

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ASSESSING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATION IN ANGLICAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, KUMASI

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BY

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Dissertation submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Education Degree in Educational Administration

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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.

Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Dominic Dewitts Darkoh

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Prof. Yaw A. Ankomah

ABSTRACT

The study was prompted by an observation that student leaders of Anglican High School, Kumasi, hardly performed their prefectorial duties as expected. A sample of 300 second and third year students was randomly selected. The views of the headmaster were also sought to affirm the responses of the students. Background information on 30 selected teachers was also obtained from official records while a questionnaire made up of 24 items was used to get responses from the students. Also, an interview guide was used to interview the headmaster.

There were major findings about the students' involvement and participation in decision-making at all levels. When students participate in school decision-making they become committed to the decisions made and that does not always bring about conflict between the students and the school authorities. On the other hand active involvement may adversely affect students. It adversely affects their academic work; it robs them of their time for private studies as well as normal classes, thus increases their work load. These findings did not differ by gender. On the basis of the findings, recommendations made for practice, include proper establishment of a system to get feedback through consultations, and the need for exchange of ideas such as open forum to be regularly organized for students.

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DEDICATION

To Ms. Beatrice Asare, my dear wife,
for her understanding and loving support.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The rapid expansion of enrolment in most schools in Ghana, coupled with inadequate resources to cope with ever-increasing demand for educational provision has made school management a much more complex and difficult enterprise in Ghana now than in few years ago. To ensure effective and efficient school management, the head must create an environment for participatory decision-making in the running of the school, for the success of every school depends on the way it is managed. In any educational institution, such as secondary school, the student can be described as a direct clientele of the school, and the pivot around which everything in the school revolves. Students therefore form an integral part of the human resource that the school head has to manage.

Ozigi (1977) says, the student is at the centre of the educational process and all activities in the school should aim at developing his total personality to the fullest. The school should provide opportunities for the students to develop responsible attitudes and to experience the type of moral training that will prepare them for the future life.

It could be inferred that one of the major problems that school administrators grapple with is how to create a conducive ambience for retaining students in the school, guarantee their welfare and thereby promote

smooth learning. The school head must therefore put in place a wide range of student personnel services such as effective classroom management, counseling, health services, security, co-curricular activities, recreation, student governance, student social services, student feeding, student accommodation and student discipline.

The need for the efficient management of schools has placed emphasis on quality of work of the head as the leader of a team of professional educators and as the manager of the supply and effective use of human resources. If teachers and students are given more opportunities to participate in the administration of the school, the greater it is likely to be their sense of commitment to school organisation.

It is commendable that students are given opportunity to participate in at least some of the decision-making processes of the school. Student participation is a step towards fostering responsible attitude among students and bringing about a greater sense of self-discipline within the student body, through the Student Representative Council (SRC) or the prefectorial system.

Most students of a school, desire opportunities to participate in the process of decision-making (Ntow, 1992). They believe that increased participation in decision making increases commitment to the rules and regulations of the school and acceptance of change (Owens, 1970). However, while some students would like greater participation, others may not want to be involved. It therefore becomes the responsibility of the school administrator to find out the capabilities and interests of the students and assign them their desired level of participation and under-participation may affect the tone of the school (Sergiovanni, 1991).

Student leaders complement the work of the staff in order to ensure a smooth running of the affairs of the school. The basic role of the school prefects is to act as general agents of social control in the school. Some of their duties include ensuring attendance of students to gatherings, seeing to the orderliness of students in the school, organizing tidiness of the school compound and seeing to the implementation of school's rules and regulations.

Prefects usually have their authority reinforced by some sort of formalization. Usually their names are listed on a notice board in the school Assembly Hall and often too, they could be distinguished by a difference in their uniform for example, a different colour of their uniform.

A lot of time and resources are spent in order to be able to select the best possible student leaders. Sometimes, the expectation attached to the selection of school prefects may not be realized if certain shortcomings are allowed to affect the prefectorial system of the school.

Do prefects who are democratically elected have some level of authority in the administration of the school? Students become insecure and apprehensive if they are not very familiar with the task given them. Unless they are adequately informed of the way things are done in the new system, they are likely to fumble as they go about their roles and responsibilities as student leaders.

The significant fall readily observed with the prefect system in the schools is that, some of the prefects do not seem to have a clear idea of what their duties are. Although some of them may perform their duties well, they perform on trial-and-error basis, and by the time basic corrections are made, much harm might have been done. Some prefects always depend on the

teachers for instructions and direction, and when the teachers are not there, things get out of head (Richardson, 1979).

If a new employee is not quite familiar with the task given him, he becomes insecure and apprehensive of many things. Unless he is adequately informed of the way things are done in the system, he would fumble. Also, a lot of time and sometimes money can be invested in the selection process and this investment can be dissipated and possibly lost if, through lack of orientation, the new personnel are not given the chance to contribute maximally to the work of the school.

Since a school is made up of people deliberately composed for the achievement of its specific purposes, there must be a hierarchy of officers and highly structured inter-personal relationships, with shared value orientations. This will enable the school, like any formal organisation, to make decisions in order to achieve its specific purposes.

Erving-Goffman, (cited by Burden, 1981) was of the view that educational institutions affect the lives of the students by their very nature of their organizational structure. A typical high school in Ghana today, like Anglican High School, Kumasi, has an organisation structure with the headmaster and his deputies at the apex, followed by the staff in the middle and the students at the base.

The senior house master together with the house staff directly ensure the implementation of the school rules and regulations by students, including seeing to it that sanitation in the school and personal hygiene are observed among other duties (Richardson, 1979). These duties are to be performed with the assistance of the school prefects. The school prefect is the chairman of the

student Council and the school prefects.

In Anglican Secondary School, Kumasi, the election of students as prefects depends largely on good character and good academic performance. This practice is pursued because a good leader must necessarily have a good character for the people he leads to emulate.

The mode of assessment and evaluation of persons for employment into an institution, profession or occupation require that applicants responds to items like honesty, reliability, ability to get along with others, leadership capabilities and so on. It is worth knowing therefore that in Anglican Secondary School, Kumasi, any aspiring prefect need to have a good character before he could be considered for election to lead the student body.

Prefects are not imposed on the student body. Rather, those who show interest in prefectship are given the chance to be elected through a secret ballot after the electoral board has screened the aspiring students taking cognizance of their academic performance and past behaviour, before they are recommended to stand for the post. So therefore in Anglican Secondary School, prefects are democratically elected by students themselves and not appointed by the school authorities.

Statement of the Problem

Student leadership in Anglican Secondary School, Kumasi, is considered as part of the decision-making process in the school. They are represented on almost all the committees in the school. The prefects, however, find it difficult to direct students to perform various activities in the school. For instance, cleaning around the compound must be done under the supervision of teachers if it must be done well and successfully.

To organize any meaningful clean-up exercise by the students without teachers' supervision is obviously going to fail. Students break school rules while prefects look on helplessly. School gathering can be successful only if it involves the staff. Meetings organised by the students themselves are usually very poorly attended. The above observation seems to imply that the prefects do not have a clear idea of what their duties are. Such a situation calls for a closer look through a research in order to be properly addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to assess the participation of the students in the administration of Anglican Senior High School in Kumasi. It is also intended to find out what levels are students involved in decision-making in the school and whether students are satisfied with the degree of their involvement in school decision-making. In addition, it is intended to explore other areas of decision-making that the students want to participate, whether students participation in school decision-making differ by gender and lastly, if the male and female students are equally satisfied with the degree of their involvement in school decision-making.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are students' perceptions of their involvement and participation in decision-making in Anglican Senior High School?
2. At what levels are students involved in decision-making in the school?

3. Are the students satisfied with the degree of their involvement in school decision making?
4. In what other areas of decision-making do the students want to participate?
5. Do the students' perceptions of their participation in school decision-making differ by gender?
6. Are male and female students equally satisfied with the degree of their involvement in school decision-making?

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the results of the study will equip educational administrators with some knowledge on issues that determine student participation in school administration. Again, it is hoped that the study will equip the Headmaster of Anglican Senior High School, Kumasi, with the knowledge of students' expectations regarding participation in decision-making in the school. It will also assist him to understand the dynamics of student participation in decision-making. The results of the study will also assist the Headmaster to adopt appropriate management leadership styles and techniques to effectively manage the student personnel services. The head will know the areas in which to motivate students to assist in the day-to-day running of the school. This will help create a healthy communication between students and staff. Finally the study will contribute to knowledge on students' participation in school decision making.

Delimitations of the Study

The study investigated perceptions or beliefs and facts about student participation in school level decision-making in Anglican Secondary School, Kumasi. The study involved only second and third year students of the school. First year students were not involved because they were new to the school and would not know the dynamics of the school properly.

The study mainly covers only the second and third year students of Anglican Senior High School in Kumasi. It would have been very beneficial to have carried out the study in a bigger area but this was not possible because of the time frame given for the completion of the study. Findings here apply to only the Anglican Senior High School selected for the study. However, other Senior High Schools in the Metropolis and other areas elsewhere with similar characteristics could adapt the findings to the solution of their own educational problems.

