and the later years in - which they established themselves as full adult members of society. They strongly tend to have "bought into" the values of education and educational organizations and, as professionals in these organizations, are highly committed to their core values, central beliefs and goals. In the long process of being so thoroughly socialized into the organization - first as a pupil, then as a student, and, ultimately, as professional - those who work in educational organizations tend strongly to accept the 'rules of the game' for getting

along and 'the ropes' that must be learnt in order to become an accepted member

(Owens, 2001).

The foregoing has been supported by a lot of studies in the educational

organizations and as analyzed by Mintzberg (1951) it is "clear that administrators

spend little time in reflective thought: they are active, they spend much of their time

communicating, interruptions are frequent and they have little opportunity to be

alone in peace and quiet."

However Schon and Weick (as cited in Owens, 2001) have been quick to point

out that "it does not necessarily mean that administrators do not think: it means that

their thinking is closely intertwined with their action on the job" (p.280).

Keef (1975) studied into the role of teachers and their subordinates on

decision-making which was conducted in the Montana School District. The results of

this study revealed some differences between the perceptions of administrators,

teachers and Board members with respect to the involvement of teachers and other

subordinates in school decision-making matters. While the teachers and other

subordinates had reason to be involved in every decision-making process of the

school, the administrators on the other hand felt teachers should be involved only in

instructional issues and for the Board members, teachers should not be involved in

any way.

In a similar study Merritt (1987) looked at the perceptions of parents; teachers and clerical staff on the issue of shared governance in a selected urban school district. The results of the study showed some differences in the perception of shared governance among the study population. The outcome was different when the teachers and administrators were put into the primary and secondary schools where they seemed to have no difference in perception. However when grouped according to age and gender there was a significant difference in their perception of shared governance.

Gorton (1980) conducted a study on the attitude and perception of principals and teachers towards the implementation of school-based shared decision-making in an urban school district. From the study the attitude of principals and teachers differed significantly towards the implementation of the shared governance as well as their perception of areas of students' involvement. Principals opined that students should be guided in taking decisions by providing them with relevant information and also have an input when setting up goals and priorities. Students on the other hand wanted more opportunity when deciding on issues like student discipline, evaluation of teachers and control of all extra-curricular funds.

Blasé and Blasé (1994) have indicated that in order to bring about positive changes in education, administrators must realize that teachers and students alike

must experience the school as a place that provides room for innovation and

dynamic opportunities for growth and development. This is supported by Owens

(2001) when he says that

> one of the persistently under-recognized problems in implementing
>
> participative decision-making methods is the need to provide participants
>
> with training in the group process skills that are needed to make collaboration
>
> work well. It is insufficient that only the administrator be skilled in
>
> participative methods: it is essential that all participants understand and
>
> know how to play their roles effectively (p. 295).

He goes on further to iterate that in organizational decision-making the goal is

neither 'victory nor compromise' but 'consensus and empowerment', not 'win-lose'

but 'win-win'.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) did a study which proved that students expressed strong

desires to get involved in taking decision that affect them especially that which had

the tendency to improving their school life. In the same study he realized that school

heads did not see the need to involve students in decision-making.

Sergiovanni (1991) had a study using some principals, teachers and students

in some "effective schools" to find out how come they had become effective. From

the study principals, teachers and students saw themselves as being in a corporative

enterprise where they all have a common goal to achieve. The principals and

teachers also saw students as an important part of the relevant public of the school

who needed to be given some guidance to operate in taking decisions where

necessary. Consequently there was no significant difference in their perception and

attitude towards the decision-making process.

Students Involvement/ Participation in Decision-making

Owens (2001) has observed that "decision-making has long been recognized

as being the heart of organization and administration". He further indicated that "two

sets of issues have been dominant in influencing how decisions are made in the

educational organization namely the past and the rise of expectations of people at

work; and the universality of change as an urgent and overwhelming driving force in

human affairs" (p. 265). The increasing rejection of the autocratic hierarchical

organizational ideas of these two issues are virtually inseparable parts of every

decision taken by the educational leader and the effectiveness and quality of

decisions that are made usually depict the skill with which the leader has dealt with

these issues. It could be that the issues demand that the leader makes quick

decisions and moves on to other pressing business. Here there is the temptation to

take unilateral decisions for the sake of speed and efficiency. Owens (2001) iterates

that it is becoming clear that healthy organizations characteristically find strength in

opening up participation in decision-making and empowering relevant people at all

levels of the organization to contribute to the quality of the decisions made.

Bolman and Neal (1984) and Argyris & Schon (1964) have noted that involving

the relevant publics in the activities of an organizational set up (bureaucratic,

socio-political, open-system) enables management to achieve set objectives. This is

also supported by Sergiovanni (1991) when he emphasizes that such involvement

through laid down decision-making structures builds a large commitment base which

leads to effective implementation of decisions. Such involvement has been confirmed

by Gorton (1980), and Ettling and Jago (1988) to be the best positive means of

improving the quality of decisions which invariably cultivates support and

understanding for seemingly controversial issues. Gorton (1980) observes that all the

while students have not been involved in matters like discipline. He argues that

students are the consumers of education and are always in the best position to

determine whether the teaching they receive is the best or deficient.

According to Makoe (2002) students' participation in school administration

may be seen as a constitutional right.s He further explains that the school

organization could be likened to a tripod which cannot be functional without one

stand. The tripod, he explained, to be the various groupings of human resources

namely the academic support staff, non-teaching staff and students. Consequently

each group has its own unique role to play for the school to achieve its goal.

