

**TEACHER REPRESENTATION IN FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKING IN SELECTED  
GRANT AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CHOMA DISTRICT, ZAMBIA**

By  
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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Management.

**UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA  
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## DECLARATION

I, **Jeffer Moonga**, do declare that this piece of work: Master of Education in Educational Management dissertation represents my own work and that it has never been previously submitted for an award of a degree at the University of Zambia, Zimbabwe Open University or any other University or institution.

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## **APPROVAL**

This dissertation by Jeter Moonga is approved as a fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Management at the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University.

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## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to my wife, Ellis Makai Moonga, whom I love so much, a rare gift indeed. Thanks for your support great woman throughout this difficult journey. To my lovely children I say thanks for understanding me when my studies deprived you of my love and attention.

## ABSTRACT

This study investigated teacher representation in decision-making and its role in financial decisions of selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District, Zambia. The objectives were: to assess the areas in which teachers were involved in decision making; to establish levels of teachers' involvement in financial decision making among various categories; to ascertain the major constraints of teachers' representation in selected grant aided schools in Choma District. The study employed a descriptive design and Vroom-Yetton-Jago Contingency Theory of participative decision making guided the study. Data was collected from a total sample size of 25 participants that comprised 5 head teachers, 15 teachers and 5 heads of department. The instruments of data collection used were interview guides containing semi-structured question items.

The study revealed that teachers were involved in academic decision making which included drawing the agenda for school meetings, selection of school prefects, and discipline of learners but not directly involved in financial decision making. Heads of department were representatives of teachers in financial decisions. The study also revealed that heads of department and head teachers' involvement in decision making was higher and minimal for teachers. Further, the study revealed lack of direct participation of teachers in financial decisions.

The study recommends that administrators in grant aided schools should involve teachers in financial decisions so as to enhance collective financial decision-making. The Ministry of General Education should provide training to teachers in the form of workshops, seminars and so on, in decision making, for them to become competent, and skillful enough to participate in financial decision-making and hence make the school efficient and effective in achieving its objectives. Head teachers should involve all education stakeholders to aid in school development programmes and projects. The schools should also initiate income generating projects to subsidize government funding.

Key words: *Decision making, Representation, Teachers.*

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## **ACRONYMS**

FDM: Financial Decision Making

GASS: Grant Aided Secondary School

SBM: School Board of Management

TLM: Teaching and Learning Materials

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter provides information on the background to the study. Further, it presents the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation and operational definitions of terms that were used in the study.

#### **1.1 Background**

Educational institutions have more and more power to decide both on financial and operational matters. Who exercises this power in reality is therefore not insignificant. The opinions of leaders are reflected in the decisions being made. New opportunities have also brought about more and more responsibility and effects on decision making and the relative weight assigned to different functions. The structure of the teaching staff and the distribution of their competencies are not without consequence, nor are the school head's own preferences say, a strong interest or whether an emphasis is given on the use of a new working method and communication. All choices and priorities in decision making have a bearing and can be seen in the schools' everyday operations and in their future. In this way, they will surely also become visible in pupils' everyday lives and in the construction of their mindsets and school improvements as a whole.

Decision-making is a complex process that involves multifaceted skills and experience. It is a key skill in the workplace and particularly if one wants to be an effective manager. This explains the reason why decision-making is an integral part of modern management. It is indeed the backbone of the management of any organization because without taking the right decision at the right time, effectiveness is compromised. Olcuma and Titrekb (2015) observed that a decision is not a simple, unitary event, but the product of a complex social process generally extending over a considerable period. It involves many actions and factors which boarder on identification of a problem and finding the correct remedies for it without delay.

The process of decision making does not only aim at preventing or solving problems but also to change an organization. Adair (2000) is of the view that the decision-making process involves determining the problem, gathering the data, creating suitable alternatives, making decisions, practicing the decisions, and evaluating the results. A good decision, as seen by Dietz (2003) maximizes the well-being of those affected by it, even when it is subject to the constraints of knowledge and resources.

A school like any other organization needs well thought and properly made decisions if it is to be effective. In most schools, if not all, decision making has been the sole responsibility of the administrators. This follows the fact that historically, administrators in most schools and even other organizations have not perceived participation of workers or teachers as rightly deserved and necessary. The role of a teacher never went beyond being a classroom manager responsible for student daily behavior and academic performance within the classroom. School matters outside classroom like policy planning and decision making traditionally were not related to teachers but to school administrators like head teachers and Principals (Lin, 2014).

The focus on teacher involvement in decision making is not without historical precedent (Rice and Schneider, 1992). The desire for teacher participation in decision making is not new in Zambia just like many other countries. Steyn (1998) cited by Mpungose (1999) argues that shared decision making is not a new concept in education. Further, Mpungose states that throughout the seventies and eighties, educators debated and encouraged teacher empowerment.

By the year 1980, the United States of America began to experiment with participative models of decision making and strategies (Mpungose, 1999). Apart from the United States of America, by the 1990's in Australia, action relating to process elements of participation in decision making, decentralization and devolution of decision making had progressed significantly (Chapman et al 1995). In Africa as pointed out by Mosege and Van der Westhuizen (1997) cited in Mpungose (1999), participation in decision making by subordinates has long been the basis of educational reforms in countries such as Tanzania and Mozambique.

In the Zambian context, as put by Mwamba (2009) by 1991, the Ministry of Education (MOE) embarked on the democratization of education requiring teachers to take part in decision making.

Further, Mwamba observes that the impetus for this decision was a result of the view that democratic principles guide the formation and implementation of policies. Today, despite having been excluded by school administrators from the process of decision-making and not being endowed with the right to implement school policies years ago, teachers are to some extent part of the process. Their role has been transformed into an active participant from a passive practitioner. Teachers are no longer confined to making classroom decisions only but also administration related decisions. They now participate in school decisions outside the classroom, such as, curriculum development, learning assessment, textbook selection, student placement, personnel staffing, or professional development (Lin, 2014).

However, in spite of the involvement of teachers in the making of most decisions, it seems the extent of participation; even through their representatives in financial decisions is low. Researchers such as Newcombe et al (1997) have proved teacher involvement in financial decisions as a major component of school-based management reform. However, in most schools, school-based management reform has only taken place in other aspects of decision making and not financial decisions. Lin (2014) argues that since teachers seldom have opportunities to be involved in crucial matters, their isolation might bring about alienation or misunderstanding between them and school leadership. Lin is of the view that with the advent of teacher empowerment, teachers were expected to be given an authority to be the ones having access to decision making about school significant matters.

Participative decision-making is conceived as an aspect of shared leadership, and the idea of involving teachers in school-level decision-making is known by many names. Several scholars including Kahrs (1996); Marks and Louis (1997); Reitzug (1994); Rice and Schneider (1994), have studied teacher empowerment as a concept that is related to teacher participation in decision-making. While participative decision-making is a system or structure, teacher empowerment represents an internal perception by teachers of having increased authority in their positions.

The centrality of the role and influence of the head teacher in shared decision-making has been well documented. Blase and Blasé (2000) pointed out the need for research addressing the personal and professional socialization factors linked to the development of head teachers' perspectives on shared governance and leadership. The literature on participative decision-

making has focused primarily on the study of teachers, relying on teachers' self-reports of their views and experiences with participative decision making and neglected the voice of the head teacher. Somech (2002) is of the view that the reason for involving teachers in participative decision making is to improve the quality of decisions that a school makes and the effectiveness of the school in achieving its goals.

It is therefore useful that school administrators have enough knowledge of how and when to involve teachers in decision making (Maritim, 1988). Looking deeper into the relationship between head teachers and teachers, participative decision making begins to flourish where head teachers have actively supported it or, at least, encouraged it. Head teachers clearly are viewed as persons with the greatest power, and the ones who set the tone for the relationship between themselves and teachers. It is from this background that an investigation on teachers' representation in decision making and its roles in enhancing financial decisions in secondary schools was significant.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In a bid to provide quality education to its citizens, the Zambian Government through chapter 134 of the Education Act provides for the establishment of boards of management in grant aided schools (MoE, 2007). The guidelines in the Education Board of Management manual provided by the Ministry of General Education directs that grant aided schools should incorporate various stakeholders in decision making in a quest to bring about quality education. Despite the directives to grant aided schools to ensure stakeholder participation in making decisions on matters relating to school finances among other issues, what was not known were the levels of teacher representation in decision making and their roles in decision making in secondary schools. Hence, this study investigated teachers' representation in decision making and its role in financial decision making in selected grant aided schools in Choma District, Zambia.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

Making decisions is one of the prime functions of educational management and in the current educational setup; more teachers are taking up management roles in schools. Appreciating the important role played by teachers in schools, it was critical to gather evidence for or against the

assumed important role played by teacher representation in financial decision making and its role in enhancing financial decisions in grant aided secondary schools.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

1. To assess teacher involvement in financial decision making in secondary schools.
2. To establish levels of teachers' involvement in financial decision making among various categories in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District.
3. To ascertain the major constraints of teachers' representation in selected grant aided schools in Choma District.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. In which areas are teachers involved in decision making in secondary schools?
2. What are the levels of teachers' involvement in financial decision making among various categories in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District?
3. What are the major constraints of teachers' representation in financial decisions in selected grant aided schools in Choma District?