The researcher wanted to seek the views of the students and student leaders who completed their schooling for the past two years. However, getting them at their different locations was a major problem. So their very good views were not captured to be added to the research findings to make them more broad based and richer.

Limitations of the Study

Some limitations could not be avoided, despite the efforts put in by the researcher. For instance, the study covered only school prefects and a few sampled students. It is however, likely that other interesting findings could have been made if the entire students has been involved. Prefectorial system is

not static. It is possible that the prefects of the subsequent year may be different from the 2005/2006 prefects observed by the researcher.

Organisation of the rest of the Study

The organisation of the study is done in five chapters. Chapter one is made up of the following: background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study and organisation of the study.

Chapter two deals with the review of literature; documents both published and unpublished such as books, newspapers and journals that had useful information on the topic were reviewed.

Chapter three consists of the methodology used for the study. Contents of this chapter include: research design, population of the study, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, pre-testing of instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure.

Chapter four highlights exclusively on results and discussion.

Chapter five comprises: overview of the study, summary of the main findings, conclusions drawn after the analysis and discussion of the study. Finally, the chapter includes recommendations for practice and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review looks at the observations made by other writers and researchers of related studies. The literature review concentrates on the following areas:

1. What is an organisation?
2. The School as an organisation
3. The Administrative structure of the school
4. Teacher participation in school administration
5. Student participation in decision-making
6. The Prefect system
7. Concept of discipline
8. The Nature and causes of indiscipline in Senior High School

These broad areas have been grouped into two major headings. These are: Conceptual/Theoretical Review and Empirical Review.

Conceptual/Theoretical Review

The Conceptual/Theoretical Review looks at these: What is an organisation, student participation in school Decision-Making, prefectorial system and concept of discipline.

Empirical Review

On the other hand, the empirical review covers these: The school as an organisation, teachers' participation in school administration, administrative structure of the school and lastly, the nature and causes of indiscipline in Senior High Schools.

What is an Organisation?

According to Atta, Agyenim-Boateng and Baafi-Frimpong (1998), Organisation can be classified as formal or informal. To them a formal organisation is constructed to seek specific goals and the relationships are defined by specific and formally stated sets of rules and regulations, while an informal organisation is loosely organised, ill-defined, and usually grows spontaneously, with members interacting in a more personal way.

Atta et al (1998) said formal organisation is a social group that has been deliberately tasked to seek certain specified objectives; an institution established to achieve a goal; a mechanism or basic framework enabling persons to work effectively to achieve the set goals through integrated group effort. They believe that there exists in any formal organisation an informal one. Walters (1951), talks about informal organisation as the interpersonal relationship in the organisation that affects decision within it, but is either omitted from the formal scheme or is not consistent with it.

The School as an Organisation

Atta et al (1998) noted that the school is a formal organisation. It is a system of consciously constructed activities or forces of two or more persons. Bernard (1964) says the school realizes its objectives through a complex

system involving policies and programmes, teachers, administrators, students and supporting staff. The school is purposely established to achieve certain goals.

Bernard (1964) explained further that just like all other formal organizations, one other characteristic of the school is that relationships between members are defined by specific and formally stated set of rules and regulations. Among the rules are the conducts for teachers and students, which show the expected behaviour of members as prescribed by the organisation for it to achieve its set goals.

There is an organizational structure that refers to the way in which the activities of the organizations are divided, organised and co-ordinated. This provides stability and aids to organize members to work together to achieve goals.

The school has a formal authority structure with clearly drawn lines of communication and responsibility. Thus, the school organisation indicates the ordering of hierarchical relationship between subordinates and superordinates.

School structure has been identified by Atta et al (1998) as shown in Fig 1.

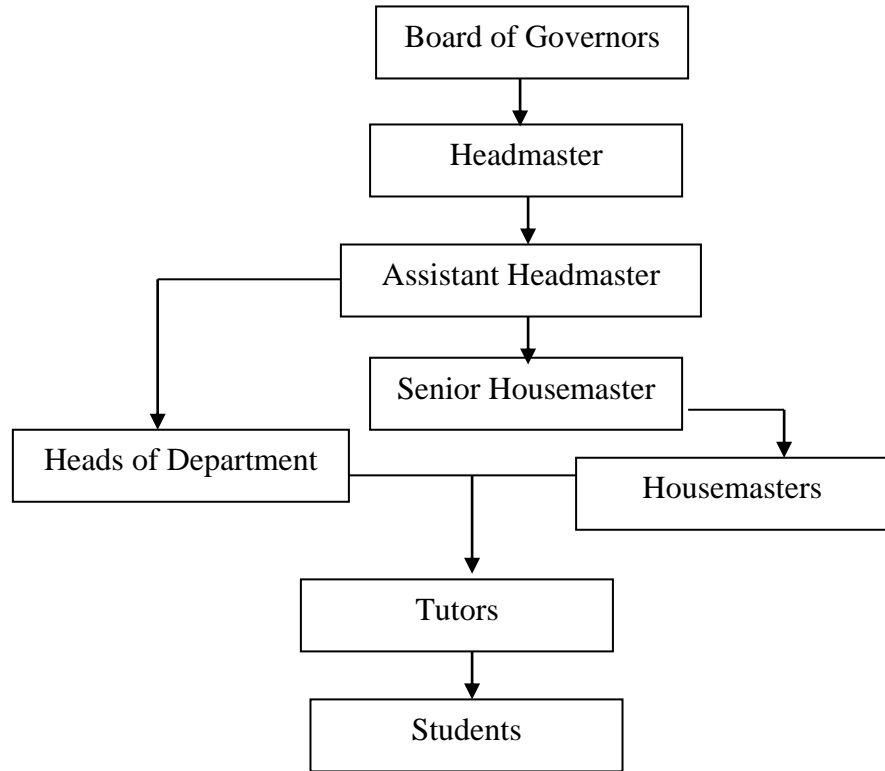


Fig. 1: School Organisational Structure

Administrative Structure of the School

According to the *Headteachers' Handbook* (1994), the headmaster in any school is the most important figure since he is largely responsible for directing the school towards the goals that are assigned him or that he chooses for the school. The role of the headmaster therefore becomes a focal point in any analysis of a school.

The headmaster, according to the book, therefore performs the following tasks:

1. Managing the school: This involves delegating duties, maintaining discipline, holding staff meetings, communicating effectively and maintaining good interpersonal relationships.

2. **Managing Instructional Time:** This includes orientations, planning the school time-table, managing instructional time, inspecting students' work and appraising teachers' performance.
3. **Managing Learning Resources:** The Headmaster's administrative task includes monitoring school buildings and equipments. Finding solutions to problems that may crop up in the school, maintaining furniture and employing qualified personnel to ensure good tuition.
4. **Managing co-curricula activities,** scheduling these activities and supervising them. He also organizes open day programmes and sees to giving the best health facilities to the school by ensuring that the school observes good sanitation habits and by incorporating health teaching and activities in the school and community.
5. **Managing Financial Matters:** This concerns preparing school budgets and keeping proper financial records; being accountable and managing school funds.
6. **His other tasks include the following:** Increasing school intake and attendance, preventing drop-out and absenteeism, assessing teachers and students' performance and also improving relationship between school and community.

The Headteachers' Handbook summarizes the head's tasks by saying that, in the school the headmaster possesses authority and status. These authorise him to direct the affairs of the school so as to achieve the

expectations of the public. If he is able to direct the school successfully, he wins personal influence and prestige.

In his administrative capacity, he delegates some of his authority to the Assistant Headmaster, Heads of Department, House Staff who also delegate some of the authority to the prefectorial board. Thus, the Headteachers' Handbook implies that there is some participation in the school administration by teachers and students alike.

Teachers' Participation in School Administration

Participation in the management of organisation is a broad concept described in so many ways in different societies. It ranges from workers Representation on Boards of Directors, Supervisory Boards, Work Councils and Consultative Committees.

Quist (1971) said that workers' participation in Germany is known as "Mitbestimmung". It is called "Self Government" in Yugoslavia. The people of the United States of America call it "Co-Management". While in Britain it is called "Industrial Democracy", and that workers involvement in the organizational set-up helps management solve complex problems which confront them in the day-to-day running of organisations.

Arnold (1966) who researched into the extent to which school principal use participatory management also found out that, a majority of principals used collective or joint participation or gave teachers complete autonomy in making the decisions. Eric (1986) says that the teacher is an executor of policy decided from above and that staff participation until recently was a controversial issue. Some researchers, however, believe that teachers'

involvement in the affairs of the school at the school level is necessary for effective management.

Increasing workers participation in the decision-making process has been identified as the best means of improving the quality of decision-making even though in the education sector, the involvement of teachers in issues such as formulation of national educational policies is negligible. A study conducted by Merit (1987) to examine the difference in perceptions of parents, teachers and students on shared governance also found out that, there were no significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and students on shared governance.