Shanahan (1987) conducted a study into the extent to which principals used participatory management in their schools and their success assessed. It came out from the study that some principals used at least participatory decision-making in discharging duties such as establishing classroom disciplinary policies, determining appropriate classroom teaching methods, maintaining discipline in the school and allowing students to have control over funds contributed by them for projects. This was found to be quite effective in smaller school communities than in larger one. This study has been supported by the findings of Hanson (1996) and Blasé and Blasé (1994) when they observed in their studies that some principals involved their subordinates including students in the decision-making processes. Both studies together have confirmed that participatory decision-making as a tool, help to increase commitment and produce a higher level of cooperation.

In another study, (Owens, 2001), which was conducted by an Association of Principals of schools, the need to have a team approach, providing an opportunity to all administrators and supervisory personnel to contribute to the process of decision-making instead of the old system of passing down the "unaltered decision" of the principal was emphasized. In return, subordinates must be ready to demonstrate their confidence in group processes while the principal involves people

in decisions that are made considering him/herself as a team member. Ettling and Jago (1988) studied critically the results of decision-making games played among volunteers from Hudson University and found out that disagreement among members was very likely. They established that acceptance was a necessary aspect of the decision-making process which allowed group involvement to generate much greater acceptance than the absence of it. This gave a strong feeling among the subjects of the study that collective thinking resulted in higher quality decisions.

In a study conducted by Piper (1974), he used graduate university students as astronauts who had crush-landed on the moon. They were then given the opportunity to rank in order of importance 15 items or equipment which would enable them to reach the master - ship some 200 miles away. They were to do this individually and in groups of threes and fives. The individual decisions were then compared with the group decisions to find out which produced the best results. It was found that the group decisions had more appropriate decisions on the assignment than the individual ones. This pointed out the fact that consensus decisions yielded more positive results. The results of the studies of Ettling and Jago (1988) as well as Piper (1974) together confirm that involving others in the processes of decision-making were the best as better outcomes are assured and in addition the needed commitment for the execution of the particular issue.

Gray and Stafford (1988) also studied into the choice behaviour of 60 selected

medical students from the Washington University. The results of the study was that

there is strong evidence to support the fact that groups are less likely than

individuals to choose a behaviour with relatively lower value. This though may have

something to do with the level of students used for the study.

Margerison and Glube (1976) and Field (1982) have separately studied and

argued that disagreement is better understood and resolved through collective

decision-making. Hanson (1996) further explains that disagreements are conflicts

which are inevitable in group work. They help those concerned to be alert to the

problem or issue and find lasting solution to. On the other hand, Bolman and Neal

(1984) consider a disagreement as disequilibrium which invariably works for the

good of the institution since such periods draw together all available resources to

source for equilibrium. This is succinctly summed up when Sergiovanni (1991) asserts

that

> highly successful shared governance principals know it is not power over
>
> people and events that count but rather power over the achievements of
>
> organizational purposes, that their subordinates need to be empowered to
>
> act and given the necessary responsibility that releases their potential and
>
> makes their actions and decisions count (p. 198).

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) also buttresses the fact that if students are denied the

opportunities for their empowerment which seeks to release their potential then

principals should be prepared for a strike action.

Owens (2001) sees participation as being the 'mental and emotional

involvement" of the individual. To him this shows a sense of 'ownership of' (or

"buying into") the decision. It is genuine ego involvement and not merely being

present or "going through the motions". This encourages people to accept greater

responsibility for the organization's effectiveness. Having taken part in the process of

decision-making the person sees him / or herself as having a stake of seeing them

work out well. It releases the person's own energy, creativity and initiative.

Owens (2001) further states that as education grows more complex there

appears to be less and less certainty that many important issues can be resolved by

experts who pass their solutions on to others to implement. When others are

involved they get motivated to have done so and their participation infuses the

decision-making process with the full spectrum of knowledge and good ideas that

people throughout the organization have to contribute.

To Crane (1976) participative decision-making is a management approach

which allows and encourages subordinates to participate in decisions that will affect

them. Alluto and Belasco (1976) on the other hand think that participative

decision-making is an organizational operation by which decisions are reached

through the inclusion of those persons who are to execute those decisions. Conway

(1984) notes that participative decision-making involves the intersection of concepts

of participation and decision-making limiting attention to that participation by two or

more actors in the process of reaching a choice. This process works on the

assumption that there are relationships of subordination and domination.

Short and Greer (1977) indicated in one of their studies that workers found in

all organizations would like to be involved in making decisions that made an impact

on the quality of their working lives, as well as those decisions essential to the

success of the organization. They also indicated that participation in management is

one of the widely recognized motivational techniques. The effects being increased

employee satisfaction, commitment and confidence in the organization.

Sergiovanni (1991) indicated in his study that people become empowered

when they are made to take part in making decisions. This according to him makes

them to have a sense of ownership which makes them committed to whatever

decisions are taken. He further indicated that when people are motivated they work

with meaning and is even so the more when the motivation comes from

management. From a similar study, Patchen (1970) argued that increased

participation in decision-making could be associated with job satisfaction, work

achievement and personal integration in the organization.

In their study, Short and Greer (1977) show that leaders who fail to motivate workers by involving them in decision-making processes are those who are not prepared to accept blame for their subordinates' mistakes. As a result subordinates under such heads are not empowered to take part in decision-making neither do they also have the desire to act (Kirby, 1991). The subordinates consequently lack feelings of "worth and value of importance". There is low level of trust as well as absence of openness and sharing, expression of acceptance, support and co-operative intentions (Johnson and Johnson, 1989).

