



SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION MAKING ABILITIES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT The study examined the Decision Making of secondary school teachers in Shimoga city. It is a descriptive research and survey method was used. The sample consisted of 100 teachers who are working at secondary schools. Stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Teachers Decision Making Questionnaire constructed by the investigator was used to analyze the decision making of Secondary school teachers. It has face validity also. Reliability on the Cronbachs Alpha test is found to be 0.841. The hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Specific objectives formulated were: 1. To assess the level of Decision Making abilities of Secondary School teachers. 2. To find the significant difference between male and female Secondary School Teachers with respect to their Decision Making abilities. 3. To find the significant difference between high and low experienced secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision making abilities. The data obtained from the survey was analyzed using percentage analysis and 't' test. Findings of the study were: 1. A majority of secondary school teachers that is 68% of them are found to involve more in Decision Making and only 32% of the secondary school teachers are found to involve less in Decision Making. 2. No significant difference was found between male and female secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision Making. 3. No significant difference was found between more and less experienced secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision Making.

KEYWORDS : Decision Making, Secondary School Teachers, Experience

INTRODUCTION:

Work takes up a major share of everyone's life since it is necessary for an individual's livelihood. In today's modern world a large chunk of people's life is spent at work. People spend around one third of their life at their work place. This enormous part of life time spent at work should give satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment for having worked purposefully, constructively, and fruitfully.

Teaching is one of the most significant and noblest professions in the world. All the other professions, job and work in the society have their bases in teaching. As a profession it is the basis of the development of any country. Teachers are essential for the effective functioning of the nation. Teachers take a significant role in constructing the personality of students, who are the future of a nation.

Teaching as a profession involves complex work. The job of being a teacher is both demanding and challenging. Teachers draw upon physical, emotional and intellectual resources in order to be effective in the classroom. Like many professionals, teachers are also overwhelmed by multiple and complex challenges, which they perform with the meagre resources required to fulfil the high expectations placed on them. Their work includes tasks like, planning of lessons, supervision of student's projects, evaluation of student's work and conducting examinations which are accompanied by pressures in their work environments.

Teacher involvement in decision-making is not only a matter of fairness and respect, but also a key factor for improving teaching quality and student outcomes. Research shows that when teachers participate in decisions related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, school culture, and policy, they are more likely to feel empowered, motivated, committed, and satisfied with their work. They are also more likely to collaborate with their colleagues, share their expertise, and innovate their practices. Furthermore, teacher involvement in decision-making can enhance the relevance, responsiveness, and effectiveness of educational programs and policies, as teachers can provide valuable insights, feedback, and suggestions based on their classroom experiences and student needs. Considering their values allows teachers to adopt a student-centered approach, where they prioritize the best interests and needs of their students. Values such as fairness, compassion, and respect guide teachers in making decisions that support students' growth, development, and overall success.

In the past, decision making was thought of as management function by itself. But now days, researchers and management authority relate decision-making with a collaborative work. This is because the changes in the educational system call for rethinking, reformulating and restructuring of educational policies both at national and school levels.

Concept of Decision making:

Decision-making is the most aspect of educational management. In fact, some authors in the field of management suggest that management is decision making. Decision-making is considered to be the "heart of management". In the process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, reporting, and budgeting a manager makes decision Okumbe (1998) define decision-making as the process of specifying the nature of particular problem and selecting among available alternatives in order to solve the problem. This definition of decision-making indicates that a problem precedes any decision and that there must be a number of alternative courses of action from which an optimum course will be selected.

Finally Decision Making is the act of making up on one's mind about something, or position or opinion or judgment reached after consideration. It is a thinking process, with lots of mental activity involved in choosing between alternatives.

