



**TEACHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING:  
A CASE OF THREE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KASUNGU  
MUNICIPALITY**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION (POLICY, PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP)**

**By**

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Submitted to the Department of Educational Foundations, School of Education  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Education  
Degree (Policy, Planning and Leadership)

**University of Malawi**

**August 2021**

## **DECLARATION**

This thesis is my own original work and it has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Acknowledgements have been duly made where other people's work has been used. I bear the responsibility for the contents of this paper.

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## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For his grace, my special thanks go to the Almighty God. Without Him it would not be possible for me to sail through to this level.

Many thanks go to my younger brothers Lambrey and George and their families for the financial and material support. I do not forget my mother who always prays and wishes the best for me.

I am also very much indebted to my wife Mary Vinja who was supporting my children during my absence. To my children Temwa, Tionge and Tadala, thanks for your endurance staying without me for long periods.

Finally, I acknowledge my main supervisor Dr N. Mgala for supporting me throughout my research work. You were kind and encouraging. I also extend thanks to the co-supervisor Dr R. Nyirongo for similar support and guidance rendered to me. God bless you.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study explored teachers' involvement in decision making related to finances in three public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality. Specifically the study attempted to determine ways through which teachers are involved, level of their involvement and factors affecting their involvement. An exploratory case study research design was used. Three head teachers, three deputy head teachers and three heads of departments were interviewed. Twenty class teachers participated in Focus Group Discussions. Data gathered was qualitatively analysed. The researcher listened to interviews and FGD recordings, read through notes, and produced transcripts. The study revealed that class teachers were mostly involved indirectly through representation and they were the least involved in all the three schools. Lack of adequate opportunities for involvement in decision making was the major factor that affected them. This was due to structures in the schools not being effectively and efficiently used to facilitate their involvement. However, the study revealed that creativity and activeness of heads of departments and improved relationship and communication between head teachers and class teachers in addition to adherence to government policies and regulations would improve the situation. Class teachers are implementers of most school activities hence, their involvement is likely to promote teaching and learning and reduce issues in different areas in the schools. These findings can be a source of vital information to education authorities for possible interventions.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CEED:	Central East Education Division
DSS:	Direct Support to Schools
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
MGDS:	Malawi Growth and Development Strategies
MoEST:	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MSCE:	Malawi School Certificate of Education
ORT:	Other Recurrent Transactions

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the background to the problem, statement of the problem, purpose, research questions and significance of the study. It ends with definitions of terms related to the study.

#### **1.1 Background of the problem**

Malawi has always included education as one of the key priority areas in its development plans since it got independence in 1964. Even after the country adopted multiparty democracy in 1994, the education system continues to be guided by the National Development plans. This is reflected in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategies (MGDS) which have education as one of the priority areas (Malawi Government, 2013). To facilitate realization of its development plans, government has the obligation of providing resources to all its sectors and it remains the major funder of the education sector in the country. However, there are concerns on how finances are handled in government institutions following cases of mismanagement of the same through corruption which has become a daunting challenge to the nation (Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, 2014).

According to the Education for Development Report on Financing Education in Malawi, the issue of mismanagement of resources in government sectors is one of the bottlenecks to progress (Hall & Mambo, 2015). Through corruption, significant amounts of finances are lost, this in turn adversely affects the quality of services rendered by government institutions at all levels, and schools are not exceptional.

Cases of misappropriation and misallocation of funds have been rampant in education institutions. As a result, there have been cases of pupils engaging in strikes as they complain of inadequate learning materials and poor diets in schools (Mphande, 2016).

These affect the quality of teaching and learning in schools and consequently, the performance of students. This entails depriving students of their right to education.

Secondary schools in Kasungu Municipality have not been spared. According to Pretorius et al (2008), availability of highest level of transparency and accountability in the use of finances is required to ensure effective and efficient use of the public finances. Hence, the Education for development report suggested improving efficiency of resource management by reducing corruption through creation and enhancement of transparency and accountability (Hall & Mambo, 2015). Malawi government guidelines too require accountability and transparency in managing finances as stipulated in national education standard 26 (MoEST, 2015). The standard states that schools should promote accountability and transparency through public display of income as well as expenditure. It further emphasizes on involvement of stakeholders in dealing with finances for transparency (MoEST, 2015). The implication is that in the education sector and at school level in particular, teacher involvement in decision making on matters concerning finances can help promote transparency. With transparency, cases of abuse and mismanagement of finances can be reduced.