The statement is confirmed by Wilson (1960) when he states that lack of involvement in the decision-making process leads to unconcerned attitude and lack of effective responsibility. Vroom and Yetton (1973) demonstrated that administrators are key actors in controlling decision- making in the organization and that this control is exercised by the decision-making style that administrators choose to use. Argyris (1964) also emphasizes the need to develop greater harmony and consistency between the goals of organizations and the human needs of people who work in them, and that this requires replacing directive administrative styles with more participative styles.

Though the above studies have failed to mention students as taking part in

the decision-making process, Short and Greer (1977) have suggested in their study

that students must not be treated as products but as workers with vested interest in

the learning experiences in which they participate at school. He further went on to

indicate that if they are involved in the decision-making process it will bring about

the same positive results as when the other workers are, involved.

Student demonstrations have several adverse effects but the cause of these is

not certain. This was investigated by Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) who found out that one

main issue leading to these demonstrations is the lack of social relationships.

According to him, heads of institutions need to involve students in the

decision-making process to build up trust which will help remove suspicion on the

part of students and promote cordial relationship between students and teachers

and the administration

Lightfoot (1986) is of the opinion that students must be empowered in order

for them to realize autonomy, choice, responsibility and participation in

decision-making. According to Jenkins (1988) students who are empowered are able

to initiate and carry out new plans because they are allowed to be part of the

decision-making process. They are also able to take more responsibility for their

learning and exhibit higher levels of engagement in learning experiences.

In a study, Amabile (1983) found out that people placed in situations that

provide intrinsic motivation and free choice generally produce more innovative work.

In a related study Barth (1990) reveals that considerable risk-taking is associated with learning and experimentation. As such risk-taking is critical if new ideas are to emerge in schools. Though student participation in decision-making processes involves risk-taking, it is worth it because it tends to yield positive results in the end.

Summary

Participation in decision-making is a new concept which is gradually unfolding - into the educational sector. Unlike other organizations where decisions are taken to help increase profits, decisions in the educational institutions are taken for several reasons among which are the following:

Improve teacher-student, principal-teacher, principal-student and student-student relationships; increase the effectiveness of the school; and reduce student, agitations or "tension" resulting from lack of understanding existing issues.

The literature that was reviewed pointed out that there is need to prepare the relevant publics - teachers, students and other subordinates well before letting them start with the process. Confusion can be a very real hazard in organizational decision-making unless participants know just what procedures to follow to arrive at acceptable decisions and what their own roles and functions are. Unless this is done all the advantages ascribed to participatory decision-making will be nullified. All

members are required to have access to means of initiating the decision-making process.

Since different people have different perceptions about the involvement of others especially students in decision-making, the literature pointed out that the leadership style of the head will determine how much they would be involved. Lightfoot (1986) clearly point out that students must be empowered in order for them to realize autonomy, choice, responsibility and participation in decision-making.

It is therefore very necessary that educational administrators should involve their subordinates including students in the school's decision-making processes. If students are given this opportunity then the school has a chance of achieving the set goals without undue interruptions but may suffer some setbacks if they are denied through students unrests.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design used for the study. The various

processes and procedures utilized included the research design, population, sample

and sampling procedure, instruments used for collecting data, data collection

procedures and method of data analysis.

Research Design

The design employed for this study was a descriptive survey, which consists of

the collection of data to answer questions concerning the current state of the subject

under study, that is, to determine students' participation in decision-making in health

training institutions in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Descriptive survey,

according to Osuala (1993) studies both large and small populations by selecting and

studying samples chosen from the populations to discover the relative incidence,

distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables.

Conclusions could then be drawn about students' participation in decision-making in

the discharge of the principal's duties.

Population

This is the larger group of people who share the same characteristics needed

for the research and to which the findings will be generalized. For this research the

target group was made up of students of all the health training institutions, that is,

Nurses Training College (N.T.C.), Midwifery Training School (M.T.S.) and Public Health

Nurses School (P.H.N.S.) within the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

Accessible Population

The accessible population for the study was made up of all the students in the

nursing training institutions within Korle bu, Accra. The training institutions consist of

the Nurses Training College (N.T.C.) which trains students in the Registered General

Nursing programme; the Midwifery Training School (M.T.S.) which trains students for

the Registered Midwifery programme; and the Public health Nurses School (P.H.N.S.)

which offers training for the post basic nursing / midwifery graduates for the public

health nursing programme. The N.T.C. has the largest population of students followed

by the M.T.S. then the P.H.N.S. Apart from the N.T.C. which has some male students the two others have only female students. It is from these accessible groups that the sample for the study was taken. To give a fair representation of the population the sample was drawn from all the different health training institutions.

The accessible population was made up of 650 students of the Nurses' Training College (N.T.C.), 170 students of the Midwifery Training School (M.T.S.), and 40 students of the Public health Nurses School (P.H.N.S). The total population was 860.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The purposive and systematic random sampling techniques were used to select the SRC executives and the rest of the respondents respectively. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the SRC executives because they happen to be the 'mouth-piece' of the students and are very likely to take part in decision-making more than all other students. For the remaining students the systematic random sampling technique was used in order to get a fair representation from them to source their views about decision-making in the schools under study. According to Opoku-Amankwa (2002) respondents or elements in a purposive sample are intentionally selected for the study based on certain characteristics or qualities to meet the needs and requirements of the study. He further explains that elements in a systematic sample are selected from the list of the population systematically. The

first element is selected at random either by lot or by the use of the table of random numbers. A sampling interval is determined and the desired number is selected at the given interval. Every third person on the class list was systematically selected to be part of the sample.