Strategies to improve decision making among teachers:

Teacher involvement in decision-making can take many forms, from consultation to collaboration to leadership. To increase teacher involvement, strategies such as creating teacher councils or committees, facilitating teacher-initiated projects or innovations, providing professional learning and growth opportunities, soliciting teacher input and feedback, and recognizing or rewarding teachers' contributions should be implemented. Such measures can help teachers represent and advocate for their interests, develop their knowledge and skills, and participate in decision-making processes with greater confidence and success. Here there are few strategies will help the teachers to improve their decision making abilities they are:

1. Set decision-making deadlines:

every teacher should set deadlines for each decision that needs to be made. Try to discover the importance of their decision to begin with. If it has an enormous impact gives themselves a longer time to decide. This in turn can improve their time-management skills. Soft skills tend to be used together and decision-making soft skills are always used in conjunction with a host of other skills.

2. Make a Plan:

teachers should sit down and think with a pen and paper and make a plan. Think about the decision they must make. Thrash out the advantages and disadvantages which could occur. Examine what resources and supports you have. Think about why the decision is important. Think about what could go wrong. Ask advice from peers, friends, colleagues, and managers and their heads. Try to predict the outcomes of their decision.

3. Experiment:

If the teacher are unclear about an action or result, try conducting an experiment that is like the decision they are considering. This enables

them to predict a hypothesis and use research and a strategy when designing their experiment and producing protocols.

4. Limit the Choices:

The decision-making process is more difficult if the teacher have too many choices. By limiting their choices, they can make a more informed decision so try to reduce their options and keep them at a minimum.

5. Be Assertive:

Be in control of the decision-making process. It's a soft skill that takes work. If the teachers are working in a group, work with their teammates and brainstorm the advantages and disadvantages of each choice and set a time limit. This enhances productivity and helps the group to come to a fast and productive decision. Productivity is especially important in a group environment and being assertive and in command of the situation helps all stakeholders come to a decision faster. The entire process can also be helped by informing the group of your preferred choices and explaining why you consider some choices better than others.

6. Make a list and work through it:

Time-management soft skills and decision-making soft skills can be improved by prioritizing decisions. This is a simple but effective strategy. Make a list of decisions that need to be made. Start with the least important decision and work your way through to the most difficult decision. A feeling of empowerment can be attained by ticking items off the list and this can improve confidence in future decisions. This feeling of empowerment empowers you and when you feel empowered you can be more productive and get more done. Sounds simple but works a treat!

7. Keep things in Perspective:

teacher should Judge the value and consequences of each decision. Do not waste valuable time on smaller inconsequential decisions which may have only a tiny impact on future successes. Instead, focus their time and energy on more important decisions. Keep each decision in perspective, this can teach you how to compromise and become more flexible in their approach to the decision-making process. Again, this may sound like a simple idea but sometimes the simplest ideas are the most effective. Life in many ways is all about perspective.

8. Weigh your options:

teacher should always make a list of all the pros and cons of each decision. This will aid them to scrutinize all their options and choices in a more informed way. The process itself may even aid them to consider new choices. Making a neat, organized list allows them to examine their decisions in a structured layout and can help them to weigh up each choice objectively. Being objective is an excellent skill to master. Be analytic, think critically and use their problem-solving soft skills to the best of your ability.

9. Learn from the mistakes:

teachers can learn a huge amount from the past and our previous failures in the results and should not be looked down upon but be seen as a way of learning and improving. There can be a success through failure. Use lessons from the past to hone and develop their decision-making soft skills. Analyze previous decisions and allow themselves to be guided by their outcomes and utilize that valuable information to make new and improved decisions and choices.

10. Consult an educational expert:

Getting an opinion from an expert is always a great decision. Never feel bad about asking for advice. Getting advice is an excellent habit to develop and when you learn from advice you can pass on that advice to others in need. Ask heads, managers, friends, colleagues, and peers for advice. There is an old saying that "a problem shared is a problem halved." Keep this in mind when you are making important decisions. People have different ways of looking at things and it is always an excellent idea to get as many different perspectives as they can. Communication is a crucial part of the decision-making process.

The above ten strategies of decision making will improving the teachers decision-making soft skills. They are simple to implement but extremely effective. Try them out, they are suitable for all levels of society, and they all need to make decisions in all the time. Making bad decision could result in disastrous consequences whereas making a well-thought out, informed decision could result in life-changing results.