In addition, for effective decisions to be made in a system every role player needs to participate at one level or the other (Omobude & Igbudu, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative that teachers as stakeholders and implementers of important decisions in schools be engaged in financial decision making. They should be involved not only in teaching but also in planning and budgeting.

Studies conducted in different countries revealed positive effects of involving teachers in decision making in schools. In United States of America and in United Kingdom a study that was conducted to look into effects of involving teachers in decision making found that the practice increased administrative efficiency in schools (Cheng, 2008). The practice also improved communication and promoted collaboration among teachers (Hayes, 1994). Furthermore, the studies found that the practice enhances organizational commitment, job satisfaction, communication among teachers and administrators and assists in professionalizing teaching (Kirya, 2019). However, these studies revealed benefits that focused on teachers and administrators. Substantive research has not yet explored the direct causative relationship between involvement of teachers in decision making in finances and student performance. However, the combined effects of involving teachers in decision making revealed by the studies are likely to bring about improvements in instruction and performance of students in schools. Therefore, it is necessary to involve teachers in decision making in all areas including finances.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Revelations of mismanagement of government resources in the country have led to recognition of many smaller but longer established and systematic instances of mismanagement of resources in government sectors (Hall & Mambo, 2015). These include abuse of finances through misallocation and inappropriate procurements. Kacheche (2015) revealed that the education sector is among the worst affected sectors in the country.

Diversion and mismanagement of school finances deprives students of materials they need to learn, (OECD, 2017). These affect teaching and learning in schools and consequently, students' performance. However, good governance entrenched with institutionalization of practices that can help avoid mismanagement of resources are key to dealing with the challenge (Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, 2014). Practices that ensure existence of transparency and accountability play a critical role in promoting efficient allocation and use of resources (Gupta & Ogada, 2016). These create an environment good enough to help reduce corruption cases and allow for informed decision making which in turn facilitate and promote appropriate use of finances in the institutions (United Nations, 2015). Involvement of stakeholders in decision making related to finances is one such practice. Malawi national education standards and the internal procurement regulations demand that schools have effective systems for monitoring and accounting for funds (MoEST, 2004; MoEST, 2015).

Presence of committees that deal with finances in secondary schools is therefore a requirement and teachers as stakeholders in the schools are required to be involved in

dealing with finances for transparency and accountability. They have to be involved in planning, budgeting and procurement processes.

Studies conducted in Ghana, Botswana and Zimbabwe revealed contrasting results on levels of teacher involvement in decision making. Some have shown that generally the level at which teachers are involved in decision making at school level is very low while others have shown that teacher involvement in decision making is practiced at significant levels (Wadesango & Bagaya, 2012; Agubere, 2013; Mosheti, 2013; Shawish, 2016).

Recently a study was conducted to look into involvement of members of school committees in management of Direct Support to Schools funds in Malawi. The study revealed that head teachers were not involving members of school committees in making decisions concerning the funds (Chiwaula et al, 2013). The study focused on primary schools and on involvement of members of the school committees. In secondary schools, emphasis is on involvement of members of the internal procurement and management committees. Members of these committees are teachers. Hence, the status quo in secondary schools of Malawi remained not clear.

While the status quo remained not clear, secondary schools continue to face numerous challenges. There have been cases of pupils engaging in strikes due to poor teaching and learning conditions, an indication of existence of problems. Recently secondary schools in Kasungu municipality have had such strikes.

Reasons behind these included poor teaching and learning, inadequate teaching and learning materials and poor diets (Mphande, 2016). All these took place despite

government's continued effort in providing funds for the day to day running of the secondary schools an indication that finances are not properly handled. Such a situation can be propagated by lack of transparency and accountability in handling the funds. It is these assertions that prompted this study. The study sought to explore how teachers in public secondary schools in Kasungu Municipality are involved in decision making related to finances.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The study aimed at exploring how teachers are involved in decision making in public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality.

### **1.4 Main research question**

How are teachers involved in decision making in public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality?