Student Participation in School Decision-Making

Generally, student government grows out of a sincere desire for responsibility Amuzu-Kpeglo (1991). This responsibility, he Amuzu-Kpeglo (1991) said, should be transferred to the students gradually and only offer careful advance preparation. He adds further that, the most successful student organizations have been allotted responsibility gradually and in proportion to their demonstrated ability to discharge it satisfactorily.

Still regarding students role in decision-making Hicks and Gullet, (1975) (cited in Musaazi, 1982) remark that before every change of programme the student should be consulted. The comments of the students should be listened to, and discussed sometimes their objections might negate a suggestion. With this, the group unquestionably develops a sense of participation.

For effective school administration, Ozigi (1977) recommends that school administrators must encourage students to play a meaningful role in the

administration of the school by delegating duties and responsibilities to them, and supervising them to perform well. He identified the prefectorial system, the school committee system, and the Student Representative Council (SRC) as the most effective ways of involving students directly in the administration of the school.

Through these systems, students are delegated certain duties connected with the day-to-day life of the school. These duties include the organisation and coordination of all sorts of co-curricula activities, such as games, societies, clubs or dealing with minor cases of indiscipline, taking responsibility for students' welfare, supervision of learning after school hours and checking of attendance.

Anderson and Van Dyke (1963) writing on 'Student participation in Government' list student participation in school administration as one of the areas of school activity essential to a balanced extra-class programmes. They discussed the various councils that exist in most American schools and the students' participation in the school government.

These were their conclusions:

1. A council composed entirely of elected representatives but with one or more faculty advisers.
2. A council that include both student and faculty representatives with the principal usually being an ex-officio member.

To Anderson and Van Dyke (1963), a number of members should not be too large to become unwieldy so as to permit useful and effective discussions and action. Ultimately, they suggested that students must be given the opportunity to manage some of their own affairs.

School Assemblies and class organisation are discussed in another treatment of school government in the Secondary School by Ovard and Olen (1969). They discussed the qualifications of the members of the School Council and the role of the Principal in the work of the Council. They are of the view that, many of the problems of discipline and control would be brought under total control, while many projects for the overall improvement of the school could be launched and carried out successfully, if the Principal work closely with the members of the School Council.

The most successful pupil-organisations have been allotted responsibility gradually and in proportion to their demonstrated ability to discharge it satisfactorily. Added responsibility comes with the desire of the pupils to widen their scope of self-direction and granted only as a tentative arrangement subject to re-adjustment in case results do not justify a continuance of the arrangement (Conway, 1984).

Elicker (1964) has noted that the student council is recognized as an entity that has great potentialities for the smooth and effective operation of the school. It is student-centred and it functions as a student participating organisation in the orderly administration of the school. He went on to emphasize the need for the principal of the school and a qualified sponsor to see that the student council has a workable constitution and enough boards or committees to carry on the student activity programme in a democratic manner.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) in more familiar African terrain discusses such common areas of student participation as the school assembly class organisation and the student council. Student participation is one of the most

difficult and controversial points in the maintenance of discipline at the secondary school and University levels, he observed. Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) further opinionated that, teachers should adopt new attitudes towards student participation in school administration based on the need for the development of civic competence; the need for intellectual development and the need for seeing the school as a community centre.

Asare Bediako (1990) states that students grow and learn more from activities in which they are involved in planning and carrying out. Student participation in the development and control of the life of the school is the most effective means of realizing the desirable discipline in the school. To keep faith and recognize the above statement, Adesina (1990) says that student participation makes the youth learn to exercise their sense of critical judgement, because they learn to speak with the authority of knowledge as they become involved in inquiring and pointing out mistakes and errors. He goes further to say that by the same token, students can be aware of their false beliefs and inaccurate observations and thus remedy them. Perhaps, to him, best of all, students are able to see criticism and disagreement with the school authority as moves for dialogue and not as causes for damaging state property which a country's poor economy may not find easy to replace.

Student participation may assist students to clearly identify negative aspects of democracy and learn to develop positive insight in handling items, believes Adesina. He goes further that as the student goes through the school, they see in the school a pattern of guidance. That is to say that, the school is not only a place where formal teaching and learning go on but it is also a unit of governance and economic entity, a congress of social relationships.

Fostering responsible attitude among students will bring about greater sense of self-discipline in the student-body. So therefore, their participation represents great promise in a society with strong aspirations of democracy. It is in this spirit that a number of concrete measures are suggested with a view to promoting self-direction and self-discipline among secondary school students. Among other suggestions made is the official encouragement of school clubs and societies and communities to provide opportunities for leadership among students and create an outlet for utilizing their energy.

(Oduro, 1999) says it has been established that students are a strong force in the process of shaping educational policies and achieving the school goals. He adds that in Ghana students' unions that are generally recognized in the school system in terms of supporting school administration are the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the prefectorial systems.

Prefectorial System

Adesina (1990) defines student movement as 'association of students inspired by aims set forth in a specified ideological doctrine usually although not exclusively political in nature.' Student movement therefore pursues ideologies that have political undertones but not strictly based on partisan interest.

King (1973) defines prefects as pupils who have formal authority over pupils. The most important criterion for prefects' eligibility was age. The selection group usually was the oldest age group in the school. However, in some schools students of the second or the last but one year group are made prefects other than the third year group to allow the latter who had been prefects to concentrate on examination preparations. In some schools it is the

head who selects the prefects or with the teaching staff. In some schools too the outgoing or the existing prefects are directly involve in the selection of school prefects. The size and population of the school may determine the number of prefects to be chosen.

King (1973) says and affirms that the basic duty of the prefects is to act as a general agent of social control in the school. They act as guides to visitors, stewards to school functions, supervise other pupils on their way to assembly and their entry into assembly. King (1973) goes on to say that the more able the pupils in a school are the more duties the prefects perform.

In Ghana, it is the Student Representative Council (SRC) that is generally recognized in the school system in terms of supporting school administration in the secondary schools, training colleges and tertiary institutions. All student movements operate under the auspices of the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS).

Concept of Discipline

Punishment and the execution of control over subordinates are the general students' conception of discipline. The Chambers Twentieth Century (2001) and the Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (2003) define discipline to cover the following:

1. Orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behaviour
2. Punishment
3. Control gained by enforcing obedience or order
4. The state of order and control that results from subjection to rule and authority e.g. prisoners

5. Systematic training in obedience to rules and authority as in Armed Forces or Police
6. Training or mode of life in accordance with rules e.g. taboos or traditional rules
7. The state or condition of orderly conduct resulting from training of priesthood.

Jones et al (1962) have indicated that discipline may be positive if it means helping an individual to attain something worthwhile and negative if it means punishment. Discipline in the school situation should relate to the extent to which an individual student can control his impulses, define and pursue goals spontaneously.

Nature and Causes of Indiscipline in Senior High Schools

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) researched into the nature and major causes of disciplinary measures put in place in Senior High Schools in Cape Coast Municipality. He used pre-tested questionnaires to sample the views of selected students and teachers. On the nature of indiscipline, he found three main forms of behaviour. These were behaviours that:

1. disrupted classroom work,
2. were defined as aggressive and
3. were seen as an affront to teachers.

The causes of the indiscipline were found to be:

1. students' peer influence
2. teachers' misbehaviour such as coming to class late or drunk, not caring about students' problems and showing favouritism
3. administrative lapses such as not handling students problems in

time, and congestion in classrooms and dormitories due to over-enrolment and over-subscription.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) stressed on the administrative lapses as the major cause of indiscipline in Senior High Schools. He concluded that there is the need for the establishment of a democratic system of administration in the decision-making process at the various levels of the students' education.

Summary of Review

The gradual acceptance of democratic practices in Ghana, is to some extent, having an impact on the decision-making process in high schools.

Discontent and demand by students to be involved in the administration of schools have made old authoritarian method of administration ineffective and prone to violent confrontations. The need, therefore, for students to be involved in administration of schools has become a crucial issue that requires consideration.

The issue of student participation in administration raises questions regarding the areas and what levels at which students should be involved. The rationale behind the involvement of students in administration is that, the students are the ultimate beneficiaries of the decisions and if their views are not sought, and if they do not understand the decisions, they may rebel. They would not co-operate with the staff and consequently the management of the school would not be smooth.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The study investigated students' views and ideas on the concept of participation in school decision making. The chapter describes the methodology used for the study. It includes the following:

1. The Research Design
2. Population of the Study
3. Sample and Sampling Procedure
4. Research Instruments
5. Data Collection Procedure
6. Data analysis

Research Design

The design that was used for this study was the descriptive survey design. The descriptive research is concerned with the conditions or relationships that exist such as determining the nature of prevailing conditions, practices and attitudes; opinions that are held, processes that are going on or trends that are developed (Cresswell, 1994).