Of the 394 respondents who form the sample 45 comprising prefects and SRC executives were chosen through the purposive and 349 through the systematic random sampling techniques. The sex distribution of respondents was such that the majority, 90.61% were females. All the male students are admitted only into the NTC and that on the whole fewer males than females come in to train. The nursing profession is generally perceived as a female preserve. However, few males are taking up the profession.

The elements for the sample were systematically selected from the list of the population. This approach was chosen to speed up the selection of a representative group from each section of the population identified. The instruments used in collecting data was pre-tested in an institution with similar characteristics of the population and some changes made with regards to the number of items in the various sections to bring out clearly what was being assessed. The sample size was also selected according to established guidelines (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) which helped to make it representative. Details of the research sample are represented in

Table 1

Table 1:

Population and Sample

School	Accessible population	Purposive sample	Systematic random sample	Total sample
Nurses Training College	650	24	216	240
Midwifery Training School	170	16	102	118
Public Health Nurses School	40	5	31	36
Total	**860**	**45**	**349**	**394**

Research Instruments

A questionnaire which consisted of close-ended items was developed by me. It had two parts. Part 1 of the questionnaire asked respondents to provide biographical data such as sex, age, number of years spent in the school and status / role played in school. Part 2 was made up of sections A, B, C, D and E. The seven items in section A

sought to find out students understanding of the concept of decision-making. Section

B was made up of four items that looked for students' perception of their

participation in decision-making. Section C consisted of four items that looked at the

areas of decision-making students would like to be involved. Section D which

consisted of five items sought to find out problems students encounter as they strive

to become part of the decision-making process. Section E sought to find out two

other problems which they are likely to encounter as they strive to be part of the

decision-making process which had not been indicated. Responses to all the items in

the questionnaire were scored using the five-point Likert-type scale in the ascending

order (Oppenheim, 1966). The responses were scored thus:

5 - Strongly agree

4 - Agree

3 - Undecided

2 - Disagree

1 - Strongly disagree

Pilot testing

The validity and reliability of the instrument were examined prior to the

actual study. For the validity, the instrument was examined and approved by the

research supervisor and other experts for their content and face value. Cronbach's

alpha was calculated for the reliability coefficient by the statistician who assisted in

the data analysis and the value obtained was 0.7. A letter of introduction from the

Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) was taken to the

Principal of the Community Health Nursing School in Winneba in the Central Region

for the pilot testing. This was to ensure that all the items in the questionnaire elicited

the necessary information. A total of 30 respondents were used for the pilot testing.

From the pilot testing it came out that three out of the seven items in Section A of

Part 2 were not relevant to the students understanding of the concept of

decision-making and were therefore scraped. By asking respondents to list two other

problems encountered as they strive to be part of the decision-making did not bring

out any new issue. The majority, 80%, repeated one of what had already been

indicated in Section D while 20% made no input. Therefore the last open-ended

question which would have fallen under Section E in the Part 2 was scraped leaving

the questionnaire with only four sections in this part. Items in Part 1 did not meet

any changes as they were able to elicit the required information.

Data Collection Procedures

The main study followed the same order as the pilot-study. Questionnaires

were delivered by hand and respondents given two weeks to respond to them. They

were collected back the same way they were distributed. Each of the three schools

used for the study were visited on different days. The first was the NTC which had the largest population. Over there, the Principal was approached with a copy of letter introducing me taken from the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA). This was followed by a discussion between the Principal and me about how I intended to go about administering the questionnaire. From this point various class tutors were called in to lead me into the various classes. In each class I was introduced by the respective class tutor to the class. I in turn explained the process of responding to the questionnaire to the students. Following this the SRC executives in each class were identified while respondents from among the remaining class members were selected using the systematic random sampling technique. After that each of them was given the questionnaire and instructions about how to respond to the various items in the questionnaire discussed with them. They were also given envelopes that they would use to store the answered questionnaires until they were collected. To aid quick collection and a hundred percent collection rate the class tutor entreated to collect all of the questionnaires after completion and they had been sealed in the envelopes given. These were in turn collected by me at the end of the two weeks. The MTS and PHNS were visited on the same day but at different times. Similar interactions went on between me, the Principals, class tutors and the students. I collected the questionnaires on schedule with a hundred recovery rate.

Data Analysis

The collected data were statistically analyzed using the Statistical Package for

Social Sciences (SPSS) software (Version 14.0). Completed questionnaires were given

serial numbers for easy identification. Those items whose responses utilized the

Likert-type responses were scored according to the numerical scale attached to them.

The computations of the frequencies and percentages were analyzed and

documented using tables. All the sections of the questionnaire were analyzed in the

same manner using the SPSS.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research was done to analyze students' participation in decision-making in

health training institutions in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. It sought to identify

students' understanding of the concept of decision-making, their perception about

the decision-making process; how they want to be involved in the process of

decision-making and the kind of problems they encounter as they strive to be part of

the decision-making process. The data analysis in this chapter covered both Part 1

and Part 2 of the questionnaire where Part 1 deals with the biographical data of

students and Part 2 made up of 4 sections numbered A-D deals with the research

questions. Information on the biographical data of respondents is in appendix C.

Section A Which group of people should be involved in Decision-making in health

training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

This table analyses the first of the four items in this section.

Table 2: Decision Taken By Principal Alone

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	38	10
Agree	65	16
Undecided	48	12
Disagree	133	34
Strongly disagree	110	28
Total	**394**	**100**

Table 2 shows that 62% of the respondents disagree that decisions could be taken by

the principal alone. In as much as the principal can take decisions, the results of the

study indicate that it is not in all situations that only the principal can do that. As a

result of this there were some 12% of respondents who were undecided about

whether or not the principal should take decisions. This is supported by Owens (2001)

who indicates that participative decision-making requires the interaction of power

and influence from two sources being the power and influence of the administrator

and the power and influence of others in the organization. This is further

corroborated by Ettling and Jago (1988) and Piper (1974) that involving others in the

processes of decision-making were the best as better outcomes are assured.