#### ***1.4.1 Specific research questions***

1. Describe ways in which class teachers are involved in making decisions related to finances in public secondary schools?
2. Determine the level of class teachers' involvement in financial decision making processes in public secondary schools?
3. Explore factors affecting teachers' involvement in making decisions related to finances in public secondary schools?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

Findings of this research provide necessary information to teachers on their role in decision making in schools. The findings can also be a source of motivation and information to school administrators and education practitioners willing to bring change both at practice and policy levels. They can motivate head teachers not currently involving teachers in financial decision making processes to start involving them in their schools. Furthermore, these findings provide useful information that can prompt education officials to come up with interventions on implementation of policies and guidelines concerning decision making related to finances in secondary schools. The findings also add knowledge to the body of already existing knowledge in education. Finally, the study findings also present opportunities to researchers for further studies in the area.

## **1.6 Definitions of terms involved in the study**

### ***1.6.1 Decision making***

Decision making refers to a process followed by the head teachers to reach a decision.

### ***1.6.2 Cost centre***

A cost centre in this study refers to a school that receives funds to support its day to day running direct from the central government.

### ***1.6.3 School manager***

A school manager was the head of the school also known as head teacher.

#### **1.6.4 Class teacher**

In this study, a class teacher is the one who was mostly involved in teaching and held the lowest position in the school hierarchy.

#### **1.6.5 Teacher involvement in decision making**

Teacher involvement in decision making refers to participation of teachers in decision making processes taking place in the school.

### **1.7 Chapter summary**

Decision making is an important element in running schools and involvement of stakeholders in the process is necessary. However, the status quo on involvement of teachers in public secondary remained unclear hence the present study explored how class teachers are involved in decision making in public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter defines decision making and discusses benefits of involving teachers in decision making processes. It also discusses planning, budgeting and procurement processes and ends with the theories supporting the study.

#### **2.2 Decision making**

Decision making is a thinking process with lots of mental activities involved in identifying and choosing between alternatives (Lunenburg, 2010). It involves interactions among people and it requires time to unfold. The process starts with the need for a decision to be made, goes on to making the decision and ends with realization of changes made in the institution because of the decision. Decision making involves making choices from many alternative courses of actions. Though the need to come up with a decision in an institution may arise from forces that cannot be controlled, the decision to be made can be controlled. The administrators in the education system control decisions made in their institutions. Furthermore, decisions made are expected to bring about changes in the institutions (Lunenburg, 2010). This happens to be one of the characteristics of all organizational decisions. Decision making is a management tool. Head teachers as managers of schools take lead in making crucial decisions related to finances.

They decide who to involve in the decision making and how to do it. Quality of decisions related to finances made matter very much as it determines the success of achieving goals. In schools, decisions related to finances affect the running of the institutions. Such decisions determine how best activities such as teaching and learning are implemented. Implementation of high quality decisions is likely to improve teaching and learning standards. Subsequently student performance in the schools would improve.

### ***2.2.1 Participative decision making***

Participative decision making refers to sharing decision authority among stakeholders. It is an element of participative management and it entails stakeholders participating in the process of management (Igbudu & Omubede, 2012). In schools, participative decision making can be viewed as head teachers giving their subordinates the opportunity to exercise some authority in decision making. The teachers participate as individuals or as groups. It is borne out of the desire to increase the influence of the subordinates. Decisions jointly made create a situation which accords the subordinates the opportunity to access relatively higher order range decisions (Leat, 2011). Participative decision making has a strong influence on managerial effectiveness, organization efficiency and innovation (Ouma, 2014). The approach is associated with administrative practices of the bureaucratic model.

### ***2.2.2 Areas of decision making in schools***

Decisions in educational institutions range from classroom to managerial. Hence, many areas require decisions to be made in schools. Decisions are made in areas of curriculum and instruction, students discipline and guidance, school operation, school planning and

budgeting (Agubere, 2013). However, teachers are not involved in all these areas in some schools and where they are involved, their involvement levels differ from one area to the other. Above all head teachers have for long not been involving teachers in making financial decisions (Wadesango, 2012; Agubere, 2013). Teachers have all along been involved more in making decisions on issues to do with instruction and student discipline and guidance.

### ***2.2.3 Benefits of involving class teachers in decision making***

Involvement of teachers in making decisions at school level in the different areas of decision making has many benefits to the schools and the teachers themselves hence it is a subject worthy being considered by school administrators. It is actually part of school management. According to Cheng (2008) in United States of America and in United Kingdom teachers' involvement in decision making was an important aspect of the decentralization policy of school management where the intention was to give more influence to schools and increase administrative efficiency.