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study hoped to enlighten on the need to have teacher representation in decision making and appreciating their roles in financial decision making through its findings. Further, the study sought to bring out the levels of teacher representation and the role they played in enhancing financial decisions and making recommendations that would contribute to the promotion of desired levels of teacher representation in decision making in secondary schools. The study was also significant in the sense that its findings would influence the way the policy makers in the Ministry of General Education design regulations and guidelines pertaining teacher representation in decision making in secondary schools. The study would also acquaint administrators in the Ministry of General Education with the knowledge of how best teachers could be represented in decision making so that their roles could enhance decision making at all levels in secondary schools. It was hoped by the researcher that the study would contribute to the body of knowledge by providing new or different insights about the role that teachers play or

could play in the financial decision- making processes as long as they were well represented in the bodies that make financial decisions.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study was conducted in Choma District of Southern Province and was only confined to five (5) selected grant aided secondary schools. This therefore means that the results were not generalized to any other secondary school in Zambia.

### **1.8 Limitations**

It was difficult to generalize the findings of the study because the findings only applied to the target area of study. Moreover, the sample was too small to have the findings generalized on a larger population. It is possible that responses might not have reflected the accurate experiences of participants and responses could have been strongly impacted by the respondent's personal bias. The results generated by this study could only be directly generalized to grant aided secondary schools with similar demographics to those that were used in the study. Time required to conduct the research was inadequate. Due to limited time and financial resources, it was not possible to conduct this study country wide.

### **1.12 Operational Definitions of Terms**

Decision making: Refers to selecting the most suitable choice from among the probable alternatives to the solution of a problem.

Financial resources: Refers to money available for spending by the school in form of cash.

Teacher participation: Increased teacher involvement in the school's decision-making process.

Representation: Refers to an act or doing things on behalf of other people.

Grant Aided School: Refers to a school which is established or maintained with the assistance of a grant or loan.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Overview**

The purpose of review of literature of literature in this study was to provide an insight summary and analysis of the related already done research works and publications to this study. The review of related literature illuminated the related literature to enable rich insights to this study. Correspondingly, the review of literature in this study was to understand the current literature on teacher representation in decision making and its role in financial decision in secondary schools. The researcher intended not only to examine literature on studies done in Zambia which had provided the gap for this study, but also to consider studies done outside Zambia in order to address the research objectives.

#### **2.2 Literature from Outside Zambia**

Agebure (2013) conducted a study on the state of teachers' involvement in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality of Ghana. The study revealed that majority of the respondents were never involved in decision-making concerning financial matters. The study also found that 59(70.2%) of the total respondents did not take part in deciding how much their departments spend each year. Furthermore, the study found that 79(94%) of the total respondents did not know the amount of money voted for their departments each academic year.

Another study was conducted by Ncwane (2011), on the role of teachers in the decision making decision-making processes that relate to school financial management in the Pinetown district primary schools of Kwazulu Natal in South Africa. The findings indicated that teacher participation in school financial decision making did exist in the case study schools but was minimal. Teacher participation seemed to be more confined to the operational decisions such as making a list of classroom needs that should be part of the school budget. However, the researcher found that teachers were not involved in strategic decisions where decisions on issues such as setting financial goals of the school were made. The findings by Ncwane in this particular study also suggest that teachers can be a tool for ensuring financial accountability.

Their levels of education and the amount of time they spend in the school according to Ncwane, allow them be better positioned to contribute to the school financial accountability.

Kipkoech and Chesire (2011) conducted a study on the levels of teachers' involvement in managerial decision making in schools in Kenya in which the researchers found out that teachers in secondary schools are involved in managerial decisions but at lower levels.

Similarly, Bademo and Tefera (2016) conducted a study to assess the desired and actual levels of teachers' participation in decision making process in Ethiopian secondary schools. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design collecting data from sampled secondary school teachers found in Assosa Zone, Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, Ethiopia. The findings of the study indicated the existence of significant differences between teachers' desired and actual levels of participation in decision-making in their individual schools. Teachers that participated in the study reported more desire to be involved in decision-making process than they actually did. The conclusion of the researchers was that the decision-making process in the studied schools did not seem participatory and the efforts made by school management to empower teachers were not satisfactory.

Wadesango (2010) also conducted a study on the extent of teacher participation in decision-making in Zimbabwean schools. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology. Data was collected through interviews and observation of two staff meetings per school from the five secondary schools in Gweru. The study established that teachers were insignificantly involved in decision making despite their eagerness to be involved. The study by Wadesango indicated that the extent of teacher participation in decision-making was low. However, the study did not specifically highlight the extent of teacher representation or indeed participation in the making of financial decisions.

In Japan, Keung (2002) conducted a study in Hong Kong aided secondary schools whose aim was to investigate the status quo of teacher's involvement in school decision making and the factors affecting their participation. The study explored the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school managerial practices, their perceptions of their participation in decision making, and their perceptions of their job satisfaction, commitment and workload. Three instruments based on Likert five-point scales were constructed to measure (1) the level of teacher

participation in decision making within four decision domains: school level managerial, class level technical, school level technical and class level managerial decision domains; (2) four variables of managerial practices: bureaucratic control, collaboration, professional autonomy and shared vision; and (3) three variables in the affective domain: job satisfaction, job commitment and teachers' perceptions of their workload. The findings of the study indicated that teacher participation in decision making was low.

Similarly, Kiprop and Kandie (2012) also conducted a study in public secondary schools in Kenya. The aim was to investigate teacher participation in decision making in secondary schools in Baringo District. In order to ascertain this, researchers listed eight possible factors in the questionnaire for teachers. The respondents were asked to indicate their significance in constraining effective decision-making. In financial decisions, Kiprop and Kandie found out that only 3.1% of teachers indicated very high involvement, 5.2% high, 9.3% moderate, 15.5% low and 67% very low. The findings of the study indicated that teachers were not effectively involved in decisions dealing with finances. In the interview schedule responses, most teachers indicated desire to be involved in financial decisions, because some felt they had the expertise, which could help the head teacher make successful financial decisions.

Ndiku et al (2009) conducted a study in secondary schools in Kenya, which was designed to investigate the extent to which teachers were involved in decision making in comparison to their desired extent of participation. The study findings indicated that school managers needed to increase the extent to which they involved teachers in decision making to improve on the quality of decisions and boost the morale of teachers in their performance of duty. The recommendations by Ndiku et al are that a participatory approach in school management should be acknowledged as an essential ingredient in the quest for better schools.

Also, Lin (2014) conducted a study on teacher involvement in school decision making. The findings of the study indicated a number of benefits of teacher participation in decision-making. Among the benefits is that teacher participation in decision-making presented crucial information closest to the sources of problems of schooling, improving the quality of decisions effectively.

Cheruto and Chesire (2011) conducted a study on the levels of teachers' involvement in managerial decision making in schools in Kenya. This study assessed the teachers' involvement

in managerial decision making in secondary schools within Keiyo district. Findings indicate that teachers in secondary schools are involved in managerial decisions but at lower levels. The study recommends that head teachers evaluate and identify teachers' needs on managerial decisions in order to facilitate further training on the same.

Elibariki (2014) carried out a study on the factors that influenced the shortage of teaching and learning resources in Tanzania primary schools. The study employed descriptive research approach and case study design was used for data collection and analysis procedures. The findings showed that in all schools surveyed by the researcher, there was a shortage of teaching and learning materials. Based on the findings, it was recommended by the researcher that the government needed to allocate adequate financial resources for education and ensure a mechanism for the funds to reach schools as planned. The researcher also recommended that resources needed to be equally allocated to all subjects.