This design was considered appropriate for the study because the main thrust of the study concerned finding out of the affairs concerning how students are involved in decision making in the administration of Anglican Senior High School in Kumasi. The assessment of the situation was done through serving of questionnaire and conducting of interviews among the

respondents. The design was considered appropriate because facts on the ground could be discovered and conditions that exist at a particular point in time could be seen and commented upon.

The advantage of this design is that it helps to find views as they are in their natural setting. Some of the problems associated with this design include: statement of questions by the researcher as in questionnaire administration which may not be understood by the respondents and which would let them give wrong answers. Another problem is the tendency for respondents to state anything which is convenient to them. Such anticipated problems were overcome by adopting measures such as pre-testing of the instrument to help identify questions that might not be well understood by the respondents and reworded them.

Population of the Study

The study was limited to Anglican Senior High School, Kumasi. Anglican Senior High School is directly opposite Kumasi Polytechnic to the south and with the Ghana National Association of Teachers Hostel to the east. The school is centrally located within Amakom and Fante New Town, two suburbs of Kumasi. The school has a population of over 2017 students and with 105 teaching Staff and a number of classified workers. Teaching is organized in 40 classrooms. It is a co-educational institution.

Like any senior secondary school, it offers a three-year secondary education that leads to award of Senior Secondary School Certificate by the West African Examination Council. The school offers Agriculture, Business, Science, Vocation and General Arts. Many students have helped and are helping the school to move forward. When it comes to national competitions

like National Science and Mathematics Quizzes, Valco Games, the school excels.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The total number of students used for the study was 301 as the headmaster was also sampled.

Thirty students made up of twenty males and ten females were selected from each of the five classes for form twos and same for form threes. All the students for the five programmes done in the school were equally represented. Selection of the second and third year students was done on the assumption that a student needs to stay for at least a year in a school to be able to make a meaningful and real assessment of the decision-making structure of the school and student participation in it.

Quota and simple random sampling methods were adopted in the selection of the students. The sampling was made easy by the classification system in the school. Students are grouped by their academic programme or course of study and also by gender. For each programme, the researcher wrote “yes” ten times for girls and “no” on the rest of the pieces of papers, folded them, put them in a container and mixed them up. The researcher invited the girls for the General Arts Programme in form two to select one of the papers and those who selected the ten papers labeled as “yes” were included in the study. The same was done for the boys in the General Arts Programme by increasing the number of papers with “yes” written on it to 20 in the same class to help the researcher get the twenty boys needed for the study from that class.

These two sampling methods were appropriate because it enabled students from all the academic courses or programmes to be well represented in the sample. Also, all male and female students were fairly represented in the sample.

The headmaster was purposively sampled though the study was basically on students. This was done on the premise that he might provide additional views to affirm the views of the students.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire for Students

A self-designed questionnaire consisting of open-ended and close-ended items was used to collect data from the student respondents. This is a quick way of collecting data. It is also reliable and valid if it is well constructed.

The questionnaire had two parts. The first part asked the respondents to provide data such as age, sex, class, course of study, previous position held and present position if any. Items on the school decision-making process that had three main parts labeled A, B, C constituted the second part of the questionnaire.

The inclusion of open-ended and close-ended items on the questionnaires was to help the respondents to freely express their opinions on decision making, student participation and the prefectorial system at Anglican Senior High School, Kumasi. The responses to the close-ended items were measured on a six-point Likert-type scale as follows.

1. Totally disagree
2. Strongly disagree

3. Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree
6. Totally agree

The six point likert scale was appropriate because it helped the respondents to select one of the alternatives provided based on how one feels about the issue at stake – students’ participation in school administration.

Items in section A investigated the perceptions that students have of their own participation in school decision-making. Section B was designed to explore the structure, channels of decision-making in the school. Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of students Representative Council meetings, issues discussed, existing channels for them to communicate their views on school related matters. It also asked respondents to indicate their involvement and maintenance of discipline in the school especially in the dormitories. The third section C sought for the head master’s leadership style and indicates their satisfaction or otherwise with their involvement in school decision-making.

Interview Guide for the Headmaster

There was not much difference between the questionnaire of the students and that of the headmaster. It had two parts. The first part was on personal particulars such as age, rank, and length of service as head of present school.

Part two of the interview guide was made up of three sections A, B, C, as the questionnaire of the students. However, the questions were made up of open-ended and close-ended types to be answered by the headmaster. Section

A explored the head's perceptions of students' participation in the school participation in school decision-making.

Section B was designed to solicit information from the headmaster on existing channels of communication for students' levels of actual students' participation in school decision-making and committees operating in the school with student participation or representatives on them.

Section C was structured to get the head's views on additional areas in which the students wish to be involved in the administration of the school.

Pre-Testing of Instruments

To help test the validity and reliability of the instruments used in the study, a pre-testing of the instruments was done using respondents from T.I. Ahimadyya Senior High School made up of 30 prefects and students. The researcher randomly selected these 30 respondents from T.I. Ahimadyya Senior High School. This school was chosen because it possessed similar features as the Anglican Senior High School selected for the study.

The pre-testing of the instruments helped to improve the instruments by adding or deleting some questions. For example, after the pre-testing of the instrument, the researcher saw it worthwhile to add a new question to find out from the respondents in what other areas of decision-making do the students want to participate? Also, after the pre-testing of the instruments, the researcher saw it worthwhile to delete a particular question on the students' questionnaire which sought to find out names of the teachers and administrators who made their administration as student leaders difficult and easy. A lot of students were afraid to answer this question for fear of

punishment or victimization. The researcher's supervisor also looked at it and gave his final approval before the questionnaire was used for data gathering.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were administered personally to the students by the researcher. To ensure maximum return of the copies of the questionnaire, the selected students were put in the school classrooms monitored by their class prefects. The purpose of the research was explained to the respondents. This was to ensure that the respondents actually understood the items and thus be able to provide most appropriate responses in their view.

The researcher also assured students of the confidentiality of the information being collected. The selected students were made to answer the questions and returned the completed questionnaire to their class prefects. The questionnaires were collected from the class prefects the same day. The researcher was able to get the responses of all the selected students. This was mainly due to the fact that the researcher was a member of the staff of the school and was able to follow of the students promptly.

The researcher also met the headmaster in his office for an interview at a scheduled time pre-arranged with him. The researcher explained his purpose and the importance of the study to the headmaster after which he engaged the Head in the interview process. The headmaster's responses were meant to balance the views expressed by the students.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data obtained from respondents were put together for analysis. Considering the open-ended questions, the various responses from different

respondents on the same item were categorized into similar themes for analysis. The statistical methods for analysing the data were the use of frequency and percentages. The results of the analysis were then presented in tables for easy description and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation and discussion of the results of the data analysis are addressed in this chapter. It gives a total description of how the data have been presented in tables, using frequencies and percentages. The presentation in this chapter is organised in two parts:

1. Background data of respondents.
2. Results and discussion on student participation in school decision-making.

Background Data of Respondents

The profile of the headmaster comprising such aspects as age and rank in the Ghana Education Service and experience in school administration was collected. A summary of the background information on the headmaster of the school is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Headmaster

ITEM	RESPONSE
1. Age	53
2. Sex	Male
3. Rank	Assistant Director
4. Number of years at post	4
5. Previous experience in school administration	
(a) House Master	5 years
(b) Head of Department	6 years
(c) Senior Housemaster	3 years
(d) Assistant Headmaster	6 years
(e) Headmaster	4 years

The data on headmaster as shown in Table 1 indicate that he is an experienced administrator. He has been actively involved in school administration for about 28 years. As gathered from the interview, he started his teaching career after completing University of Cape Coast in 1974.

He has diligently risen through the ranks from Superintendent to Assistant Director. It is expected that the headmaster's knowledge and experience of the culture of the school would affect his present administrative style.

Students' Perception on Involvement in School Decision-Making

Research Question One: What are students' perceptions on their participation in school decision-making in Anglican Senior High School?

The question was designed to seek information from the students on the perceptions they have regarding their participation and involvement in decision-making in the school. It was to establish whether the students and the headmaster recognised the importance of students' involvement and participation in decision-making in the administration of the school. This is because the kind of ideas that the headmaster has, regarding students' involvement and participation in decision-making would determine whether or not he would encourage and create opportunities for them to participate effectively in the school's decision-making process. Also, the kind of perceptions that students have will affect their willingness and active participation (Bittle, 1985).

Six statements were made to provide answers to the first research question. There were three positive and three negative statements which reflect various understandings of students' involvement and participation in the administration of the school.

From a six-point scale of responses ranging from: totally agree, strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree to totally disagree, the respondents were required to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statements.