The next table analyses the second of the four items in this section.

Table 3: Decision-Making Extended To School Management Team

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	105	27
Agree	139	35
Undecided	42	11
Disagree	69	17
Strongly disagree	39	10
Total	**394**	**100**

From table 3 a total of 62% respondents agree that decision-making could be

extended to the school management team. Such involvement had also been

confirmed by Gorton (1980), and Ettling and Jago (1988) to be the best positive

means of improving the quality of decisions which invariably cultivates support and

understanding for seemingly controversial issues.

The next table analyses the third of the four items in this section

Table 4: Decision-Making Extended To Teachers

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	77	20
Agree	244	62
Undecided	36	9
Disagree	28	7
Strongly disagree	9	2
Total	**394**	**100**

Table 4 shows that 82% of the respondents agree that decision-making could be

extended to teachers. This confirms what Crane (1976) said of decision-making as

being a managerial approach that allows and encourages subordinates to participate

in decisions that will affect them. By allowing teachers also to participate in the

decision-making according to Alluto and Belasco (1976), it ensures that those to

execute the decisions are directly involved and therefore the organizational

operation is achieved.

The next table analyses the fourth of the four items in this section.

Table 5: Decision-Making Extended To Students

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	320	81
Agree	65	17
Undecided	0	0
Disagree	4	1
Strongly disagree	5	1
Total	**394**	**100**

In table 5 decision-making extended to students has been analyzed where 98% of the

respondents agree that decision-making should be extended to students. This

confirms what Sergiovanni (1991) concluded about his study that people become

empowered when they are made to take part in making decisions. According to him

it makes them to have a sense of ownership which makes them committed to

whatever decisions that are taken. Bolman and Neal (1998) and Argyris (1964) also

noted that involving the relevant publics in the activities of an organizational set up

(bureaucratic, socio-political, open-system) enables management to achieve set

objectives. This is also supported by Sergiovanni (1991) when he emphasizes that

such involvement through laid down decision-making structures builds a large

commitment base which leads to effective implementation of decisions.

Section B Students Perception of their Participation in Decision-making

This table analyses the first of the four items in this section.

TABLE 6: Involvement Of Students Allows Them Opportunity To Make Decisions

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	238	60.0
Agree	108	27.4
Undecided	5	1.3
Disagree	21	5.3
Strongly disagree	22	6.0
Total	**394**	**100**

Table 6 shows the responses from students' perception about their involvement in

decision-making. Here 87.4% of respondents agree that their involvement will allow

students opportunity to make decisions while 11.3% of them disagree. While it is

true that running of the school is the prerogative of the principal or administrator

and the management team, the relevant publics must be involved for better results.

It is as a result of this that 87.4% the respondents think that when they are involved

they could make decisions which could be owned by them. This has been confirmed

in various studies conducted by Gorton (1980), Blasé and Blasé (1994) and Owens

(2001) all of whose studies indicate how much students would like to be involved in

the decision-making process.

The next table analyses the second of the four items in this section.

Table 7: Involvement promotes students commitment to decisions made

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	208	53
Agree	140	35
Undecided	19	5
Disagree	12	3
Strongly disagree	15	4
Total	**394**	**100**

Table 7 discusses the perception of students that their involvement will promote

their commitment to decisions made. In this 88% of students agree that their

involvement would make them committed to decisions made. This opinion has been

confirmed by Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) who found out in his study that students wanted

to be involved in making decisions that had the tendency of improving their school

life. Similar results have been shared by Blasé and Blasé (1994) whose study revealed

that both teachers and students strongly wished to be involved in the school's affairs

as well as take responsibility for their decisions.

The next table analyses the third of the four items in this section.

Table 8: Students' Involvement Affects Students' Academic Work

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	4
Agree	35	9
Undecided	39	10
Disagree	144	36

Strongly disagree	161	41
Total	**394**	**100**

Table 8 further analyses the results of whether students' involvement in decision-making is perceived to affect their academic work. A total of 77% of the respondents disagree that being involved would affect their academic work with 13% agreeing to it. Having expressed the strong desire to be made part of the decision-making partners they are emphasizing the fact that they could combine that task and the academic work. This has been supported in a study by Short and Greer (1977) who found that workers in all organizations would like to be involved in making decisions that made impact on the quality of their working lives as well as those decisions essential to the success of the organization indicating that students should be treated as workers with some vested interests. In an earlier study by Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) heads of schools should involve students in the decision-making process to build up their interest which will in turn help to remove suspicion on the part of students and promote cordial relationships between them, teachers and the administration.

The next table analyses the fourth of the four items in this section.

Table 9: Students' Involvement Delays Implementation Of Decisions

Responses	Frequency	Percentage

Strongly agree	28	7
Agree	37	9
Undecided	40	10
Disagree	130	33
Strongly disagree	159	41
Total	**394**	**100**

Table 9 discusses the delay in implementation of decisions when students are involved. In all a total of 73% disagree while 16.5% agree that involving students would delay implementation of decisions. Owens (2001) iterates that it is becoming clear that healthy organizations characteristically find strength in opening up participation in decision-making and empowering relevant people at all levels of the organization to contribute to the quality of the decisions made. According to Makoe (2002) students' participation in school administration may be seen as a constitutional right. He further explains that the school organization could be likened to a tripod which cannot be functional without one stand. The tripod, he explained, to be the various groupings of human resources namely the academic support staff, non-teaching staff and students. Consequently each group has its own unique role to play for the school to achieve its goal. From the above studies it is clear that widening the base of decision-making will rather enhance decisions made though

nothing was said about this delaying the implementation of decisions made.