In another vein, Sankale (2015) conducted a study on the influence of head teachers' instructional supervisory role on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Ololulunga Division. The study employed the descriptive survey using questionnaires and document analysis. The target population for the study was 70 head teachers, 480 teachers and 960 pupils in all primary schools in the division totaling 1,510. The results showed that provision of teaching and learning resources was not regular and was faced with very serious shortages. This was depicted by the head teachers' responses as majority of them indicated that they sometimes provided the resources.

Musembi (2014) conducted a study to investigate school factors that affected public primary schools head teachers' provision of special needs education in Kangundo Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya. The study employed descriptive survey design. The sample for the study comprised of all the 14 head teachers and 140 teachers. Findings revealed that there were inadequate financial resources for the special needs children in the schools as indicated by majority 9(64.3%) of head teachers. It was further found out by the researcher that the available funds did not provide adequate teaching and learning materials.

### **2.3 Literature from Zambia**

Mwamba (2009) conducted a study on teachers' decisional condition in high schools in Central Province and its effects on organizational development in schools. The sample consisted of eight high schools, of which four were urban and the other four rural. The findings of the study showed that there was more participation in decision making in rural high schools than urban ones. The research further revealed that improved schools, motivated staff and positive professional practices were because of the decision condition of teachers. Mwamba's study indicated a higher level of teacher participation in decisions in some of the schools in which he carried out his study.

Another Zambian study is the one conducted by Sibeso (2009) in which she was trying to investigate the management of school funds at Chibombo Basic School. The study revealed that in the management of school funds at Chibombo Basic School, teachers, parents and pupils did not participate. The study postulated that head-teachers did not include pupils, parents and teachers in the financial management committee. The study went further to elucidate that not incorporating some teachers, pupils and parents in financial management denied them powers to manage school funds. It was also established that head teachers were poor at encouraging parents, teachers and pupils to participate in the management of School funds.

Additionally, Siwale (2013) conducted a study in which he investigated the provision of science teaching and learning materials in the high schools of Northern Province of Zambia. The objectives of the study were to identify the current practices in the provision of teaching and learning materials in high schools; to assess the adequacy and state of the existing science physical infrastructure in high schools; to establish the adequacy of teaching and learning materials in science subjects through such indicators as pupil-book ratio; pupil laboratory space ratio; and pupil-equipment ratio and to find out the challenges which schools face in the provision of teaching and learning materials in science subjects. The researcher's findings were that some key science teaching and learning materials were not available in schools. Even those which were available were in not adequate. Pupil apparatus ratio for the most abundant apparatus was 14:1 .Similarly, the pupil –book ratio for the most abundant text books were 7:1, 14:1 and 23:1 for Biology, Chemistry and Physics respectively.

## **2.4 The Research Gap Addressed and Directions from Literature Review**

Views expressed by various authors (Cheruto and Chesire, 2011; Ndiku et al (2009; Wadesango, 2010) point to the fact that teachers are not well represented in decision making. Scholars maintained the need for enhanced teacher involvement in decision making in the operations of the school. However, a lot of scholars (Bademo and Tefera, 2016; Kipkoech and Chesire, 2011; Ncwane, 2011; Sankale, 2015) in various literatures reviewed perceived the extent of teacher representation in decision-making and how adequate teacher representation could enhance decision making. Further, the literature reviewed indicated little research in Zambia on teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decision in grant aided secondary schools, particularly in Choma District of Zambia, the problem this study focused on.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

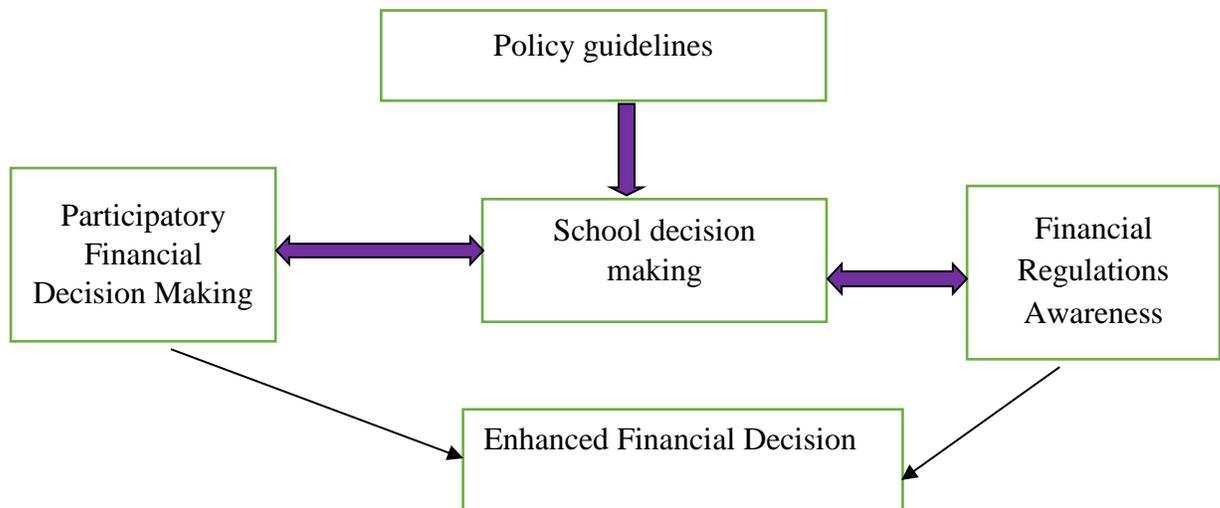
This study was guided by Vroom-Yetton-Jago (1973) Contingency Theory of participative decision. This theory is essentially a model for deciding how much subordinates should participate in the decision making process. It suggests decision making based on the characteristics of the situation in which the leader determines an appropriate decision style that specifies the amount of subordinate participation. The theory model suggests that leaders should have skills to apply decision making styles in a continuum from highly autocratic to highly consultative. The model is designed to protect the quality of the decision and to ensure decision acceptance by all.

Contingency Theory of Participative Decision defined different decision procedures based on the theory that participation increases acceptance of a decision. This theory identified three decision-making procedures. In this study, this theory was employed by linking it to the school administrators who were bestowed with authority to make decisions than the rest of the teachers. Hence, the study used this theory to establish the extent to which grant aided secondary schools involved the rest of the teachers in financial decision making. The theory was used to act as a tool that managers can apply with some confidence in deciding how much subordinates should participate in decision making. In the light that the theory pioneers saw it, followers were likely not to accept an autocratic decision in which the leader is the only one who sees quality in the decision but the followers do not and such a decision is highly likely to fail. Employing this

theory, the study established that grant aided schools needed an all-inclusive approach in financial decision making as the theory posits that there was substantial evidence of the importance of participation in decision making.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

This study considered adequate teacher representation in financial decisions as an independent variable while enhanced financial decisions were the dependent variable. The assumption of the study highlighted in figure 1 was that with improved extent of teacher representation in financial decisions, the result would be enhanced financial decisions. This would also result in increased levels of teacher representation in decision making in school operations. The conceptual model in this section aimed at illustrating the relationship between teacher representation and enhanced financial decisions in grant aided secondary schools. In case of grant aided schools, decision making covers all major key accountability areas in the school which includes financial decisions. Presence of a mission statement and vision spells the strategic direction of the organization. Similarly, academic excellence, discipline and school culture, land and infrastructure development, stakeholder satisfaction, financial stability and excellence in non-academics are used as indicators of school improvement. The model thus illustrates that policy guidelines (independent variable) enhanced financial decision (dependent variable).



**Figure 2.6.1: Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is guided by Contingency Theory of Participative Decision which paves decision making direction in grant aided schools' day to day operations. The independent variable in this conceptual framework is school decision making. School decision making uses the available policy guidelines to formulate informed and lasting decisions about financial decision making in grant aided secondary schools. The framework representation outlines how variables in a secondary school teacher representation interact with one another to attain optimal intended enhanced financial decisions.