Table 2: Students' View on Decision-making

ITEMS	Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1. Students must be consulted during decision making on issues affecting them	Male	124	62	76	38	200	100
	Female	70	70	30	30	100	100
2. Students' views must always be taken when they participate in school decision-making	Male	56	28	144	72	200	100
	Female	32	32	68	68	100	100
3. Students become committed when they participate in school decision-making	Male	186	93	14	7	200	100
	Female	80	80	20	20	100	100
4. Actions of school authorities are delayed when students participate in school decision-making	Male	84	42	116	58	200	100
	Female	38	38	62	62	100	100
5. Participation of students in school decision-making brings conflict between students and school authorities	Male	22	11	178	89	200	100
	Female	20	20	80	80	100	100
6. Student Representative Council (SRC) is an important organisation for decision-making in a school	Male	192	96	8	4	200	100
	Female	82	82	18	18	100	100

The notion that when students participate in school decision-making, they must be consulted was examined. Sixty-two percent 62% of the male students and 70% of the female students expressed their agreement with the statement when the responses were analysed. This means that the students have a strong perception of consultation as a means by which they can participate in school decision-making.

The headmaster's view also corroborated with the views of the students. His response indicated a positive stand for student participation in school decision-making.

When the above issue was put up, students expressed varying degree of agreement and disagreement with the statement. The analysis of their responses indicated that about 72% of the male and 68% of the female students disagreed that students' views must always be taken when they participate in school decision-making.

The headmaster had a similar perception. He indicated that it is not all the time that students' views are to be taken. The school accepts what will be useful to both the school and the students. Thus, students' views must be balanced. Constructive and the general interest of the school come before they are accepted.

Ninety-three percent 93% of the male and 80% of the female students' responses showed that students become committed to decisions made when they are involved. Only seven percent of the male and 20% of the female students expressed disagreement.

The analysis portrayed that when students participate in school decision-making they become committed. They feel the decisions are their

own but not an enforced ones, so they try to make them work. The headmaster expressed his agreement with this perception.

There were varying degrees of agreement and disagreement from the responses of the students. The analysis showed 58% of the male and 62% of the female students disagreed with the perception. Actions needed to be taken promptly would not be delayed because of the involvement of students in decision-making.

Forty-two percent (42%) of the male and 38% of the female students felt that actions would be delayed because a good number of the students would not be inclined to participate in that decision. The headmaster also disagreed with the perception, for it was not always that actions are delayed when students participate in decision-making in the school. School authorities make efforts to take reliable decisions that would help both the school and the students. This takes considerable amount of time. Therefore delays are not always necessarily due to student participation.

Anderson (1961) observed that group decision-making is likely to be slower than individuals at solving problems. This is because time is required to organize and co-ordinate group members for decision-making. It is expected from the foregoing that headmasters would effectively support the students to actively participate in school decision-making process.

The responses analysed indicated that about 11% of the male and 20% of the female students agreed with the notion. They perceived that students' participation decision-making leads to conflict between students and school authorities. The headmaster and the majority of the students thought otherwise. The majority of eighty-nine percent of the male and 80% of the

female students did not perceive conflict coming about out of student participation in decision-making.

The headmaster stated that responsible prefects would always reason out with school authorities. The students having a perception that they are involved in the administration and decision-making of the school would always work cordially with school authorities to avert conflicts.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) was loudly accepted as an important organ for decision-making in a school. Ninety-six percent of the male and 82% of the female students expressed agreement with the notion.

It is expected that the students having shown a strong and positive perception of the SRC would show much interest in the activities of the Student Representative Council and make it function effectively.

It is also expected that the headmaster would encourage the operation of a dynamic and efficient Student Representative Council in the school, as he took a positive stand on the perception.

Answers were provided to the first research question through the data analysed on students' involvement and participation in decision-making. The answers indicated that the students have ideas of their participation in the school decision-making in the administration of the school. They also recognized the importance of student participation in decision-making in the school.

The answer to the first research question is that most of the students perceive student participation in school decision-making as:

1. Authorities are required to consult students on issues that affect them.

2. Students must accept and enhance greater commitment to decisions taken.

It was also found that, student participation in decision-making is not:

1. Always bringing about conflict between students and school authority. This was the perception of majority of the respondents.
2. Accepting the views of students always by school authorities.
3. Delaying the execution of administrative actions most of the time.

Levels at which students are involved in decision making

Research Question Two: At what levels are students involved in decision-making in the school?

To find out the areas where the students are actually involved in the decision-making in the school, questions were designed to describe the methods or procedures and the hierarchy adopted by the school for making decisions.

The responses to be analysed were grouped into three parts. They are:

1. 'Yes' or 'No'
2. Open-ended questions
3. Optional questions

The method adopted to analyse the data was to tabulate the 'Yes' or 'No' responses and group the other responses on the basis of similarity to ascertain their frequencies of occurrence.

The fifth research question was organised under four sub-headings.

1. Student Representative Council (S.R.C.)

2. Disciplinary Committee
3. Meetings with students
4. Other school committees

It is agreed that the Student Representative Council is one of the many channels that students get themselves involved in the decision-making and administration of a school.

Under the SRC subheading, the researcher sought to find the following:

1. Whether there was a Student Representative Council in the School
2. The composition of the council
3. The frequency of their meetings
4. The issues that are discussed at their meetings
5. The made of transmission of their decisions to the headmaster

Table 3: There are issues that school authorities refer to the SRC to deal with

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	34	17	166	83	200	100
Female	25	25	75	75	100	100

The researcher asked the respondents if there were issues in their opinion that the school authorities should have referred to the SRC or a particular student prefect to deal with but were not. Eighty-three percent of the male and 75% of the female students indicated that there were not such cases. Seventeen percent of the male and 25% of the female students however

indicated “Yes” to mean that there were such cases. To explore the response further, the respondents were asked to list the issues concerned. Those who said ‘Yes’, indicated the following that:

1. Junior students misbehaving in the dormitory
2. Junior students refusing to perform duties either on the compound or in the dormitory
3. Junior students’ misbehaving towards a prefect or total gross Insubordination
4. Students refusing to attend evening classes
5. Students late at dining or school assemblies and functions.

The 83% “No” response is an indication that generally there are no issues that were to be referred to the S.R.C but were not.

Table 4: Other areas/ways in which students want to participate in school administration apart from SRC and School Committees

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	90	45	110	55	200	100
Female	40	40	60	60	100	100

Apart from the S.R.C. and the school committees the researcher wanted to know the other additional areas or ways in which students want to participate in school administration. To this 45% of the male and 40% of the female students gave responses such as involving majority of the students in the activities of the SRC, formation of sub-committees at the house level, being allowed to give instant punishment to offending students and helping to promote and instill discipline.

The responses of 55% of the males and 60% of the female students did not identify any new or additional ways of participating in decision-making. This suggests that there are no entirely new ways of participation in the decision-making process. Improvement could be made where students are not satisfied, though, for example, the student leaders are aware of their authority to help maintain discipline in the school within the limits of the school rules and regulations at the class and house levels.

The idea of sub-committees at the house level needs careful handling. It is either giving too much or fewer power and responsibility to students which if not properly supervised, could lead to mayhem in the school. If properly handled, it will let the house captains or prefects to promptly handle problems without much reference to the staff. Ozigi (1977) has this to say 'students' participation in the life of the school contributes greatly to the efficient and orderly operation of the institution, it will improve communication, lead to better understanding and co-operation and help to resolve many personal and social problems which can be disruptive. Apart from this, it is time consuming and tiring for the headmaster and his staff to perform certain duties concerned with students' welfare when such duties can be more efficiently performed by the students themselves. This is because the headmaster and his staff have too much to do to be able to attend to certain details of non-academic duties.

Students' Satisfaction with Degree of Involvement in School Decision-Making

Research Question Three: Are the students satisfied with the degree of their involvement in school decision-making?

The researcher wanted to find out if students were satisfied with their involvement in the decision-making and administration of the school.

The respondents were first asked if in their opinion they were satisfied in their involvement of decision-making in the school. To this, about 72% indicated 'Yes'. Going further, the respondents were asked of their degree of satisfaction. The majority, 70% expressed dissatisfaction. These responses meant that although majority believed that they were involved in the decision-making and administration of the school, they were not satisfied of their degree of involvement.

Respondents expressed involvement of decision-making and administration of the school because of the existence of the Student Representative Council (SRC) and their involvement in school committees on which some of the student serve. Students channel their grievances, views and suggestions to the headmaster through these organs. Class meetings and House meetings serve as channels for communicating decisions to the headmaster. With all these avenues of channel of communication coupled with the democratic leadership style of the headmaster, majority of the students appear not satisfied.

Factors, in part with students non-satisfaction with their extent of their involvement could be attributed to:

- (a) Issues discussed at SRC's meetings are not fully discussed with the entire students and again students are not given the

chance to make inputs for the agenda of the S.R.C. meetings, and feedback from the headmaster is always sketchy.

- (b) The desire for the senior students to have absolute control over the juniors.

The answer to the third research question is that students are not satisfied with their degree of involvement and administration of decision-making in the school.

Other Areas of Decision-Making Students want to Participate in

Research Question Four: In what other areas of decision-making do the students want to participate?