Section C   Areas of Decision-making would students like to be involved

This table analyses the first of the four items in this section.

Table 10: Students Would Like To Be Included In Planning New Projects For School

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	219	56
Agree	115	29
Undecided	29	7
Disagree	21	5
Strongly disagree	10	3
Total	**394**	**100**

In table 10.a total of 85% of the respondents agree that they should be included in

planning new projects for the school. This involvement is corroborated by Mankoe

(2001) whose study pointed out that students' participation in school administration

may be seen as a constitutional right. Consequently each group has its own unique

role to play for the school to achieve its goal. The results of the studies of Ettling and

Jago (1988) as well as Piper (1974) together confirm that involving others in the

processes of decision-making were the best as better outcomes are assured and in

addition the needed commitment for the execution of the particular issue. This will

augur well for the school if students are involved in planning any new project.

The next table analyses the second of the four items in this section.

Table 11: Students Would Like To Be Included In The Disciplinary Committee

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	191	48
Agree	132	34
Undecided	38	10
Disagree	25	6
Strongly disagree	8	2
Total	**394**	**100**

Analysis of students desire to be included in the disciplinary committee is in table 11

where 82% of them agree that they should be included in the membership of the

disciplinary committee in the school. Student demonstrations were investigated by

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) who found out that one main issue leading to these

demonstrations is the lack of social relationships. According to him, heads of

institutions need to involve students in the decision-making process to build up trust

which will help remove suspicion on the part of students and promote cordial

relationship between students and teachers and the administration. He further

buttresses the fact that if students are denied the opportunities for their

empowerment which seeks to release their potential then principals should be

prepared for a strike action.

The next table analyses the third of the four items in this section.

Table 12: Students Would Like To Be Included In Assigning Them For Practical Experience

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	229	58
Agree	106	27
Undecided	24	6
Disagree	25	6
Strongly disagree	10	3
Total	**394**	**100**

In table 12, a total of 85% of respondents agree to students' inclusion in assigning

them for practical experience (ward/fieldwork). This was confirmed by Sergiovanni

(1991) that highly successful shared governance principals know it is not power over

people and events that count but rather power over the achievements of

organizational purposes, that their subordinates need to be empowered to act and

given the necessary responsibility that releases their potential and makes their

actions and decisions count. By so doing the students will be able to fully participate

in those activities that go on in the field/ward and pass through the training as

competent as would be expected.

The next table analyses the fourth of the four items in this section.

Table 13: Students Would Like To Be Included In Planning School Menu

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	295	75
Agree	75	19
Undecided	6	2
Disagree	9	2
Strongly disagree	9	2
Total	**394**	**100**

Out of the total respondents 94% agree that they should be given opportunity to

plan the school menu each semester. This involvement is corroborated by Makoe

(2002) from whose study came out that students' participation in school

administration may be seen as a constitutional right. Consequently each group has its

own unique role to play for the school to achieve its goal. The results of the studies of

Ettling and Jago (1988) as well as Piper (1974) together confirm that involving others

in the processes of decision-making were the best as better outcomes are assured

and in addition the needed commitment for the execution of the particular issue.

Section D: Problems Students Encounter as They Strive to be Part of the

Decision-making Process

This table analyses the first of the four items in this section.

Table 14: Students Fear Being Victimized

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	316	80

Agree	64	16
Undecided	2	1
Disagree	7	2
Strongly disagree	5	1
Total	**394**	**100**

In table14 a total of 96% respondents agree to the fear of being victimized as one of the problems they may encounter as they strive to be part of the decision-making process. This fear is somehow an internal feeling which though may be right has not as yet been realized since there has not been any active involvement of students in decision-making in the schools under study yet. The expression of fear has however been contradicted by Owens (2001) who has observed that healthy organizations characteristically find strength in opening up participation in decision-making and empowering relevant people at all levels of the organization to contribute to the quality of the decisions made.

The next table analyses the second of the four items in this section.

Table 15: Students Fear Uncooperative Attitude Of The Principal

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	137	35
Agree	109	28
Undecided	71	18
Disagree	62	16
Strongly disagree	15	3
Total	**394**	**100**

In table 15 a total of 63% respondents agree to the uncooperative attitude of the

principal as a problem that students may encounter while striving to be part of the

decision-making process. If this were a real problem it could affect the extent to

which students would like to be involved. This fear has been contradicted by the

studies of Ettling and Jago (1988) and Piper (1974) which confirm that involving

others in the processes of decision-making were the best as better outcomes are

assured and in addition the needed commitment for the execution of the particular

issue. Sergiovanni (1991) also asserts that highly successful shared governance

principals know it is not power over people and events that count but rather power

over the achievements of organizational purposes, that their subordinates need to be

empowered to act and given the necessary responsibility that releases their potential

and makes their actions and decisions count. Given the opportunity the principals

should let the students feel part of the process of decision-making such that the fears

they are exercising would be dispelled.

The next table analyses the third of the four items in this section.

Table 16: In-effective SRC

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	159	41
Agree	79	20
Undecided	36	9
Disagree	76	19
Strongly disagree	44	11
Total	**394**	**100**

In table 16 ineffective SRC has been indicated as a problem that students may

encounter as they strive to be part of the decision-making process and 60% of them

agree. Much as students want to be involved in making decisions they have problem

with their representation in the SRC whom they probably do not see as "doing

anything" as far decisions of the schools reaching them is concerned. According to

Jenkins (1988) students who are empowered are able to initiate and carry out new

plans because they are allowed to be part of the decision-making process. They are

also able to take more responsibility for their learning and exhibit higher levels of

engagement in learning experiences.