## **2.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has highlighted the existing literature that is related to teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decisions in grant aided secondary schools, particularly in Choma District in Zambia. The various related literatures reviewed in this chapter have been considered to be relevant in the view that they helped putting into the context similar scholarly studies conducted so far, thereby providing justification as to why there was a need to conduct a study to establish teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decisions in grant aided secondary schools, particularly in Choma District in Zambia. In the next chapter, the methodology that was employed in this study will be presented.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Overview**

The previous chapter endeavored to review the related literature deemed relevant to the study. In this chapter, research design, target population, study sample, sampling techniques, research instruments for data collection, data collection procedure, validity and reliability, data analysis as well as ethical considerations have all been explained.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is constituted and provides the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). Research design is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent and achievable empirical research. According to Kothari (2004) research design is the arrangement of condition for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The criteria for selecting a research design depend upon the appropriateness of the techniques for the objectives of the study (Keith et al, 2000).

This study adopted a qualitative approach and used a descriptive design. The main reason for choosing a descriptive design was that the researcher wanted to get factual evidence from school situations and respondents with regard teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decision in selected secondary schools of Choma district. Also, a qualitative approach was considered to be the best for this study due to its theoretical underpinnings as it regards the available facts and uniqueness in interpreting the phenomena. Qualitative research enabled the researcher to enter into the field with an open mind. It is holistic and it provided the researcher with a contextual understanding of participants' experiences of teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decision in secondary schools. Qualitative research offered the researcher a more in-depth understanding of the role that was played by teacher representation in decision making and enhancement of financial decisions in secondary schools.

### **3.3 Study Population**

A target population was drawn from all grant aided schools in Choma district which formed the sample frame for this research. The target population from the selected research site included all head teachers, teachers and heads of department in grant aided secondary schools in Choma District. These cohorts were selected because the researcher was of the view that this category of participants had more information on teacher representation in decision making and their role in enhancing financial decision in grant aided schools.

### **3.4 Sample Size**

A sample is a subset of a population. A sample size may be defined as the size of the subset of a population. Khotari (2004) states that a sample of a research should be truly representative of population characteristics without any bias so that it may result in valid and reliable conclusions. The sample size of this study comprised five (5) head teachers of grant aided schools, twenty (20) teachers; that is, four from each of the five selected grant aided schools and five (5) heads of department from the selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

Kombo and Tromp (2006) refer to sampling procedure as a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population. Purposive sampling was used to sample head teachers and heads of department from the five grant aided schools that were purposively selected in Choma district based on the nature of the job of the participants and their relevance to the study. According to Kothari (2004), purposive or deliberate sampling involves deliberate selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe.

Simple random sampling method was used to sample teachers from the five selected grant aided schools. A lottery draw was used to get a wider representative sample of participants and everyone with similar characteristics in the sample had an equal chance for being selected. To achieve this, lists of all teachers in individual selected grant aided schools were generated using school enrolment statistics. The lists formed a sample frame for teachers for each of the selected grant aided schools. Every name on the lists for individual schools was written on separate small

piece of paper. All pieces of paper containing single names of participants on lists for individual schools were folded and thoroughly mixed in a box. Raffle draw for each individual school was conducted without replacement of already picked names back in the box. Four participants were selected from each of the five selected schools to come up with 20 teacher participants. This sampling method was significant in this research because it gave every teacher in each of the five selected schools an equal opportunity to be selected.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

This study was qualitative in nature; therefore, it used qualitative data collecting methods and instruments. The data collection methods that were used are in-depth interviews and document analysis. The researcher used interview guides containing semi structured question items to engage participants into interviews. The interview guides contained semi-structured questions items that accorded the participants to clarify and expand on their views. According to Combo and Tromp (2006) semi-structured questions are flexible and enable the researcher to get a complete understanding of the issue under investigation.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), Data collection refers to the gathering of specific information aimed at proving or refuting some facts. The purpose of collecting data is to help the researcher clarify the facts. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher sought permission from the District Education Board Secretary. Consent was also sought from the participants. The five (5) Head teachers, twenty (20) teachers and five (5) heads of department were subjected to in-depth interviews at separate convenient times. Data collected from the In-Depth Interviews was recorded. Document analysis was used with the head teachers to verify the representation of teachers in financial decision makingdecision-making committees as well as minutes from the financial decision makingdecision-making planning meetings.

### **3.8 Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness**

In the sub-sections below the researcher explains how this research ensured the aspects of validity, reliability and trustworthiness.

### **3.8.1 Validity**

The aspect of validity was used to examine the extent to which the results of the research were generalized on the results of teacher's representation in decision making in selected grant aided secondary schools. To validate the findings in this research, the researcher recorded some of the interviews under the permission of participants during data collection which was used later to check for unclear information and member checking with the participants. To achieve data validity using member checking, the researcher had to make use of the participants' responses for the verification of the findings from interviews and was able to make follow ups on issues that needed clarity. In addition, the researcher compared the findings from the interviews and observation schedules in order to check whether the analyzed data represented the phenomenon under study. Analyzed data was presented back to respondents for verification of their responses

The researcher also ensured data validity through the use of interviews and document analysis on one group of participants which did not take part in the main research. This use of multiple data collection techniques to ensure data validity helped the researcher to crosscheck the authenticity of data gathered. It also maximized validity by counterchecking any contradictory information. To achieve triangulation of data sources, interviews and document analysis were used on separate groups of participants. The main purpose of triangulation of data sources in this study was to provide validation of the information obtained from one source by gathering information from another source using another data collection instrument. The researcher found that the responses from various instruments used yielded the similar results.

### **3.8.2 Reliability**

Prior to the collection of data, the researcher ensured that the reliability of the research instruments measures was taken. Reliability measures were conducted to reduce a high probability of collecting inaccurate data on interview guides which would have probably paralyzed the whole essence of the research carried out. It was in this view that interview guide question items were pre-tested in order to assess whether the instruments addressed the data the researcher wanted to collect. Therefore, a pilot was carried out on randomly chosen participants, involving interviews to ensure internal consistence. Participants who took part in a pilot were not included in the main research. The reason for a pilot was to measure accuracy precision of

interview guide items and this was achieved because the interviews yielded consistent results after repeated trials.

Further, the researcher conducted a pilot study in order to check the appropriateness of the language used in the interview guides to determine the difficulty of the instrument's questions items. The researcher used results from pilot testing to rectify misleading questions on the instruments before the study was carried out, therefore making the instruments valid and reliable. The questions that appeared to be difficult in understanding were rephrased. The researcher updated the research instruments by making corrections and adjustments based on observations made. Amended interview guide question items facilitated the collection of appropriate data from the sampled participants.

### **3.8.3 Trustworthiness**

Credibility, dependability and transferability were put into consideration to ensure data trustworthiness. Credibility depended on the richness of the data gathered. Credibility was achieved through expert evaluation of gathered data from interviews. Data that needed clarity of experts in the field were subjected to experts who included the Education Standards Officers who clarified and authenticated the trustworthiness of data gathered from interviews.

Dependability ensured that the research findings were consistent and could be repeated. This was achieved through member check as the respondents asked to confirm their responses, still maintained their earlier responses. Transferability was ensured to a degree that the research could be transferred to other contexts. The data gathered and analyzed point to the participants' tilt in point of view and this made the researcher to make generalizations on the results. Therefore, ensuring trustworthiness helped the evaluation of the research in line with the procedure to generalize the findings and this was achieved through giving a clear and distinctive description of the research context, selection and characteristics of participants, data collection as well as the procedure for data analysis.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Data analysis refers to examining the information collected in a research and making inferences and deductions (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Qualitative method of data analysis was used. Using

thematic analysis method, qualitative data collected from In-Depth Interviews was transcribed and sorted into themes which were analyzed and presented as findings.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues were considered in this study. Ethics are simply moral principles that guide our behavior and based on shared values and beliefs about what is good or bad. All data collected was strictly confidential and was strictly for the purpose of this research. No findings were attached to any particular school. The researcher sought consent from all the participants, and permission from Head teachers of the selected grant aided schools in the sample and the District Education Board Secretary.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Overview**

This chapter contains findings of the study on teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decision in selected grant aided secondary schools of Choma District. The findings are a reflection the interviews conducted in the field among the head teachers, teachers and heads of department in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District.

The findings are given under full headings derived from the objectives of the study which include: areas of teachers' involvement in school decision making, levels of teachers' involvement in financial decision making among various categories and categories and constraints faced in financial decision making in grant aided secondary schools.