In order not to kill the students' interest and enthusiasm and thus lower their participation in decision-making process, respondents were asked questions which relate to:

1. additional areas and ways in which students wanted to help in the administration of the school,
2. issues or challenges that the students expected to be referred to them to handle but were not.

The rationale for seeking responses to this research question is that, the students would not be satisfied with their level of participation in the decision-making process if there were issues that they should have handled but were denied.

Differences between Students Perception by Gender

Research Question Five: Do the students' perceptions of their Participation in School Decision-making differ by Gender?

The research question sought to find whether there are different views in perceptions of decision-making in the school by gender. There is an assumption that perceptions differ from the male and the female students in participation of decision-making in the school.

A statement stating that students must be consulted on issues concerning them was presented to the respondents. Table 5 is the results of the analysis based on gender.

Table 5: Students must be Consulted on Issues that Affect them

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	189	94.5	11	5.5	200	100
Female	96	96	4	4	100	100

Table 5 showed that 94.5% of the male and 96% of the female students agreed that students must be consulted on issues that affect them. This means an over-whelming majority of both sexes agreed that student participation in decision-making means students must be consulted on issues concerning them. More female percentage of 96% agreed to the statement than 94.5% of males.

Table 6: When Students Participate in Decision-Making their Views must always be taken

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	44	22	156	78	200	100
Female	10	10	90	90	100	100

There was marked disagreement with the perception that the views of the students must be always taken when they participate in decision-making. Seventy-eight percent of the male and 90% of the female students disagreed that, students views must be taken always during decision-making.

The analysis shows that more percentage of girls disagreed with the statement than that of the boys. The implication of the stand of the boys means that where their views on issues are not taken always, some of them could rebel or be apathetic. It may also be argued that since majority of the girls felt their views should not always be taken, much interest would not be shown in participating in decision-making process.

Table 7: Students become committed to the decisions made when they participate in

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	184	92	16	8	200	100
Female	91	91	9	9	100	100

The results presented in Table 7 indicate that an overwhelming majority of 92% male and 91% female students agree that when students participate in school decision-making, they become committed to the decisions made. The results did not show any differences. The conclusion therefore is students of both sexes are of the opinion that their participation in decision-making made them to accept the decisions and be committed to it.

Table 8: Actions of school authorities are delayed when students take part in school decision process

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	70	35	130	65	200	100
Female	54	54	46	46	100	100

Thirty-five percent 35% of the male and 54% of the female students agreed that actions of school authorities are delayed when students take part in school decision process. This presupposes that the boys do not agree that actions are delayed when they participate in it. So therefore they need to participate fully in all decisions taken in the school. Conversely the girls felt that actions would be delayed if they took active part and involvement in the decision-making process.

Table 9: Students' Participation in School Decision-Making always bring about Conflict between the Students and School Authorities

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	24	12	176	88	200	100
Female	13	13	87	87	100	100

The analysis in Table 9 shows harmonious agreement of both sexes that students participation in school decision-making do not bring about conflict between students and school authorities.

The indications are that both male and female students are willing to participate in school decision-making in complete harmony with school authorities.

Table 10: Student Representative Council (S.R.C.) is an Important Organ for Decision-Making in a School

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	174	87	26	13	200	100
Female	92	92	8	8	100	100

As shown in Table 10, majority of the students both males and females agreed that the school Student Representative Council (SRC) is an important organ for decision-making. However there were more boys than the girls. This suggests that if almost all the boys perceived that the Student Representative Council is the main and major avenue to participate in decision-making then more boys must show active interest in the activities of the S.R.C.

From the foregoing analysis, the answer to the fourth research question is that majority of both males and females are all of the perception that:

- a. student participation in school decision-making means that students must be consulted on issues affecting them
- b. when students participate in school decision-making they become committed to the decision made
- c. student participation in school decision-making always bring about conflict between the student and the school authorities
- d. Student Representative council is an important organ for decision-making in a school.

However, the respondents showed marked differences on the perception that:

1. When students participate in school decision-making their views must always be taken. The boys were louder than the girls.

2. When students participate in school decision-making actions are delayed by school authorities. More girls have that perception.

Table 11: There is a Student Representative Council in the School

Gender	Agree		Disagree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	192	96	8	4	200	100
Female	94	94	6	6	100	100

The responses of the respondents showed that there is a Student Representative Council in the School. This was agreed by 96% of the male and 94% of the female students. All the general school prefects, house prefects and class prefects constitute the Student Representative Council. The chairman of the Council is the Senior Boys' prefect.

The membership of the Council is drawn from the cross-section of the study body. The members hold school leadership positions through which they play significant roles in the administration of the school. The decisions of the council reflect the popular opinions of the entire school.

The Council meets three times in a term. This enables the Council to regularly give feedback to the school's authority of the students' views on programmes in existence and possible suggestions on future activities of the school. It also affords the administration of the school to explain some policies and actions to the students. The researcher found that among the issues that are discussed at the council meetings are:

- a) Disciplinary Issues

- b) Students' academic work
- c) Entertainment Issues
- d) Feeding Issues

Disciplinary issues that are discussed include how to maintain discipline in the classroom, dormitories, breaking of bounds, cutting of classes and so on. The Assistant Boys' Prefect is the chairman of the SRC's disciplinary committee. This sub-committee investigates and prescribes punishments within the context of the school rules and regulations to offending students. The SRC has the power to dish out punishment for offences like failing to do grounds work, insolence to prefects and seniors, improper dressing, stealing, fighting and violating dining hall rules.

Issues discussed on academic work of the students include, Teachers' class attendance, use of the school facilities e.g. library, classrooms, playing field, supply of textbooks, classroom furniture and so on.

Programme for the term, condition and use of the musical equipment and students participation are some of the issues discussed.

On feeding, the quality and quantity of the food served, cleanliness of the dining hall, neatness of the pantry staff, late serving of food at some time are discussed. School authorities refer changes in the menu for students' views.

It could be observed that Students Representative Council is a facility that offers students opportunities to meaningfully discuss issues affecting them and send suggestions and recommendations to the headmaster.

The headmaster neither attends nor represented at the Student Council meetings. This enables the students the freedom to express themselves freely

on issues affecting them. There would be fear and tension if the head or his representative were to be at the Students Council meetings.

On the mode of transmission of the decisions of the Student Council to the headmaster, responses showed that: (a) minutes of the meetings are recorded in a notebook by the Secretary and (b) a report made of the issues discussed and recommendation made is sent to the headmaster direct by the Council's Secretary and two other prefects.

The headmaster supported this procedure. He further added that decision is taken after discussing the issues raised with his assistants for implementation. A meeting comprising the headmaster, the assistant headmasters for academic and administration, the senior house master and the student leaders is convened if there are differences or discrepancies to be solved. The student leaders were then charged with the responsibility of explaining the joint-decisions to the student body.

Taking disciplinary committee as one of the key structures for decision-making in a school system, the researcher wanted to find:

- a) Whether there was a disciplinary committee in the school
- b) What proportion of students are represented
- c) The role the students play in the committee

The responses of the students indicate that there was a disciplinary committee in the school. Disciplinary issues are very sensitive to students and therefore disciplinary decisions spread very fast among students.

On students' representation on the Council of disciplinary committee, the finding is that the students are well represented. Their representation is found to be a very positive step that could enhance student participation in

decision-making in the school. The reason is that when students team up with teachers to apply school rules and regulations, there is a consensus on the punishment to be meted out to an offending student, thus eroding the feeling of bias. Such a practice has the tendency of making students develop much confidence in the school administration.

The respondents were asked to state the role that students play on the disciplinary committee. Different responses were given due to the open nature of this item. The analysis of the grouped responses is represented in Table 12.

Table 12: Students' Role of the School Disciplinary Committee

Responses	No.	Percentage (%)
No response given	21	7.0
No idea	29	9.7
Serve as witnesses	52	17.3
Help in investigation	34	11.3
Give evidence or information	78	26.0
Express their views or make contributions	86	28.7
Total	300	100.0

The table indicates that 9.7% of the male and female students do not have any idea about the role that their colleagues play on the school disciplinary committee. Majority of the students representing 83.3% however, gave more responses which indicate that the students play positive roles on the committees. These include serving as witnesses, helping in investigations, giving evidence or information either in favour of or against offenders and

expressing their views or making contributions on issues at stake. From the foregoing analysis, the answer to the fifth research question is that the students are quite involved in decision-making in school.

The roles the students play in the disciplinary committee was asked as a follow up. It was found that majority about 84% of the students gave a positive answer. The students had always accepted the decision of the disciplinary committee. This could be attributed to their active involvement in the decision-making process of the disciplinary committee.

Students could also be involved in school decision-making through other areas such as the operation of a system of committees with student representation on them. This mode of decision-making offers opportunity to many student leaders or officers to share ideas with the staff and help make decisions that affect many areas of school administration.