Need and Importance of the study:

Education is a complex endeavour. It encompasses various decision-making processes concerning different issues and educational problems. The decision made could also be categorized as the collection of scarce teaching and learning resources, the enrolment of students, employment of teaching and non-teaching staff, introduction of the new curriculum, student and staff discipline, staff training and methods of improving pedagogy

Teachers being involved in making decisions concerning all aspects of the teaching and learning process to include curriculum, textbooks, scheduling, planning, personnel selection, and goal setting. In order for change to occur teachers must become partners in the process. Their involvement must have an impact on final decisions. Allowing teachers to be involved in decision making will result in teachers being responsible for solving problems; and not just identify the problems. Teachers tend to be more committed to ideas/projects when they are involved in the designing and planning process. It relates to the participation of teachers in critical decisions that directly affect their work.

Klecker and Loadman (1998) highlight the fact that decision-making includes teachers' involvement in educational decisions such as financial issues, choosing teachers, determining programs, and measuring student success. Short (1994) states that providing teachers' full-participation in critical decisions impacts their quality of work. By doing so, their voice is heard in areas related to their work. With teacher empowerment, it is often purposed to increase teachers' decision making authority and accountability in their fields. Furthermore, when teachers participate in making decisions, their problem-solving ability improves, and the entire school benefits from it, resulting in a feeling of stronger commitment to the overall organization (Dee, Henkin & Duermer, 2002; Devos, Tuytens, & Hulpia, 2014, Moran, 2015).

Delegating decision-making tasks to teachers after ascertaining the rules regarding teacher participation is a major element of teacher empowerment. It relates to the participation of teachers in critical decisions that directly affect their work. It refers to participation in and taking responsibility for decisions involving budgets, teacher selection, scheduling, and curriculum.

Schools today face intense pressure from rapidly changing external environments and the needs of an ever-evolving global economy. These pressures are creating new demands on schools to produce effective students with skill to compete (Moran, 2009). To cope with these objectives, improving the quality of school effectiveness through the mobilization of teachers and providing them opportunities to participate in school decision-making.

As regards the role played by teachers, UNESCO (2005) writes that "without the participation of teachers, changes in education are impossible". This preposition confirms that teachers are the corner-stone of school activities. Moreover, it can be said that the quality of schools' performance largely depends upon teachers who occupy the most important place in teaching learning process. Therefore, the involvement of teacher in decision-making is likely motivating teacher to exert their mental and emotional involvement in group situation that may contribute to group goals and shared responsibilities. Therefore there is a need to conduct a research in this area. The review of related literature has revealed that there are fewer attempts to study the Decision Making abilities of teachers in shimoga. Hence this investigation is a modest venture in this direction.

METHODOLOGY:

It is a descriptive research and the survey design was used in the study. The population of the study comprised secondary schools teachers in Shimoga city. A total of 100 secondary school teachers worked at secondary schools were formed the sample of the study. Stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Teachers Decision Making Questionnaire constructed by the investigator was used to analyze the decision making of Secondary school teachers. It has face validity also. Reliability on the Cronbachs Alpha test is found to be 0.841. The data which were collected and analyzed using percentage analysis, and 't' test statistical techniques. The hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The study was taken up in pursuance of the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of Decision Making abilities of Secondary School teachers.
2. To find the significant difference between male and female Secondary School Teachers with respect to their Decision Making abilities.
3. To find the significant difference between high and low experienced secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision making abilities.

Hypothesis of the Study:

1. There is no significant difference between male and female Secondary School Teachers with respect to their Decision Making abilities.
2. There is no significant difference between High and Low Experienced Secondary School Teachers with respect to their Decision Making abilities.

Analysis and Interpretations of the Results:

The analysis of data interpretation and discussion of the results are presented below:

Objective 1: To assess the level of Decision Making involvement of Secondary School teachers.

Analysis related to objective 1 is presented in table no. 1

Table No. 1: Table showing the percentage of secondary school teachers with respect to more and less involvement in Decision Making.