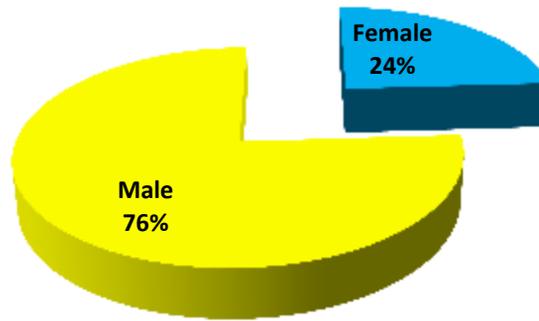
The headings are sub-divided to include: teacher participation in financial decisions, financial decisions and teacher representation, inadequate financial resources, policy directives in financial decision making, and financial regulations and guidelines.

#### **4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

In order to have a proper identification of participants in the present study, the researcher assigned letters of the alphabet to head teachers and heads of department. For instance, head teacher 'A', head teacher B and so on. The same was with heads of department. Similarly, with teachers, numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 were used to identify them. Additionally, schools were coded using numbers.

Respondents who took part in this study had to indicate their brief background information for the purpose of analysis regarding their gender, working experience. Figure 4.1; and Tables 4.1 indicate the background information of the respondents.

**Gender of Respondents**



**Figure 4.1.1:** Participants’ Gender

As shown in Figure 4.1, the study indicates that 76% of participants who participated in the study were male while 24% were female. This means that there were more male participants than female participants in the participating grant aided schools.

**Table 4.1.2:** The distribution of the work experience of participants in the study

Position of Participant	Below 5 Years	5-10 Years	11-15 Years	16 Years and Above
Head teachers	0	4	1	0
Heads of Department	3	2	0	0
Teachers	1	12	1	0
Total	4	18	2	0

The study shows participants working experience in the ranges of: below 5 years, between 5-10 years, 11-15 years and above 16 years respectively. The findings of the study indicate that 4 participants comprising head teachers had worked for 5-10 years; 1 had worked for 11-12 years, none had worked for 16 years and above and below 5 years. The study also revealed that 2 heads of department indicated to have worked 5-10 years; 3 worked for below 5 years; none worked for 11 – 15 years and none indicated to have worked for 16 years and above. The study further revealed that 12 teachers indicated to have worked 5-10 years; 1 worked for below 5 years; 1

worked for 11 – 15 years and none indicated to have worked for 16 years and above. It was clear that the majority of head teachers and teachers had 5-10-years work experience and majority of heads of department had worked for less than 5 years. This meant that the respondents were conversant with most of the issues surrounding teacher representation in decision making and its role in enhancing financial decision in grant aided schools.

#### **4.2 Staff Involvement in Decision Making**

The study sought to establish the areas that class teachers were involved in decision making in secondary schools in selected grant aided schools in Choma District. The data was collected from categories of respondents; head teachers, followed by the heads of Departments and teachers.

The study found that grant aided secondary schools had different staff establishment and staff involvement in decision making. The findings revealed that school ‘A’ had total staff establishment of 48 staff; school ‘B’ 63 staff; school ‘C’ 31 staff; school ‘D’ 35 staff and school ‘E’ had 27 staff. The study established from the three categories of participants interviewed that from all the schools in the study every staff in the school staff establishment was involved in decision making related to drawing agenda for school meetings, selection of school prefects, and discipline of learners; however class teachers were less involvement in financial decisions and procurement of educational materials.

The study further found that Heads of Department (HODs) were both involved in decision making such as: seeking opinion on matters, during choice of school prefects, drawing up programs for important school functions, and decisions in financial matters and procurement of educational materials. The study found that school ‘A’ had 46 teachers and only 5 HODs; one from each department (Languages, Social sciences, Natural sciences, Commercial subjects, Practical subjects) were involved in financial decisions. School ‘B’ had 61 teachers and 5 HODs were involved in financial decisions; School ‘C’ had 29 teachers and 5 HODs were involved in financial decisions; School ‘D’ had 33 teachers and 5 HODs were involved in financial decisions and school ‘E’ had 50 teachers and only 5 HODs were involved in financial decisions.

The study found that grant aided secondary schools involved the rest of teaching staff in academic related decision making decision-making program areas but less involved in areas of financial decisions. This was evident when teachers who were interviewed expressed their displeasure at being less involved in some decision making decision-making areas such as financial decisions. The study found that the decision making decision-making concerning management issues were left in the hands of head teachers and head of departments while decisions concerning students' progress were left to the teachers. Teachers interviewed indicated that the heads of department and head teacher of selected grant aided secondary schools did not feel confident about the involvement teachers in financial decisions. One teacher commented that:

*The impact of adequate teacher representation in financial decisions is obvious. The more the teacher representatives, the better the quality of decisions made. Adequate teacher representation in financial decisions has an impact on the quality of the decisions made in the sense that ideas come from a wide pool of people with a variety of knowledge and skills.*

The study revealed that all staff on school establishment was involved in decision making which included drawing agenda for school meetings, selection of school prefects, and discipline of learners. Teachers were not directly involved in financial decisions and procurement of educational materials. Heads of department were representatives of teachers in decisions on financial matters and procurement of educational materials. Teachers expressed their displeasure on being given fewer opportunities when it came to making decisions in financial matters.

#### **4.2.1 Teacher Participation in Decision Making**

The study found that participatory decision making in the area of academics in grant aided secondary schools. The participants interviewed indicated that decision making on school issues was not a one-person activity but involved everyone in the school. Further, the study found that teachers participated in decision making in staff meetings at the beginning of every term to contribute on matters of school planning for school time table, class allocation, extra and co-curricular activities for the term and appointment of school prefects and class monitors. Teachers also participated in decision making in staff briefings, learners progress assessment meetings and teachers welfare meetings. The study also found that every staff participation in decision making

enhanced collaborated decisions; allowed transparency and accountability among teachers and school administrators. The following excerpt presents views of one head teacher:

*Decision making in school financial matters requires the involvement of key stakeholders that include the representatives of teachers and parents. Because of the sensitivity of financial decisions, our school involves teachers in decision making though not everyone is involved. This has helped our school in ensuring transparency in handling financial decisions.*

Further, another head teacher expressed a similar view when stressing out that:

*Involving every staff in decision making helps in enhancing integrity in school decisions because individuals are able to respond accordingly to the collective decisions.*

The study also found that at departmental level teachers participated in decision making that involved drawing of financial budget for procurement of school requisites such as textbooks, preparation books, box files, chalk, paper, pens at department level. Interview findings from schools 'C'; school 'D' and school 'E' revealed that science teachers participated in decision making on budgeting and procurement of science chemicals for the department but findings from school 'A' and school 'B' found that the school administration made decisions in budgets on science chemicals procurement with heads of department but without the participation of teachers. The study found that departments in schools involved staff within the department on matters such drawing up of department work plans, budget, and schemes of work and teacher group meetings as well as group study meetings. On matters that involved financial decision, the study found that all the schools only heads of department participated both in academic and financial decisions.

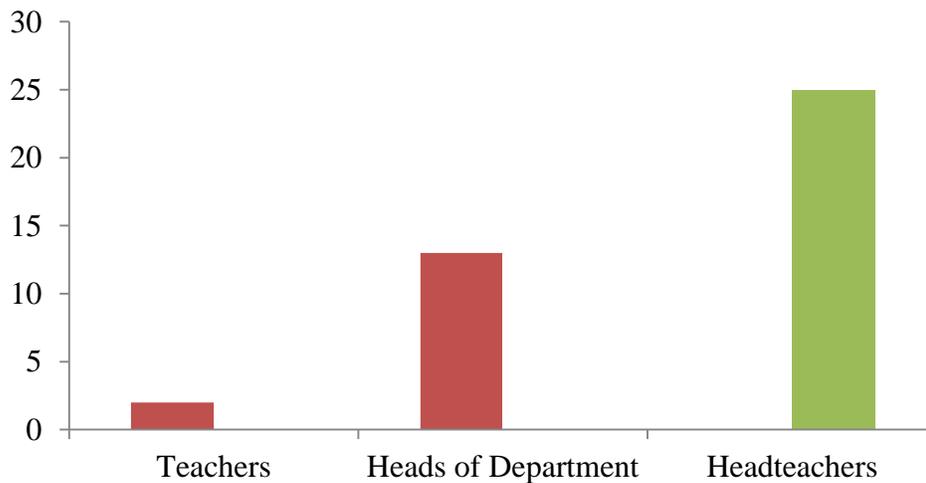
The study revealed that teachers participated in decision making during staff meetings at the beginning of every term to plan for school time table, class allocation, extra and co-curricular activities for the term and appointment of school prefects and class monitors; teachers participated in decision making that involved drawing of financial budget for procurement of school requisites such as textbooks, preparation books, box files, chalk, paper, pens at departmental level; departments in schools involved staff within the department in decision

making on matters such drawing up of department work plans, budget, schemes of work and teacher group meetings as well as group study meetings.