Table 13: Students’ Views on the Leadership Style the Headmaster uses most

Gender	Democratic Style		Laissez fair Style		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	152	76	48	24	200	100
Female	73	73	27	27	100	100

Students were asked to give their views on the leadership style the headteacher uses most. Table 13 summarises their views. It was found that 76% of the male and 73% of the female students saw the headmaster as practicing a democratic leadership style and about 24% of the male and 27% of the female students said the headmaster was using laissez-fair style.

It was found that majority about 76% of the students saw the headmaster as practicing a democratic leadership style with about 24% said the headmaster was using laissez-fair style. The headmaster does not use any one particular method of leadership, but a blend of democratic and laissez-faire styles. He would often use group decision and participation of subordinates to work when he uses the democratic approach, while by the laissez-faire style he will be advising motivating and allowing subordinates to be creative and take initiative. The predominantly democratic leadership style of the headmaster, as stated by the students is an indication of an open school climate that gives much support to participative decision-making. This could be a reason for his reliance on the school committee system with student representations for decision-making in the school.

Table 14: Students Views on how Student Officers are Selected in the School

Gender	Elections		Appointments		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	192	96	8	4	200	100
Female	95	95	5	5	100	100

The students were asked finally to indicate how student officers or leaders are selected in the school. To this 96% of the male and 95% of the female students overwhelmingly said their leaders are elected by the entire student body. This democratic practice creates further opportunity for the entire student body to participate in deciding who should be their leaders.

The analysis of data on the levels or areas of actual participation of students in the school decision-making process, the answer to the fifth

research question is that the students are involved in decision-making at:

1. The Student Representative Council (SRC) level where a cross-section of the students meet regularly to deliberate and take decisions on a wide range of issues affecting many areas of the life of the school.
2. The election of prefects, student leaders or prefects are democratically elected by the entire student body through the ballot box.
3. The committee level. The administration of the school depends to a large extent on the operations or activities of a number of committees with student representations on them.

Students' Satisfaction with Degree of Involvement by Gender

Research Question Six: Are Male and Female Students Equally Satisfied with the Degree of their Involvement in School Decision-making?

The research question was to find out if there is any gender difference in the satisfaction of the students with the degree of the participation in decision-making in the school. The assumption that girls are more apathetic and would easily express satisfaction with their involvement as a way of avoiding responsibility, come into play.

The responses of the students to the question of whether or not they were satisfied with their degree of involvement, were further analysed by gender. The result of the analysis of the responses are presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Students' Satisfaction with their Degree of Participation in Decision-making by Gender

Gender	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	14	7	186	93	200	100
Female	80	80	20	20	100	100

Table 15 shows that majority of the male students 93% expressed dissatisfaction with their involvement than the females. On the contrary, a greater number of the female students 80% expressed satisfaction with the degree of their involvement than the males 7%.

This finding, therefore, revealed a marked gender difference between the boys and girls with respect to their satisfaction with the degree of their involvement in the decision-making process. While the males are highly dissatisfied the female counterparts are satisfied.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

The perceptions that students have regarding their participation in decision-making, the type of leadership style of the head, the kind of climate that exists in the school, and the attitude and willingness of the staff all combine in a complex way to determine how effective and successful student participation in decision-making could be in a particular school. The study therefore focused on student perception of their participation in decision-making in Anglican High School, Kumasi.

In all, six research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study aimed at the perceptions that the students have regarding their participation in decision-making in the school on gender basis. Areas or levels which the students are actually involved in decision-making were also explored laying emphasis on channels of decision-making and communication.

Summary of the Main Findings

After analysing the data collected, the study revealed the following findings:

- (1) Students do not have any issues which should have been referred to them. A few students called for a more decentralised administration at

the house level that will open through sub-committee.

- (2) To find out if the students are satisfied with the degree of their involvement in decision-making, the outcome is that most students are not satisfied. In spite of the many opportunities and areas of decision-making that are opened to the students, they are not satisfied with their performance. There could be some negative influence that militates against the active participation of the students in decision making.
- (3) With respect to finding out whether the perceptions of the students about their participation in decision-making differ by gender, no difference was found between male and female students on their perceptions on the issue. The findings showed that both male and female students agreed that student participation in school decision-making means students must be consulted on issues that affect them. When students participate in school decision-making, they become committed to the decisions made, and that student participation in decision-making does not always bring about conflict between the students and the school authorities.
- (4) To find out the levels at which the students are involved in decision-making, the findings are that;
 - (a) There are regular meetings and consultations between the staff and students.
 - (b) There are regular SRC meetings which deliberate on a wide range of issues concerning academic work, discipline, feeding, entertainment, health, sports, and so on. Decisions and recommendations from the SRC are presented by the Senior

prefects direct to the headmaster, Feedback from the headmaster is discussed with the senior members of staff and the core of the school prefects after which the prefects inform the general student body.

- (c) To all the student respondents, there are disciplinary, food, entertainment and sports committees in the school. Alongside these, are the workshop and health committees. The committee system operated fairly well as a major approach to decision-making in the school.
- (d) The democratic election of school leaders or prefects through the ballot box is another major area in which the students are actively involved in decision-making. This was confirmed by the headmaster and 98.4% of the students. The indications are that the students have several avenues for participating in decision-making in the school. The success of these structures could be attributed to several factors:

The democratic leadership st participating in decision-making in the school. The success of these structures could be attributed to several factors:

- (i) The democratic leadership style of the headmaster.
- (ii) The attitude and willingness of the teachers to support the democratic style of the headmaster.
- (iii) The adoption of decentralization and the consequent establishment of a number of school communities with student representations on them.

- (iv) The establishment of open vertical and horizontal channels of communication which cover the entire school, and
 - (v) The respect and recognition given to the SRC to function as a major organ for student participation in decision-making.
- (5) To find out whether male and female students are equally satisfied or dissatisfied with the degree of their involvement in decision-making, the finding is that while most of the male respondents 93% expressed dissatisfaction with their involvement in school decision-making, most of the females 80% on the other hand felt satisfied.
- (6) Majority of the students, 62% for males and 70% for females agreed they have to be consulted during decision making on issues affecting them.
- (7) More male students of 56% agreed that students' views must be taken always when they participate in school decision making while 68% of the girl students disagreed to this same assertion.
- (8) Majority of students representing 98% of the males and 80% of the females agreed that students become committed when they participate in school decision making.
- (9) Eighty-four percent of males and 62% of females disagreed that actions of school authorities are delayed when students participate in school decision-making.
- (10) A lot of the students representing 89% for male and 80% of the female students disagreed that participation in school decision making brings conflicts between students and school authorities.

- (11) Overwhelming majority of the male students 96% and 82% of the female students agreed that SRC is an important organ for decision-making in a school.
- (12) With respect to how student officers are selected in the school, most of the students representing 96% of the males and 95% of the female students overwhelmingly agreed their leaders are elected by the entire student body.
- (13) On the leadership style the headmaster used most, it was found that 76% of the male and 73% of the female students saw the headmaster as practising a democratic leadership style. Twenty-four percent of the male and 27% of the female students saw the headmaster as using laissez-faire style.
- (14) Majority of the students representing 96% male and 94% female students agreed that there is a Student Representative Council in the school.
- (15) Different responses were given by students on the students' role of the school disciplinary committee, 9.7% said no idea, 7% gave no response, 17.3% serve as witnesses, 11.3% help in investigation, 26% give evidence or information, 28.7% express their views or make contributions.

Research question two aimed at finding out other areas of decision-making that the students want to participate in. The findings are that the students do not have any issues which should have been referred to them. A few students call for a more decentralized administration at the house level that will operate through sub-committee.

Research question three sought to find out whether the students are satisfied with the degree of their involvement in decision-making. The outcome is that most students are not satisfied. In spite of the many opportunities and areas of decision-making that are opened to the students, they are not satisfied with their performance. This could be some negative influenced that militate against the active participation of the students in decision-making.

Research question four sought to find out whether the perceptions of the students about their participation in decision-making differ by gender. No difference was found between male and female students on their perceptions on the issue. The findings showed that both male and female agreed that, student participation in school decision-making means students must be consulted on issues that affect them. When students participate in school decision-making, they become committed to the decisions made, and that student participation in decision-making does not always bring about conflict between the students and the school authorities.

Research question five aimed at finding the levels at which the students are involved in decision-making. The findings are that:

1. There are regular meetings and consultations between the staff and students.
2. There are regular Student Representative Council (S.R.C) meetings which deliberate on a wide range of issues concerning academic work, discipline, feeding, entertainment, health, sports and so on. Decisions and recommendations from the SRC are presented by the senior prefects direct to the headmaster.

Feedback from the headmaster is discussed with the senior members of staff and the core of the school prefects after which the prefects inform the general student body.