This was adopted with the assumption that an effective and efficient administration brings about improvements in the running of schools. Furthermore, shared decision making with teachers improves the rate at which changes take place in schools. It improves communication in schools which is a prerequisite for problem solving alongside improving schools culture.

Involvement of teachers in decision making also fosters collaborative work habits among teachers, a positive intervention that leads to improvement of schools by changing teachers' attitudes and removing barriers of authority (Hayes, 1994). Schools

can easily be reformed by involving teachers in decision making. Involving teachers in decision making is an effective management strategy that helps to meet teachers' self-esteem and self-actualization needs resulting in having a work force of teachers who are satisfied with their job and are committed to it. Involving teachers in decision making provides a fertile ground that allows teachers to look at the school environment with self-esteem and trust and consider themselves respected and dignified (Manga, 1996; Wadesango, 2012). In schools where head teachers involve class teachers in decision making, teachers' morale goes up. A study conducted in Tanzania to examine relationship between participation in decision making and teachers' commitment found that teachers' participation in decision making increases teachers' commitment to their work. Since teachers' commitment to work is important for teaching effectiveness, teachers' participation in decision making becomes an important factor for school improvement (Ngussa & Gabriel, 2017). The implication is that increased morale, job satisfaction and increased commitment to work by teachers are likely to translate to improvements in students learning and performance.

### **2.3 Extent to which class teachers are involved in decision making in schools**

A study was conducted in Nigeria to examine teachers' participation in decision making in secondary schools (Olorunsola & Olayemi, 2011). The study found that teachers were generally significantly involved in all decision making processes although they were frequently involved in curriculum and instructional activities and discipline matters. A similar study conducted in Ghana found contrasting results. The study found that teachers were mostly involved in decision-making involving curriculum and instructional activities and in decisions that promoted school-community relationship and less in decision making related to finances.

Its findings were supported by findings of another study conducted in Botswana which also found that teachers reported high participation in decision-making when guiding students in their academic progress and future career choice, but less participation in decision making on operation of the school budget (Mosheti, 2013). Therefore, on levels of teacher involvement in decision making concerning finances the studies showed contrasting findings. The studies from Ghana and Botswana showed that there was less teacher involvement in decision making related to finances while the one conducted in Nigeria revealed that generally teachers were involved significantly in decision making in all areas. However, there was consensus on findings on the levels with regards to areas of involvement in decision making. The studies revealed higher teacher involvement levels in student discipline, student career guidance and curriculum and instruction and less involvement in the crucial areas that dealt with resource allocation in the school.

In Malawi, a related study was conducted to investigate improvements in primary schools because of the implementation of the Direct Support to Schools (DSS) Grant. The study revealed that head teachers in primary schools were conversant with the processes involved in accessing funds from the government and procuring materials for the schools while some members of the school management committees and parent and teachers associations were not aware of them (Chiwaula et al, 2013). This was due to the process of handling the finances not being participatory implying less participation of stake holders in the process. However, the status quo in secondary schools remained not clear.

## **2.4 Financial decision making processes in secondary schools**

Government has the obligation of providing resources to the education sector and secondary schools are among the benefiting institutions. Government involves secondary schools in formulation of the national budget and budget execution.

The schools allocate financial resources projected to be provided to them by the government each financial year to their planned activities. The resources include grants and finances for Other Recurrent Transactions (ORT) which constitutes expenses related to daily running of business in the schools (Kampanje, 2011).

Consequently, within each financial year the Ministry of Finance releases funds to schools to undertake their planned activities. The procedures schools follow to access and use these funds involve planning, budgeting and procurement.

### ***2.4.1 Planning and budgeting***

Planning is one of the important aspects of management. Effective planning is necessary for achievement of intended aims and objectives of an institution. It involves organizing, directing and controlling resources (MoEST, 2014). A plan is a commitment to a particular course of action believed necessary to lead to achievement of the desired results. In the education sector, secondary schools plan accordingly.

A combination of good planning and communication ensures that all stakeholders strive for achievement of the same aims and objectives. Therefore, teachers as stakeholders and important implementers of decisions in the schools have to be aware of the school goals and actions that would lead to their achievement. Consequently, involving teachers in planning encourages commitment of teachers as they see that their work is essential in helping the school achieve its goals (Somech, 2002). Planning provides a

better roadmap believed to lead the schools to a good future. The roadmap which can easily be tracked, evaluated and modified cannot only facilitate good governance but also promote good management of resources in the schools. Schools plan activities to undertake in each financial year. A well formulated plan holds all staff accountable for their actions, encourages collaboration and provides a framework of activities that takes care of priorities of the school. In schools, effective resource allocation is paramount in ensuring that priority areas of teaching and learning are considered. Availability of teaching and learning materials is crucial as schools endeavour to make teaching and learning more meaningful to students. Planning goes along with budgeting (MoEST, 2014).