### 4.3 Levels of Teacher Involvement in Financial Decision Making

In trying to establish the levels of evidence of teacher involvement in decision making in selected grant aided schools, a question was used to help provide answers to the findings; “How are the levels of teachers’ involvement in financial decision making among various categories of teachers in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District?”

The study found different levels of teachers, heads of department and head teachers involvement in financial decision making. The data analyzed from participants’ responses from interviews revealed that head of departments and the head teachers had higher levels of involvement in the decisions making within the schools and minimal for teachers. The overall levels of involvement in decisions making based on participants responses are presented in Figure 4.3. 1.



**Figure 4.3.1:** Levels of respondents’ involvement in financial decision making.

The findings of the study revealed that head teachers and heads of department were more involved in financial decision making than teachers. The teachers interviewed expressed decisional deprivation in the financial decisions and also expressed the perception of administrators as exercising high decisional control. One teacher said:

*School finances are public funds and no one should be allowed to make financial decisions alone. Therefore, it is very important to allow representation allow representation of teachers in school financial decision making so that ideas are collaborated in decision making. This gesture of allowing teachers to be part and parcel in financial decision has helped us in addressing some conflicts based on financial management.*

The study also found that some of the selected granted aided secondary schools were allowing teachers to participate in financial decision making as a ways of promoting transparency, accountability in financial decisions and avoid conflict between the teachers and the administrators. The study found that school 'C' and school 'E' allowed teachers participation in decision making on whole school planning. Schools 'A'; School 'C'; and school 'B' did not allow teachers in financial decision making for whole school planning. It was established that teachers and head teachers at school 'C' and school 'E' employed participatory financial decision making. From Schools 'A'; School 'C'; and school 'B', teachers explained that they were not involved in school based financial decision making. The following views were expressed by one teacher pertaining to his experiences:

*The aspect of involving teachers in financial decision making is a good idea and in our school teachers are involved in financial decision making through our Heads of Department.*

The study also found that the Ministry of General Education distanced itself from the full authority of school financial decision making but only provided policy guidelines on the management of financial resources in grant aided schools.

The study revealed discrimination in the levels of involvement in decision making among teachers, heads of departments, and head teachers. The teachers expressed decisional deprivation in the financial decisions and also expressed the perception of administrators as exercising high decisional control; some school allowed teachers in financial decision making for whole school planning while other did not; the Ministry of General Education distanced itself from the full authority of school financial decisions in grant aided schools and only provided policy guidelines on the management of financial resources.

### 4.3.1 Financial Decisions and Teacher Representation

The study found that the Ministry of General Education directed all grant aided secondary schools to follow financial guidelines provided by the ministry. The documents analysis revealed that the education board management guidelines indicated that the school financial committee shall involve the representation of teachers and parents in financial decision making. The study established that not all teachers were to be involved in financial decision making but only departmental and section heads were to represent teachers in financial decisions.

The study revealed that the representation of teachers through departmental and section heads was biased, low trust in heads of department representation because teachers' plights were not being addressed. Teachers interviewed indicated that teachers' representation in financial decisions in grant aided schools did not support the teachers but benefited school administrators' financial decisions to finance their meeting allowances and travel expenses. The findings also showed that the representation of the whole department by one person was not favored by teachers in selected grant aided secondary schools. One teacher from secondary school 5 claimed the following in the excerpt below:

*The people who claim to represent us in financial decision making in my view don't represent us because when we share the problems we encounter and our needs in departments, the responses we get from representatives are contrary to our requests and usually no financial report is given to us. For me representation is not helpful to teachers.*

In agreeing with the teacher from school 5, another teacher from school 2 also expressed himself in the following way:

*Our heads of department and school head teachers don't help us in financial decisions. What they bring out in most financial decisions only benefits them. Financial decision making should cover all things that concern teachers, learners, administration and parents but this is hardly the case.*

The views obtained from head teachers were also similar to teachers' responses. Head teachers indicated that financial decision making was not a one person-one-person thing but needed representation of teachers in schools. The study revealed that head teachers of selected schools indicated that teachers were represented in financial decision making through their heads of department and sections. The study found that teacher representation in financial decisions did not favour the plight and needs of teachers' because teachers financial concerns raised through their heads of department were not addressed. One head teacher said:

*Teachers are represented in financial decision making through their heads of department and sections. Not every teacher can be involved in financial decision making, the guidelines indicate that teachers should only be represented in financial decision making through their heads of department.*

In the same vein, another head teacher who was interviewed had an opportunity to say the following:

*It is important to get views from a wider pool, than a limited number of people. However, One member is enough to report: There is no need to have a crowd of teacher representatives since the current membership is enough and equal to the task. One member is enough to represent the rest.*

The research revealed low trust in heads of department representation because teachers' plights were not being addressed; teachers thought departmental and section heads were biased. Teachers interviewed indicated that teachers' representation in financial decisions in grant aided schools did not support the teachers but benefited school administrators financials decisions to finance their meetings allowances and travel expenses; representation of the whole department by one person was not favored by teachers in selected grant aided secondary schools; teacher representation in financial decisions did not favour the plight and needs of teachers because teachers financial concerns raised through their heads of department were not addressed; schools cannot involve every teacher in financial decisions; teachers should be represented in financial decisions through their heads of department.

#### **4.4 Major Constraints of Teachers' Representation in Decision Making**

The major constraints of teachers' representation in decision making in grant aided schools were very important in this study. It was important to establish the evidence based evidence-based findings pertaining to the constraint that were associated and experienced by teachers and head teachers in financial decision making in selected grant aided schools in Choma district. Semi structured Interviews were used to collect data from head teachers, teachers and district education official concerning constraints faced in teacher representation in financial making decision in grant aided schools. In order to obtain in depth views and information from participants, interviews involving different categories of participants were conducted separately. The findings from the interviews revealed different categories of major constraints as presented under the following subheadings: lack of teachers' direct participation in financial decisions; and policy directives by Ministry of General Education.

##### **4.4.1 Lack of Teachers Direct Participation in Financial Decisions**

The study found lack of teachers' direct participation in financial decisions as a constraint in financial decision making in grant aided schools. The study established that teachers felt misrepresented by their heads of department in decision making in matters of financial decisions. Teachers interviewed indicated that financial concerns presented to administration were not being addressed. Teachers attributed non address of their concerns to lack of their direct participation in financial decisions. The participants interviewed bemoaned that there was no adequate representation of teachers in financial decision making because financial concerns were hardly addressed. One teacher said that:

*I think misrepresentation in decision making is a very big problem that we face as teachers. Our heads of department don't take the actual concerns we raise as a department because the departmental needs are not addressed whenever decisions are made by school authorities.*

Other teachers interviewed similarly mentioned that their representatives in financial decisions were not representing the voice of teachers but coerced by the decisions of school senior administrators. One teacher from grant aided school 4 indicated that:

*Sometimes blame can be leveled against the people who represent us in financial decision making and yet they are innocent. The main problem is that departmental concerns are not addressed by the school in as much as they are always presented through heads of department*

From the responses of head teachers, teachers and an official from District Education Board Secretary office, the study found that the funding that the selected grant aided schools received from the government through the Ministry of General Education was very inadequate. The responses from participants indicated that inadequate financial resources in grant aided schools contributed to teachers feeling of misrepresentation in decision making. The study found that inadequacy in finances that schools received made it appear as if the heads of department who were mandated to represent teachers in financial decisions were not helping the people they were meant to represent.

The study revealed that lack of teachers' direct participation in financial decisions as a constraint in financial decision making in grant aided schools; teachers felt misrepresented by their heads of department in decision making relating to matters of financial decisions; teachers financial concerns presented to administration were not being addressed. Teachers attributed non address of their concerns to lack of their direct participation in financial decisions; no adequate representation of teachers in financial decision making because financial concerns were hardly addressed; heads of department representation of teachers in financial decisions were not representing the voice of teachers but coerced by the decisions of school senior administrators; inadequacy in finances that schools received made it appear as if the heads of department who were mandated to represent teachers in financial decisions were not helping the people they were meant to represent.