The next table analyses the fourth of the four items in this section.

Table 17: Lack Of Student Representation On Some Committees

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	158	40
Agree	126	32
Undecided	39	10
Disagree	42	11
Strongly disagree	29	7
Total	**394**	**100**

In table 17, a total of 72% of the respondents agree that lack of student

representation on some committees is a problem they may face with respect to their

attempt to being part of decision-making in their schools. This opinion by the

students has been observed by Owens (2001) when he established that two sets of

issues have been dominant in influencing how decisions are made in the educational

organization namely the past and the rise of expectations of people at work; and the

universality of change as an urgent and overwhelming driving force in human affairs.

He further iterates that healthy organizations find strength in opening up

participation in decision-making

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study investigated the participation of students in decision-making in the

health training institutions in Accra. Several studies which have been conducted into

participation in decision-making including student participation in schools were

reviewed (Gorton, 1980; Owens, 2001; Makoe 2002). These confirm the views

generally held that students' participation in school decision-making provides good

atmosphere for effective teaching-learning; building of lasting relationships and

students' commitment to the school's programmes.

In Ghana it has been found that the majority of school heads do not involve

their subordinates and students in the decision-making process. These have often led

to many student agitations. This research work was subsequently done to assess

within some health   training institutions students' understanding of the concept of

decision-making, students' perception of their participation in decision-making, areas

of decision-making students would like to be involved, and, problems students

encounter as they strive to be part of the decision-making process.

The findings of the study revealed the state of current student participation in

decision-making within the health training institutions in Accra. This may be used to

assess the understanding of how students view student participation in

decision-making at the health training Institution level. This may then be used to

give direction to future policy making on how to maintain congenial atmosphere in

the schools. A broader study of all the health training institution the country would

have given more meaning to the research theme. Due to the limitation imposed by

finance this research was restricted to the schools in Accra.

The research sample was made up of 240 students from NTC, 118 from MTS,

and 36 from the PHNS giving a total of 394. The questionnaire used for this study

consisted of two parts. The first part dealt with the bio-data of the respondents. The

second part was further divided into four sections to examine certain aspects of

students' participation in decision-making as follows:

Section A: - Students understanding of the concept of decision-making

Section B: - Students perception of their participation in decision-making

Section C: - Areas of decision-making students would like to be involved

Section D: - Problems students encounter as they strive to be part of the

decision-making process

Altogether there were eight items on the questionnaire. The instruments were

administered by me directly to the respondents. There was a 100% return rate.

Being a survey research, qualitative and quantitative methods involving percentages

and frequencies in tables were utilized in the analysis of the data collected.

Respondents were requested to choose only one of the responses to each item.

Responses to the items were weighted on a five point Likert Scale.

Key findings

The key findings for this research are presented according to the research questions

formulated to guide the study.

Research question 1: Which groups of people should be involved in

decision-making in health training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

Respondents' understanding of the concept of decision-making include the following:

students must be actively included in taking decisions, decision-making could be

extended to teachers, it could also be reserved for the school management team,

and that it may not be seen as a special way of making decision by the principal.

Research question 2: - How do the students perceive their participation in decision-making in health training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

Respondents' perceptions of their participation in decision-making also include these observations that could be achieved when given opportunity to take part in the decision-making process. That it will allow students the opportunity to make decisions; to some extent it will promote students' commitment to decisions made; it will make students pay attention to academic work though this process may delay the implementation of decisions.

Research question 3: - How do the students like to be involved in decision-making in health training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

In the areas of decision-making students would like to be involved, their highest priority was in planning school menu for each semester. This is followed closely by the students expecting their inclusion in the disciplinary committee as well as planning new projects for the school and finally assigning students for practical experience (ward/field work).

Research question 4: - What problems do students encounter as they strive to be part of the decision-making process in health training institutions in Greater Accra Region?

For problems that students encounter as they strive to be part of the

decision-making process their most dreaded problem was the fear of being victimized;

they expressed non functioning of SRC as another problem; lack of student

representation on some committees as a problem; then the uncooperative attitude

of the principal as the least of the problems.

Conclusions

The following are the conclusions I made from the research conducted into students'

participation in decision-making in health training institutions in the Greater Accra

Region.

1. From the responses analyzed in relation to the group of people to be involved in

    decision-making it is clear that students expect decisions to be taken by a cross

    section of players in the training institutions namely teachers, management

    committee members, and themselves. To a greater extent they least expect the

    principal alone to be making decisions.

2. Their responses revealed that allowing them to participate in decision-making

    could let them "own" the decisions made. This would in turn reduce the likelihood

    of them becoming volatile. This may help to widen the base of decision-making

    and enhance the decisions made.

3. The four areas where students expect to be included when taking decisions are so

crucial in running the schools. Should this be done then according to Makoe (2002) their constitutional rights would have been respected and better outcomes would also be assured.

4. The anxieties expressed by respondents as they anticipate to become part of the decision-making process seems to be natural as this could enhance the quality of decisions taken by them if given the chance. This could make the environment a healthy one for all partners to give off their best.

5. It could further be concluded that "in participative decision-making all the organizational members have the right to be heard, have their views considered and express feelings, and offer knowledge and information. Therefore all the members have a right to be part of the process" (Owens, 2001, p.267). This has however not being the case since the uniqueness of individual respondents has brought to the fore that "no two individuals are the same".