Budgeting is a process that involves making choices and deciding where to allocate resources. It involves allocating money to planned activities which are aimed at achieving expected outputs. It provides a desirable way of presenting and discussing items of public revenue and expenditure. A budget is a guide for financial management and it provides details for the disbursement of funds and accounting for funds (Kampanje, 2011). Schools budget by allocating funds to activities planned to be undertaken within the year. This budget is submitted to the ministry of finance through the ministry of education for inclusion in the national budget.

#### ***2.4.2 Budget execution***

The ministry of finance releases funds to government spending agencies which includes public secondary involved in this study every month. These funds are for the schools to undertake their planned activities. However, schools are required to report progress of the budget implementation monthly and quarterly as a means of monitoring budget

implementation by the ministries of education and finance. The ministry of finance besides monitoring budget implementation also takes part in controlling the budgets through the offices of the treasurer general and auditor general (Kampanje, 2011). These follow up on budget statements to make sure that finances are directed towards the collect activities. In schools, controlling of budgets and monitoring of budget implementation is expected to be done by citizens. They can do this through advocacy and whistle blowing in the event of mismanagement of finances by government offices. It follows that stake holders must be aware of decisions concerning finances made in public institutions schools inclusive.

Issues of finances must therefore, be transparent to stake holders of the schools. This is likely to promote accountability and sound use of the financial resources made available to schools.

#### ***2.4.3 Secondary school management guidelines***

Malawi's secondary school management guidelines stipulate that secondary schools must have structures such as subject based committees and academic departments (MoEST, 2014). It is in these structures that deliberations on important matters in schools are expected to be deliberated.

The Malawi national education standards too demand existence of these structures in the schools. Standard number 17 that focuses on school governance states that schools should have functional committees (Government of Malawi, 2015). In these committees, teachers plan for activities to be carried out in their respective subject areas and departments.

Budgets which reflect resources the school require for achievement of the school goals and effective teaching and learning in particular arise from the plans of these committees. It is these plans that are consolidated and included in the schools' budgets submitted to the ministry of education and then the ministry of finance for inclusion in the national budget. This allows schools to budget for important activities such as purchase of books and equipment to facilitate teaching and learning. It is clear that some important decisions in the schools are expected to originate from these structures. Therefore, for effective running of schools, it is imperative that such structures be instituted and that they function effectively and efficiently.

#### ***2.4.4 Procurement procedures in secondary schools***

The government of Malawi instituted procurement regulations as a way of ensuring transparency and accountability in seeking goods and services required by government institutions. According to these regulations public institutions, secondary schools inclusive are expected to have internal procurement committees (IPCs) to decide how and where to procure products and services needed in the institutions. The committees are supposed to have a minimum of three and maximum of seven members. The controlling officer or his deputy, the head of procurement unit and the bursar are compulsory members of the committee. The controlling officer has the powers to choose the other members whose membership can be rotated (Government of Malawi, 2003; Government of Malawi, 2004). With decentralization and devolution taking centre stage, government secondary schools are required to institute such committees. For school leaders to successfully implement this, teachers have to be involved.

Malawi national education standards too stipulate that financial matters should be handled in a transparent manner. National education standard 26 states that schools meet the minimum standard when issues of finances are displayed to all secondary school stakeholders (MoEST, 2015). Teachers being important stakeholders for secondary schools must be aware of how finances are being handled hence their involvement in making decisions concerning finances is vital. Teachers can participate in planning, budgeting and procurement processes through the structures instituted in the schools.

Procurement committees in secondary schools facilitate purchase of different materials needed to run the institutions effectively. It follows that decisions made in these committees affect the running of the schools positively or negatively. Good decisions assist schools run properly as they facilitate effective implementation of planned school activities. Such decisions help schools have needs in priority areas such as teaching and learning addressed timely and appropriately.