#### **4.4.2 Policy Directives in Financial Decision Making**

Head teachers of selected grant aided secondary schools bemoaned the stiffness of policy directives in financial decision making. The study revealed that the Ministry of General Education provided a policy direction to grant aided schools to use in financial decision making as provided in the financial management regulations, which made financial decision making difficult. The study found that policy directives stated that teachers were not members of financial decisions but all heads of department were members to financial committees. It was

established from the study that policy directives on financial decisions hindered teachers' participation in decision making. One head teacher from grant aided secondary school 'B' said the following words:

*The financial regulations given to grant aided schools to use in financial decision making are standard and no one school is allowed to change them but follow the directives the way they are. This poses a challenge whenever we are making decisions relating to finances because funding is too inadequate and when we subject it to the directives, it fails to fit hence we sometimes times jump the directive and do the other way which results in an audit query again once established.*

The head teachers interviewed bemoaned complexity of policy directives on financial decision making and that it was difficult to make financial decisions because of the controversy between the policy guidelines and the needs of schools. The head teachers further indicated that the policy guidelines were rigid and made them bend the policy guidelines to make financial decisions to address school needs and to address concerns by the teachers.

The study revealed stiffness of policy directives in financial decision making; Ministry of General Education provided a policy direction to grant aided schools to use in financial decision making as provided in the financial management regulations which made financial decision making difficult; teachers were not members of financial decisions but all heads of department were members to financial committee; policy directives on financial decisions hindered teachers' participation in decision making; policy guidelines were rigid and made schools bend the policy guidelines to make financial decisions to address school needs and to address concerns by the teachers.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **5.0 Overview**

The previous chapter presented the findings of the study. The present chapter discusses the findings of the study in view of literature and analysis of research findings. To this effect, findings of the study were discussed as they came out in the entire objectives presented below.

1. To assess teacher involvement in financial decision making in secondary schools.
2. To establish levels of teachers' involvement in financial decision making among various categories in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District.
3. To ascertain the major constraints of teachers' representation in selected grant aided schools in Choma District.

The findings are discussed with special reference to the results obtained from interviews. Effort has been made to reflect, validate and broaden current knowledge on teacher representation in financial decision-making in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma district. Discussion of the research findings are discussed under subheading generated from the findings presented in chapter four of this study.

#### **5.1 Teachers' Involvement in School Decision Making**

Grant aided secondary schools are institutions of learning that work in collaboration teachers, learners, administrators and the parents. Moreover, the day to day running of secondary schools involves all the categories of people mentioned above. The granted aided secondary schools appreciated the services of teachers by involving them in decision making that particularly involved issues and matters directly related to the learners' academics. The study showed that the areas of decisions making that teacher were more positive about were touching on the integrity of the students and academic performance in their areas of jurisdiction. These areas were diverse and include decision making on issues such as choice of school prefects, setting of internal

exams, making teaching timetables, choosing subjects to be offered in schools and punishing of errant students.

The study revealed that teachers were involved in decision making which included drawing agenda for school meetings, selection of school prefects, and discipline of learners. Teachers were not directly involved in financial decision and procurement of educational materials. Heads of department were representatives of teachers in financial decisions. Responses revealed that adequate teacher representation in financial decisions has an impact on the quality of the decisions because ideas come from a wide pool of people with a variety of knowledge and skills.

The findings show that aspects of teacher involvement in decision making in the area of academics and learner discipline in grant aided secondary schools in the study were related to collegiality in decision making. Collegiality means a strong collegial relationship and a high spirit of cooperation among teachers and school administrators. Collegiality has been linked to effective school improvement. Collegiality was found to be a predictive aspect of teacher participation in the overall decision making dimension and all the decision domains and not except the class level decision making dimension This finding is similar to that of Bondy et al (1994) who found that where a cooperative relationship was shared amongst teachers and administrators, the level of participation in decision making would be enhanced. It is also consistent with the finding of Taylor's study (1997) which reported that teachers with a higher level of participation in decision making perceived a higher level of collegiality than those with a lower level of participation.

Collegiality in decision making was not found to be helpful with teachers' participation in the classroom level domain. This could be because in grant aided secondary schools, teaching in the classroom is an individual task for the teacher and not conducted through teamwork. This finding is in line Fullan et al (1992) who found that teachers typically work in isolation and collaborative work among teachers is rare and difficult to sustain. This suggests that if collegiality is a crucial aspect of decision making and decision making is sought, teachers in grant aided secondary schools will have to change their style of teaching to embrace more teamwork and collaborative teaching to embrace collegiality in decision making.

However, bureaucratic control was found to be a predictive aspect of teacher participation in the overall decision dimension and all the decision domains except academics level domain. Bureaucratic control was negatively correlated with the level of participation in decision making. This suggests that the higher the level of management control, the lower would be the level of teacher participation in decision making. It seems that the bureaucratic control exercised by many school administrations in selected grant aided secondary schools in the study, is a barrier for implementing teacher participation in decision making. If the policy to increase teacher participation in decision making is to be implemented, it seems clear that bureaucratic control must be reduced. Decision making in managerial matters turned to be bureaucratic and only involved key stakeholders such as the head at all levels of administration in schools. Critical managerial matters involving financial decisions only involved heads of department and head teachers. This finding is in line with Ford (1996) who indicated that many head teachers and school management boards often hide a lot of issues under the carpet because there is lack of transparency in the entire management protocols.

The lapse of proper management procedures often result because head teachers are being dictatorial. When teachers have proper scrutiny of the entire deal then the head teachers are afraid of being exposed. Such a state of affairs has often resulted to improper procurement of materials; sometimes of low quality but at inflated prices. It is therefore noted that non bureaucratic decision making would promote teachers participation regardless of administrative position. This finding is supported by Johnson et al (1996) who suggested the creation of democratic rules and procedures for enhanced teacher participation in decision making. The school administrators were part of financial decision committee by the virtue of their responsibility in schools. The involvement of heads of department was meant to represent teachers in their department on financial decisions. This finding was in tandem with Witty (2003) who asserted that in many schools, the heads of departments have a role to ensure that the departments that they head are sailing in the academic spheres.

Teachers expressed their displeasure at being given fewer opportunities when it came to making decisions in financial matters

## **5.2 Teachers' Involvement in Financial Decision Making**

The study found that the participatory aspect in financial decision making involving teachers and head teachers was necessary in ensuring transparency, accountability and also in addressing financial decision based conflicts between teachers and head teachers. Grant aided secondary schools have many areas that individuals of different responsibility are involved in making decisions. The study therefore showed that the levels of teacher involvement in financial decisions were very low while the heads of department and head teachers had higher levels of involvement in the financial decisions within the schools.

The low involvement of teachers in financial decisions was attributed to discrimination on the levels of involvement in financial decision making among teachers, heads of departments, and head teachers. The heads of department therefore were moderately involved in financial decision making in the selected secondary schools while the head teachers had higher levels of involvement in the financial decisions within the schools. The feeling of decisional deprivation among the teachers in the financial decisions was related to the perception of administrators as exercising high decisional control. This finding was in agreement with Alutto and Belasco (1972) concluded that shared decision-making may not be a viable administrative strategy for all segments of the school population

In grant aided secondary schools, the level of teacher participation in financial decisions is based on professional autonomy. Professional autonomy denoted the variation in terms of expert and job appointment in an organization. A high level of professional autonomy indicates that teachers have a lot of discretion. At the classroom level, teachers exercise autonomy in relation to pedagogy. High professional autonomy enables them to use their professional judgment to tackle students' individual differences. High professional autonomy in the school level technical domain suggests that teachers were consulted about the technical aspects of issues that influenced whole school policy. The finding is supported by the finding of Slegers et al (1995) which reported that teacher participation in decision making and their professional orientation were related. Smylie (1992) suggested that a norm of professional privacy was a predictor of participation in the decision domain concerning curriculum and instruction. This is an interesting

finding in the current study in the sense that as was suggested above that teachers' focus on the academic level domain reflects the isolated role of secondary school teachers.

In the current study, professional autonomy was not a predictor of participation in financial decisions at either department or school level. This finding was similar to the findings of Wong's study (1998) which reported a negative relationship between the variable of teachers' professional autonomy and the variable of decision making and planning effectiveness. Wong's study showed that the professional autonomy of Hong Kong teachers would not contribute to financial decisions as in managerial domains. On the contrary, this finding was different from Jongmans et al's study (1998) which showed that teachers' involvement in school policymaking and their professional orientation were related. In grant aided secondary schools, teachers' participation in the managerial domains is restricted by bureaucratic controls and on the whole their situation has been shown to be one of decision deprivation in relation to the management domain.