6. Students' participation in decision-making is laudable as it would enable adequate climate to be set for academic work and also avoid student agitations to a large extent.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are being considered to guide the utilization of the results of this research. This has been considered in relation to the research

questions and the corresponding findings.

1. There is need for the principals of these training institutions to assess the current
   trend of students' participation in decision-making in their schools and make the
   effort to include them as part of the process. This is in relation to the findings
   from research questions one and two where the respondents think they should
   be actively involved as other stakeholders in the school as well as to promote
   their commitment to these decisions respectively.

2. The school prefects as well as the members of the SRC need to assess their roles
   and functions in relation to decision-making in these institutions. This will enable
   them to harness their capabilities to assist the principals in taking decisions for
   the schools when given the opportunity. This recommendation was made from
   the fact that responses from research question four revealed that some of the
   problems students encountered as they strived to be part of the decision-making
   process was their fear of victimization and non-functioning SRC. When this fear is
   dismissed and rather utilized positively it would yield good results.

3. Dwelling on the findings from research question four again this
   recommendation was made. Students fear being victimized by the principals if
   they take part in decision-making and they would only feel safe to do so if there
   are laid down policies in relation to this. Therefore the Ministry of health should

come out with directives which will allow students' opportunity to be involved in

decision-making at the institutional level. Principals should then make these

known to the relevant publics within their institutions to empower them to be

part of the decision-making process in the schools.

Suggestions for further research

In view of the findings made from the research the following suggestions have been

put across to help to establish how decisions are taken in all the health training

institutions across the country. This in turn could serve as a basis to set up policies or

rules to guide principals and their management teams to involve the relevant publics

appropriately.

1. Similar studies could be done in the remaining health training institutions in the

   country. This will enable a global view of the state of decision-making at these

   places and offer students that opportunity.

2. Another study could also be done to find out how tutors take part in the

   decision-making at their schools and whether this could have impact on involving

   students. This will help in establishing directives at the headquarters level to spell

   out the roles of each group of people.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
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ADMINISTRATION

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May 18, 2007

Our Ref. EP/141B/80

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LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter, Mrs. Netta Forson Ackon, is a graduate student of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the University of Cape Coast. She requires some information from your outfit for the purpose of writing a dissertation as a requirement of M.A degree programme.

I should be grateful if you would kindly allow her to collect the information from your outfit. Kindly give the necessary assistance that Mrs. Ackon requires to collect the information.

While anticipating your cooperation, I thank you for any help that you may be able to give.

Mrs. Janet Koomson
for Director

APPENDIX B

A: PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTION:

A research is being conducted into the participation of students in decision making in the health training institutions in Accra.

It would be appreciated if you could spare some time to respond to the items on this questionnaire.

Your confidentiality is fully assured; all information given will be treated as such and used only for research purposes.

Kindly return all completed questionnaire sealed in the envelope provided.

PART 1

A. BIODATA

Please respond to each of the questions in the items below by making a "tick" **[√]** in the space provided.

1. Sex   a. Male   [ ]

                        b. Female [ ]

2. Age   a   18-22 years   [ ]

                        b   23-27years   [ ]

                        c   28-32years   [ ]

                        d   33-37 years   [ ]

                        e   38-42 years   [ ]

                        f   Over 43 years   [ ]

3. Number of years spent in the school   a. One year   [ ]

b. Two years   [ ]

c.Three years   [ ]

4. Status / Role played in school   a. Prefect   [ ]

b. S.R.C. Member   [ ]

c. Ordinary Student [ ]

PART 2

INSTRUCTIONS

For each section please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by making

a "tick" [**√**] in the appropriate box using the scale below or fill in the information

where requested.

Scale: 5   -   Strongly agree

4   -   Agree

3   -   Undecided

2   -   Disagree

1   -   Strongly disagree

SECTION A

Students understanding of the concept of decision making

Choose ONE response ONLY for each item

Decision making concept	5	4	3	2	1
a. Decision taken by principal alone					
b. Decision taken by the school management team					
c. Decision extended to teachers					
d. Decision extended to students					

SEC

TION B

Students perception of their participation in decision making

Choose ONE response ONLY for each item

Perception of participation in decision making	5	4	3	2	1
a. Allow students opportunity to make decisions					
b. Promotes students commitment to decisions					
c. Makes students pay attention to academic work					
d. Delays the implementation of decisions					

SECTION C

Areas of decision making students would like to be involved

Choose ONE response ONLY for each item

Areas of decision making students want to be involved	5	4	3	2	1
a. Planning new projects for the school					
b. Inclusion in disciplinary committee					
c. Assigning students for practical experience (ward/field work)					
d. Planning school menu for each semester					

SECTION D

Problems students encounter as they strive to be part of the decision making process

Choose ONE response ONLY for each item

Problems students encounter as they strive to be part of the decision making process	5	4	3	2	1
a. Fear of being victimized					
b. Uncooperative attitude of principal					
c. Ineffective of S.R.C					
d. Lack of student representation on some committees					
e.					

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX C

Biographical Data of respondents

Gender of respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	37	9.4
Female	357	90.6
Total	**394**	**100**

Age of respondents

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 22	247	63
23 – 27	103	26
28 – 32	10	3
33 – 37	19	5
38 – 42	8	2
43+	7	1
Total	**394**	**100**

Number of years spent in school

Number of years spent in	Frequency	Percentage

school		
One year	155	39
Two years	157	40
Three years	82	21
Total	**394**	**100**

Status / Role played in school

Status/role	Frequency	Percentage
Prefect	22	5.6
SRC	23	5.8
Ordinary student	349	88.6
Total	**394**	**100**