## **2.5 Theory underpinning the study**

Leadership is the process of providing direction and influencing individuals or groups to achieve goals (Kouqing, 2009). Leadership is critical as actions of senior leaders affect performance of institutions. Subordinates work differently with leaders using different leadership styles. They are more likely to work effectively with a leader who adopts a certain leadership style compared to another who adopts other styles (Nanjunde & Swamy, 2014). Each style used affects subordinates' involvement in dealing with issues in institutions. Although some leaders prefer using specific leadership styles, a variety of leadership styles are more effective in different situations such that no one leadership style is effective in all situations.

Different theories of leadership have been developed and they depict different leadership styles. Behavioral theories are based on the belief that great leaders are made. As such they focus on the actions of leaders which determine the style of leadership. On the other hand, contingency theories are based on the belief that a situation determines the style a leader employs. In relation to this study, the behavior of the leader or the prevailing situations determines head teachers' choices in involving teachers.

### ***2.5.1 Lewin's leadership theory***

This is a behavioral leadership theory established by Lewin a social psychologist. The theory focuses on three styles of leadership autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. Leadership style is the way a person holding a leadership position uses his power to lead others (Kouqing, 2009). The styles determine subordinates' involvement in dealing with issues in the organization.

#### ***2.5.1.1 Autocratic leadership***

Autocratic leadership centers on the leader. All authority and responsibility is held by the leader. Group members are rarely trusted with the task of decision making. Leaders make decisions on their own without involving their subordinates (Khan et al, 2016). Decisions are imposed on the subordinates. As a result, communication is mostly from top to down. The leader exercises tight control over the subordinates and the leadership style is characterized with strict following of guidelines and set procedures. The style leads to lack of creative solutions to issues. However, it can be effective where the leader is the most knowledgeable member of the group.

### *2.5.1.2 Democratic leadership*

This leadership style is centered on subordinates. Democratic leaders delegate authority to subordinates though they have the final responsibility (Kouqing, 2009). These leaders focus on group participation. Subordinates are encouraged to share views even though the leader often retains the position of coming up with the final say. Communication is active both upwards and downwards. This style works best where subordinates are skilled and eager to share knowledge. It is therefore, considered the most effective leadership style. However, in situations where roles are unclear and time is limited, the style may lead to communication failures and unfinished tasks.

### *2.5.1.3 Laissez-faire leadership*

Laissez-faire leadership offers authority to subordinates. The followers choose to work the way they wish with minimal or no supervision at all by the leader. There is very little guidance from the leaders. Subordinates have to solve problems on their own and they have complete freedom to make decisions. The style is known to be the least effective in management (Khan et al, 2016). However, it can be effective where subordinates are highly skilled, motivated and able to work on their own.

## ***2.5.2 Vroom and Yetton's contingency model***

Situations determine the approach leaders take to come up with decisions (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). A systematic approach to decision making helps managers to determine the most effective means of reaching a decision. It follows that the best leaders are those who are able to use various styles.

It is this notion that gave rise to situational and contingency theories of leadership. Contingency theories are based on that the best leadership style is contingent upon

various constraints in an institution (Amanchukwu et al, 2015). Examples of such constraints are availability of resources, subordinates' expertise, time and technologies. Contingency theories are similar to situational theories as they both assume that there is no one favorable leadership style for all situations. However, while situational theories mainly focus on behaviors leaders adopt in given situations basing on the behavior of subordinates, contingent theories focus on a broader view which include factors about leaders' capabilities and other variables within the situation.

This study focused on Vroom and Yettons contingency model. Victor Vroom and Philip Yetton designed the model to assist managers in choosing the best approach to decision making based on the prevailing situation. It is a situational leadership theory. It argues that the best style of leadership is contingent to the situation. The model takes into account the fact that there is no single decision making process that fits in all situations (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). It therefore, provides different approaches for the different situations that managers may encounter. The situations are based on three factors. These are quality of the decision needed, team commitment required and time constraints. Decisions of high quality often require availability of large quantities of resources to be used (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). This implies the need for more people to be involved, adequate time and adequate information to be available for the process to yield a high quality decision.

The model also takes into account that decisions impact on subordinates differently. Some decisions will likely have a huge impact on the subordinates while others will not. Use of collaborative process suits the situation where the decision is likely to impact the subordinates. Thus, in such a situation, seeking the team's commitment to

the process leads to identification of high quality decisions. When the prevailing situation allows the manager to have adequate time to look at the issue, involvement of others to boost the quality of decision is possible. But when the problem requires immediate solution making available time limited for the decision making process, inclusion of others in the process may not be feasible.