Secondary School Teachers	Involvement in Decision Making		Total
	More	Less	
frequency	68	32	100
Percentage	68	32	100

Table no.1 reveals that a majority of secondary school teachers that is 68% of them were more involved in decision making. It is also seen that only 32% of the secondary school teachers were shown less involvement in decision making.

Ho 1: There is no significant difference in Decision Making of male and female secondary school teachers.

't' test was calculated to test the hypothesis 1. The results are presented in table no. 2

Table No 2: summary table of 't' test of Decision Making of male and female secondary school teachers.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	't' value	df	Level of Significance
Male	40	69.57	7.82	1.23	98	NS
Female	60	67.87	6.98			

NS-Not Significant

Table no. 2 shows that the obtained 't' value of 1.23 is less than the tabled 't' value of 1.67 at 0.05 level of significance for degrees of freedom 98. Therefore the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers with respect to their involvement in Decision Making is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision Making.

Ho 2: There is no significant difference in Decision making of High and low Experienced secondary school teachers.

't' test was calculated to test the hypothesis 2. The results are presented in table no. 3

Table No 3: summary table of 't' test of Decision Making of more and less experienced secondary school teachers.

Teaching Experience	N	Mean	SD	't' value	df	Level of Significance
More experienced	62	68.15	9.13	1.018	98	NS
Less experienced	38	67.81	5.41			

NS-Not Significant

Table no. 3 shows that the obtained 't' value of 1.018 is less than the tabled 't' value of 1.67 at 0.05 level of significance for degrees of

freedom 98. Therefore the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between secondary school teachers with more and less teachers in their Decision Making is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between secondary school teachers with more and less experienced teachers in their Decision Making.

Findings of the study:

It is found that

1. A majority of secondary school teachers that is 68% of them are found to involve more in Decision Making and only 32% of the secondary school teachers are found to involve less in Decision Making.
2. No significant difference was found between male and female secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision Making.
3. No significant difference was found between more and less experienced secondary school teachers with respect to their Decision Making.

Educational implications:

The following educational implications could be drawn from the findings of the study:

1. Teachers need to be actively involved in decision-making in their schools to encourage, motivate and utilize their wide range of experience and personal characteristics, and capability. In order to promote teachers involvement in school decision-making, the school principals together with PTA, education department, DIET and Teachers Associations ought to: Provide meaningful encouragement as well economic incentives to teachers with exemplary performance both in their teaching activity and in their involvement. Provide proper orientation on the right, duties and responsibilities of individual teachers in each areas of decision-making and involve them to bring a change in teaching learning process and other related issues of school activities.

2. Establish a collaborative relationship among teachers in which they can share their ideas and learn from each other concerning their professions to bring an attractive environment and promote teaching learning. DIET and school education authorities should Provide training to teachers in the form of workshop, seminar and so on, so as teacher become competent, and skilful to participate in the areas that concern them and make the school efficient and effective in achieving the objectives of the schools.

3. School principals and PTAs are strongly advised to involve teachers in preparing school plan so that teachers can have a say on the overall school plan. The school leaders /Heads of the schools and PTAs need to communicate, involve and give clear information to teachers on the issues related with income generation and school budget and school building to develop the sense of transparency between teachers and school leaders.

4. Continuous involvement of teachers in decision making by the principals will further enhance teachers' development on the job. The heads of the school should not totally neglect the less experienced teachers in decision making as they also need to be developed on the job. Heads of the school should made compulsory to attend more workshops and seminars to know how to manage the younger teachers so as to build them up since they will eventually take up the mantle from them later.

CONCLUSION:

The success or failure of any school is largely dependent upon the groups that make it up and effective utilization of the intellectual abilities of these group or human resources helps the development of such an organization or school. Decision-making is one of the most important life skills for everyone. Making an effective decision is not easy and it is one of the main challenges for every teacher, administrator and leader. Decision-making is an essential leadership skill which will move forward individuals and teams to success. People make many good decisions which cause them to succeed but they make many bad decisions which cause them to fail. If they understand and learn about the different kinds of choices which are available to them, their lives would be more satisfying and particularly more effective in the workplace.

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