The variations in the levels of involvement in financial decisions contributed to different levels of in job satisfaction among teachers. Job satisfaction levels were different for the teachers and administrators pertaining to decision participation in all the decision domains. Teachers with higher levels of participation had significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than those with lower levels. This result of a positive link between teachers' participation and job satisfaction was consistent with the findings from Alutto et al (1972); Conway, (1984); Schneider (1984); Bacharach et al (1990); Reyes (1989); Murphy et al (1995); and Imber et al (1990). They found a significant positive relationship between levels of teacher involvement and job satisfaction.

Teacher representation in financial decisions played a role in enhancing decision making in the sense that their awareness of financial matters and their voices heard directly or indirectly through their heads of department or representatives promotes transparency, integrity and minimizes decision making related conflicts. This finding is in line with Lin (2014) in which he highlighted a number of benefits of teacher participation in decision- making. Among the benefits is that teacher participation in decision-making presented crucial information closest to the sources of problems of schooling, improving the quality of decisions effectively.

### **5.3 Constraints in Teachers Representation in Decision Making**

A resource is anything that an organizational manager utilizes in order to achieve their set organizational goals. Resources in an organization are always limited thus the need to plan well on how to prudently manage the available resources and mobilize for more in order to achieve the goals projected in schools. In the process of making financial decisions, financial resources are effectively allocated for the intended purpose in order to obtain optimal benefit from the resource which in turn resulted in improved performance of the secondary schools. This finding is supported by Wanjala and Rarieya (2014) who identified limited school budgets as a major challenge to the improvement of school facilities. They argued that leaders had to think of strategic ways of generating financial resources.

The findings of the study indicated that availability of financial resources played key role in financial decisions in secondary schools. Most respondents attributed the lack of financial resources to failure in achieving the objectives set out in financial decisions. Financial resources in schools enhanced performance as they enabled the staff within the schools to meet the set objectives effectively and efficiently within the required time frame. Well informed financial decisions on financial resources also enabled the schools to be able to develop the physical facilities which in turn attracted students to the school. This is supported by Zhang (2014) who argues that the process of attracting and procuring external resources together with the allocation and integration of internal resources should be aligned with the financial decisions. He adds that there should be a linkage between financial decisions, finance and resources through the development of annual plans and financial budgets.

Shared vision was cited as a constraint faced by teacher participation in the school level financial decisions. Teachers who saw themselves as contributing to building of shared vision also saw themselves as having a high level of participation in the school financial decisions. Teacher participation at all levels in school financial decisions was one of the aspects of decentralization in the education system. This finding is in tandem with the finding of Hanson (1998) which asserts that shared vision may be one of the critical success factors for implementing decisions for decentralization. The finding is also supported by the finding of Bondy (1994) which found that shared vision was one of the factors for enhancing teacher involvement in decision making. Bondy suggested that one of the preconditions for the successful implementation of school based

management was that schools should develop clear and shared financial decisions. This was not the case in grant aided secondary schools and it would be an important area on which to focus resources if school based management and greater participation of teachers in financial decisions in all domains is to be achieved.

Decision-domains for teacher participation in decision making were identified in this chapter. Decision deprivation was found in all the decision domains more especially in financial decisions. Teacher ranks and administrative duties were identified as the predictors for teacher participation. The management practices: bureaucratic control, collegiality, professional autonomy and shared vision were shown to have predictive capabilities in all the decision domains. Teacher perceptions of job satisfaction and job commitment were correlated with their level of participation in decision making. Teachers with a higher level of perceived participation representation and participation had a significantly higher level of job satisfaction and job commitment than those in levels of lower representation and participation.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Overview**

This chapter is a synthesis of the entire study and contains summary of research findings, exposition of findings, commensurate with the objectives, conclusions and recommendations based thereon. The research questions: What are the areas in which teachers are involved in managerial decision making in secondary schools?; How are the levels of teachers' involvement in financial decision making among various categories of teachers in selected grant aided secondary schools in Choma District?; What are the major constraints of teachers' representation in financial decisions in selected grant aided schools in Choma District? The conclusions to the research are reported here as a set of key answers provided to the research topic and research questions through interpretation of data and the generation of the assertions provide in the conclusions.

#### **6.2 Conclusions**

The study investigated areas in which teachers are involved in decision making in secondary schools. The study revealed that heads of department were involved in decision making that included: seeking opinion on matters involving financial decisions and drawing up programs for important school functions. Teachers were involved in decision making which included drawing agenda for school meetings, selection of school prefects, and discipline of learners. The study concludes that teachers were not directly involved in financial decision and procurement of educational materials. Heads of department were representatives of teachers in financial decisions; teachers participated in decision making in staff meetings at the beginning of every term to plan for school time table, class allocation, extra and co-curricular activities for the term and appointment of school prefects and class monitors; teachers participated in decision making that involved drawing of financial budget for procurement of school requisites such as textbooks, preparation books, box files, chalk, paper, pens at department level; department in school

involved staff within the department in decision making on matters such drawing up of department work plans, budget, and schemes of work and teacher group meetings as well as group study meetings.

The study assessed the levels of teachers' involvement in financial decisions among various categories of teachers in selected grant aided secondary schools. The study revealed that heads of department involvement in decision making was high together with head teachers and minimal for teachers; discrimination on the levels of involvement in decision making among teachers, heads of departments, and head teachers. The study concludes decisional deprivation in the financial decision making and perception of administrators as exercising high decisional control; some school allowed teachers in financial decision making for whole school planning while other did not; the Ministry of General Education distanced itself from the full authority of school financial decisions in grant aided schools only provided policy guidelines on the management of financial resources; representation of teachers through departmental and section heads was biased; low trust in heads of department representation of teachers in financial decisions because financial decisions did not favor the plight and needs of teachers' financial concerns raised through their heads of department and sections; and schools cannot involve every teacher in financial decisions; the guidelines indicate that teachers should only be represented in financial decisions through their heads of department.

The study further concludes that the Ministry of General Education provided a policy direction to grant aided schools in financial decision making as provided in the financial management regulations which made financial decisions difficult; policy directives on financial decisions allowed the head teacher, deputy head teachers and all heads of department participation in financial decision making.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

From the findings and discussion in chapters four and five respectively, this study recommends the following;

1. Administrators in grant aided schools should involve teachers in financial decision so as to enhance collective financial decisions.

2. The Ministry of General Education should increase budgetary allocation to grant aided secondary schools so that the financial decisions could address many proposed needs affecting teachers and school operations.
3. The Ministry of General Education should provide training to teachers in the form of workshops, seminars and so on, in decision making, for them to become competent, and skillful enough to participate in financial decision-making and hence make the school efficient and effective in achieving its objectives.
4. Head teachers should involve all education stakeholders to aid in school development programmes and projects. The schools should also initiate income generating projects to subsidize government funding.

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## **Appendix I:**

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

1. Do you think it is important for teachers for play a role in financial decision-making?  
Please explain.
2. Does your school have a board of management?
3. How many teachers are members of the board of management?
4. How do you think adequate teacher representation in financial decisions could enhance financial decision-making?
5. How do you think adequate teacher representation in financial decisions could contribute towards the reduction of shortage in basic teaching and learning materials in your school?
6. Is there anything that you would like to add to what you have told me? Please elaborate.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE PROVIDED.

## **Appendix II**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE TEACHERS**

1. Do you think it is important for teachers to play a role in the financial decision-making processes? Please explain.
2. Are teachers in your school playing any role in financial decision-making processes?
3. Does your school have a board of management?
4. How do you think adequate representation in financial decision-making enhance financial decisions making?
5. How do you think adequate teacher representation in financial decisions could contribute towards the reduction of shortage in basic teaching and learning materials in your school?
6. Overall, what would you say are your experiences with teacher participation in financial decisions?
7. Is there anything else that you would like to add to what you have told me? Please elaborate.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE PROVIDED**

### **Appendix III**

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

1. Do you think it is important for teachers for play a role in financial decision-making?  
Please explain.
2. Does your school have a board of management?
3. How many teachers are members of the board of management?
4. How do you think adequate teacher representation in financial decisions could enhance financial decision-making?
5. How do you think adequate teacher representation in financial decisions could contribute towards the reduction of shortage in basic teaching and learning materials in your school?
6. Is there anything that you would like to add to what you have told me? Please elaborate.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE PROVIDED.