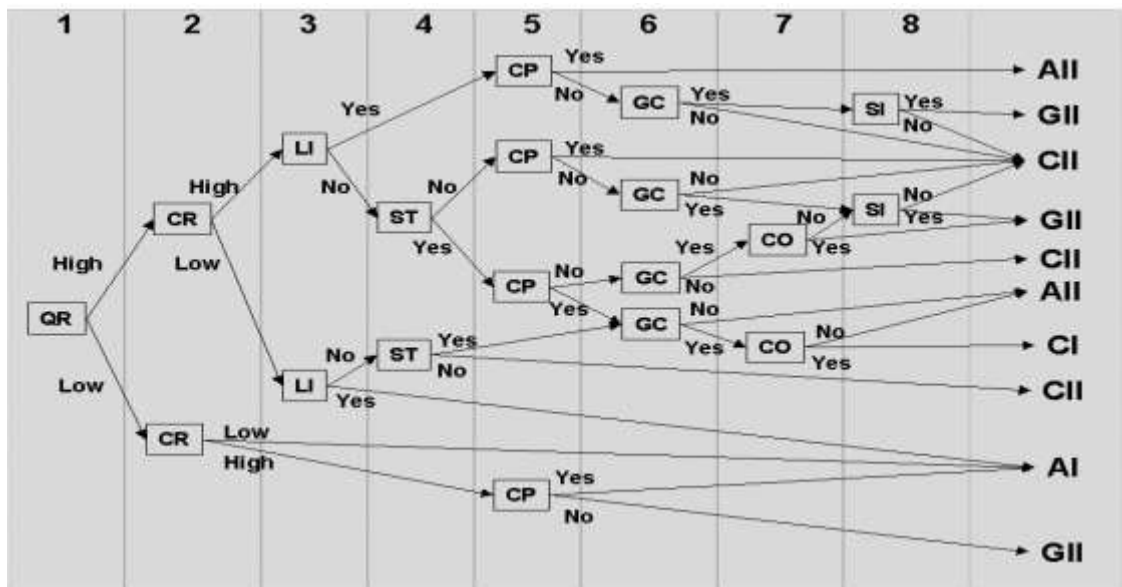
The model poses yes/no questions which the manager needs to answer. The answers to the questions help the manager identify the appropriate decision making process for the situation at hand (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). The model is a decision tree and managers are able to follow the branches as they answer the seven questions. Finally, they arrive at any of the four codes; A1, A2, C1, C2 or G2 as illustrated in figure 1.

A1 stands for an approach that does not require input from subordinates hence depicts autocracy. The manager uses information he or she possesses to come up with a decision. A2 depicts another autocratic process where the leader consults the subordinates to obtain specific information and then makes the final decision.

C represents consultative approach and C1 depicts a situation where the manager makes the subordinates aware of the situation and makes effort to get individual opinions on how to deal with it. Finally, the manager makes a decision but without involving group discussions.

C2 provides the approach where group discussions are held to enable the manager gather suggestions and make a final decision based on them. The decision is finally chosen by the manager. The last approach is depicted as G2. It involves managers

working with their subordinates as a team and arriving at the decision together (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). The decision is agreed upon as a team.



**Figure 1: Vroom-Yetton's Decision Making Tree Diagram. Source: (Vroom and Yetton, 1973)**

Quality Requirement (QR): Is the quality of the decision important?

1. Commitment Requirement (CR): Is subordinates' commitment to decision important?
2. Leader's Information (LI): As a leader do you have sufficient information to make a high quality decision
3. Problem structure (ST): Is the problem well structured (well defined, clear and organized)?
4. Commitment Probability (CP): If you make the decision yourself as a leader, is it reasonably certain that subordinates would be committed to the decision?
5. Goal Congruency (GC): Do subordinates share the goals to be attained in solving the problem?
6. Subordinate Conflict (SC): Is conflict among subordinates over preferred solutions likely?

7. Subordinate Information (SI): Do subordinates have sufficient information to make a high quality decision? (Vroom & Jago, 1988).

The model shows that leaders can be autocratic or consultative. They can be dictatorial or democratic. Democratic leaders allow subordinates to take part in decision making while autocratic leaders make decisions on their own. The model is related to the present study as it provides an insight into situations head teachers encounter as school managers and provides approaches they can employ to deal with the situations which eventually determine the extent to which they involve their subordinates in decision making. The theory therefore, is useful in the present study that sought to determine how head teachers involved class teachers in decision making related to finances in public secondary schools. On the other hand, the theory appears to be a tool that head teachers can apply with some confidence in deciding how much subordinates should participate in decision making (Kipkoech et al, 2011). This study therefore, ascertains its applicability. This study focused mainly on this theory.