3. To all the student respondents, there are disciplinary, food, entertainment and sports committees in the school. Alongside these, are the workshop and health committees. The committee system operated fairly well as a major approach to decision-making in the school.
4. The democratic election of school leaders or prefects through the ballot box is another major area in which the students are actively involved in decision-making. This was confirmed by the headmaster and 98.4% of the students. The indications are that the students have several avenues for participating in decision-making in the school. The success of these structures could be attributed to several factors:
 - (i) The democratic leadership style of the headmaster
 - (ii) The attitude and willingness of the teachers to support the democratic style of the headmaster.
 - (iii) The adoption of decentralization and the consequent establishment of a number of school committees with student representations on them
 - (iv) The establishment of open vertical and horizontal channels of communication which cover the entire school, and
 - (v) The respect and recognition given to the Student Representative Council (SRC) to function as a major organ for student

participation in decision-making.

Research question six was designed to find out whether male and female students are equally satisfied or dissatisfied with the degree of their involvement in decision-making. The finding is that while most of the male respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their involvement in school decision-making, most of the female on the other hand felt satisfied.

Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed that involvement of students in the school decision-making process ensures a smooth school administration and that effective student participation in school decision-making can be jeopardized if the students are unable to manage their time effectively. Taking cognizance of the immense benefits that a school will derive from student participation in the decision-making process, the headmaster of the school should give much attention to this practice. He must know how and when to involve the students in the decision-making process, since the students have strong positive perceptions of their participation in decision-making.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made for practice in Anglican High School, Kumasi, in particular and other senior high schools in general:

1. That opportunities for exchange of ideas, such as open forum should be regularly organized to:
 - a) Educate the students on why their views should not always be taken in decision-making

- b) Educate the students to understand how they can co-operate with the school authorities so that by their participation in decision-making actions by the school authorities are not delayed
2. As a way of increasing student participation in decision-making, it is suggested that the students should be encouraged by the Housemasters/mistresses to establish house level committees to deal with issues at their house level. This will promote the making of bye-laws which the students will be committed to
 3. That the school authorities should encourage and strengthen the following centres which involve students in decision-making: class level, house level, student representative council and school committees.
 4. That the school authorities should establish a system of consultation with the students on issues that affect them. This will enhance greater acceptance and commitment of students to decisions since the students perceive consultation as a major means of their participation in decision-making.
 5. The problem of conflicts that student leaders face from their classmates and others, should be promptly addressed by the school administration through constant dialogue and education for the entire student body.
 6. The study showed that student leaders miss normal lessons to attend committee meetings and do other leadership work. It is therefore suggested that, as much as possible, committee meetings

and other leadership activities should be scheduled in such a way that they do not take too much of students' time for academic work. This will also help the teachers not to cut lessons for committee meetings.

7. As a result of the time management problem identified in the study, it is suggested that all students especially the prefects should be given an orientation on how to plan their work and use time effectively.

Suggestions for Further Study

Specifically, the study sought to find out the perception of students involvement on decision-making in the Anglican Senior High School, Kumasi.

The following are suggested for further research:

1. That a future researcher randomly chooses students from Form 1 to Form 3 and not Forms 2 – 3 alone because the Form 1 students too may have some inputs to make to enrich the research findings.
2. The researcher should find out the student involvement in decision-making in the nearby schools and compare their involvement with this study.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Introduction

This questionnaire seeks to gather information from students on their participation in the school decision-making process. It forms part of the pool of data for research into the factors affecting student participation in school decision-making in Anglican Senior High School, Kumasi. The aim is to have information that will be of assistance to both students and the school authorities in the administration of the school.

Part One

Questions on Personal Particulars

1. Class
2. Age.....
3. Sex.....
4. Course/programme of study in School.....
5. Present leadership position (if any).....

Part Two

Questions on School Decision-Making

A. STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

6. Students participation in school decision-making means that students must be consulted on issues that affect them.

- 1) Totally Agree [] 2) Strongly Agree [] 3) Agree []
4) Disagree [] 5) Strongly Disagree [] 6) Totally Disagree []

7. When students participate in school decision-making their views must always be taken.

- 1) Totally Agree [] 2) Strongly Agree [] 3) Agree []
4) Disagree [] 5) Strongly Disagree [] 6) Totally Disagree []

8. When students participate in school decision-making, they become committed to decisions made.

- 1) Totally Agree [] 2) Strongly Agree [] 3) Agree []
4) Disagree [] 5) Strongly Disagree [] 6) Totally Disagree []

9. When students participate in school decision-making actions by the school authorities are delayed.

- 1) Totally Agree [] 2) Strongly Agree [] 3) Agree []
4) Disagree [] 5) Strongly Disagree [] 6) Totally Disagree []

10. Student participation in school decision-making always bring about conflict Between school authorities and students.

- 1) Totally Agree [] 2) Strongly Agree [] 3) Agree []
4) Disagree [] 5) Strongly Disagree [] 6) Totally Disagree []

11. A Student Representative Council (S.R.C.) is an important organ for decision-making in a school.

- 1) Totally Agree [] 2) Strongly Agree [] 3) Agree []
4) Disagree [] 5) Strongly Disagree [] 6) Totally Disagree []

**B. LEVELS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

12. Do student of this school have channels of communicating their views to the Headmaster? Yes [] No []

13. Does the headmaster and staff meet the students to discuss issues affecting the Students? Yes [] No []
14. Does your housemaster or house mistress meet students to discuss issues affecting them? Yes [] No []
15. Is there a students representative council (SRC) in the school?
Yes [] No []
16. How often does the SRC meet in a term? Yes [] No []
17. What issues are generally discussed at the SRC meetings
Yes [] No []
18. How are the decisions of the SRC carried to the headmaster?
Yes [] No []
19. Is there a disciplinary committee in the school? Yes [] No []
20. Are the decisions of the disciplinary committee acceptable to the students? Yes [] No []

C. PROBLEMS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

(This section should be answered by only students in present leadership position)

21. Students in this school are unwilling to participate actively in Decision-making because they feel:
- a. It robs them of their time for normal classes []
 - b. It robs them of their time for active studies []

c. It adversely affect their academic work []

d. It increases their workload []

22. Briefly explain your answer to question 20

.....
.....

23. Which of the following group of people do you often get into conflict during your work as student leader?

a. Headmaster []

b. Staff []

c. Classmates []

d. Other student leaders []

e. Other students of the school []

24. What is the nature of conflict indicated in question 22?

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADMASTER

PART ONE

QUESTIONS ON PERSONAL PARTICULARS

1. Name:.....
2. Age:.....
3. Rank:
4. Number of years served as head in this school?
5. Any previous experience in school administration?
.....
.....

PART TWO

QUESTIONS ON SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

A. PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

6. Are you 'FOR' or 'AGAINST' the idea that students should be involved
in school administration? a) For [] b) Against []
7. Please why?
8. Are your students involved in decision-making in the school?
a) Yes [] b) No []
9. Do you think that student participated in school decision-making
Means the students must be consulted on issues that affect them?
.....

10. When students participated in school decision-making their views must always be taken. What do you say about this?

.....

11. When students participate in school decision-making, they become committed to the decision-made. a) True [] b) False []

12. When students participated in school decision-making, actions by the school authorities are delayed. a) True [] b) False []

B. LEVELS OF STUDENTSPARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

13. What are the existing channels for students to communicate their views to you?

14. Do you often meet the students to discuss issues affecting them?
a) Yes b) No

15. If yes how and when do you meet them?
.....
.....

16. Is there a Student Representative Council (SRC) in your school
a) Yes [] b) No []

17. How are the students selected to form the SRC?
.....

18. How often does the SRC meet in a term?
.....

19. Do you attend or are you represented at the SRC meetings?
.....

20. What issues are generally discussed at the meetings?

21. How are the decisions of the SRC transmitted to you?

22. Is there a disciplinary committee in the school?
 a) Yes [] b) No []
23. Are the student represented on the disciplinary committee?
 a) Yes [] b) No []
24. What is the composition of the disciplinary committee of the school?
 a) Number of teachers [] b) Number of students []
25. What procedure is followed by the disciplinary committee to arrive at a decision?

26. To what extent are the decisions of the disciplinary committee acceptable?
 a) To the staff?
 i) to a great extent [] ii) to some extent []
 iii) a little extent [] iv) not at all []
 b) To the students?
 i) to a great extent [] ii) to some extent []
 iii) to a little extent [] iv) not at all []

C. STUDENTS' DESIRED LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

27. Do student leaders have the authority to control and punish offending students? a) Yes [] b) No []

28. If yes and your staff refer some issues to the SRC or particular student officers to deal with? a) Yes b) No

29. If yes, then state the issues concerned.
.....

30. In addition to the SRC and school committees mentioned in Section B above, in what other ways do your students desire to help in the administration of the school?
.....
.....

D. PROBLEMS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION-MAKING

31. Which of the following is/are the reason(s) why student leaders in this school are unwilling to participate actively in decision-making?
a) It robs them of their time for normal classes []
b) It robs them of their time for private studies []
c) It adversely affects their academic work []
d) It increases their workload. []

32. What is your assessment of the performance of your student leaders as participants of school decision-making?
a) High [] b) *Average* [] c) Low []

33. What reasons can you give for the answer to question 32?
.....
.....
.....
.....