## **2.6 Chapter summary**

This chapter has provided a review of important areas related to decision making concerning finances. It has defined decision making, stated importance of participative decision making before discussing how secondary schools access finances from the central government. The chapter finally discussed theories related to the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This exploratory study intended to investigate how teachers are involved in decision making in secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality. This chapter therefore, discusses the orientation and the research design for the study, sample selection, data collection procedures, tools and data analysis procedures that were used.

#### **3.2 Research paradigm**

The study followed the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretive researchers believe that the social world is constructed by human beings and that researchers seek to investigate how humans perceive and make sense of this world (Cohen et al, 2007). Creswell (2009) contends that interpretivist researchers discover reality through participants' views, their own background and experiences. According to Thanh & Thanh (2015) interpretivist research involves seeking multiple perspectives, practicing iterative and emergent data collection techniques, promoting participatory and holistic research. It follows that interpretivist research most often uses open ended questions. Furthermore, according to Guba & Lincoln (2000) interpretive research focuses on qualitative data and involves interactions between the participants one of whom is the researcher. Often times the purpose is not to generalize but to explore the meanings which participants place on social situations under investigation.

This research was consistent with this paradigm. In order to understand participants' views, perceptions and experiences on their involvement in decision-making related to finances the researcher examined what the participants said. Methods used to gather data involved interactions between the researcher and the participants facilitated by the use of open ended questions. The purpose of the study was to simply explore the participation of teachers in decision making in the targeted public secondary schools and not to generalize the findings.

### **3.3 Research design**

A qualitative research method was employed in the study. According to Monfared & Derakhshan (2015), a qualitative research involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting data by observing what people do and say. An exploratory case study research design was used to enable the researcher gather information that was used to give meaning, definition and description to the situation. An exploratory case study is useful in analyzing perceptions of a group people about a phenomenon in an organisation. Hence, the design was used because of its appropriateness in gathering data about peoples' opinions, attitudes and behavior in their own setting (Bryman, 2004). The present study sought to gather opinions concerning involvement of class teachers in decision making related to finances in the schools. Opinions gathered were likely to help in defining and describing the situation related to the same in the schools.

### **3.4 Sample selection**

#### ***3.4.1 Selection of schools***

Purposive and Convenience sampling were used in the study. According to Dawson (2002), purposive and convenience sampling are more convenient as they are cost

effective and easy to use. While purposive sampling was used to choose participants, Convenience sampling was used to select three schools to participate in the study. They were all public secondary schools within Kasungu Municipality. They could easily be accessed and they were all cost centres. Students in these schools conducted strikes recently as they complained of poor teaching and learning conditions despite the schools accessing funds from government hence targeted in the study.

#### *3.4.1.1 Sites for the study*

It is necessary that data collected from a study be accompanied by information about the sites where it came from in order for the study to provide a clear picture. Three schools were involved in the study and they were all from Kasungu Municipality. For anonymity the schools were referred to as A, B and C. They were all cost centres implying that they receive funds direct from the central government every month to help in their operations.

#### **School A**

This is a conventional boarding secondary school. It is located about 1.5km away from the Central East Education (CEED) Offices which are located right at the centre of the Municipality. At the time the study was being conducted, the school had an enrollment of 510 students and it had a total of 32 teachers, 19 males and 13 females. The least qualification of the teachers was a diploma in education.

However, many were holders of degrees in education. The school was headed by a male teacher, it had two Deputy Head teachers, one for academics, and the other one was for administration. The school also had three academic Heads of departments, two females

and one male. The head teacher, the deputy head teacher for administration, one head of department and 6 male and 3 female teachers were involved in the study.

### **School B**

This is also a conventional boarding secondary school. It is situated about 2.1 km away from the CEED offices. When the school was visited, its students' enrolment was 338 and the total number of teachers was 16. The institution had 9 males and 7 female teachers. The majority of the teachers were holders of Degrees in Education. The least qualification was a diploma in education. The school had a female head teacher and one male deputy head teacher. There were also three heads of academic departments. The head teacher, the deputy head teacher and one head of department were interviewed in the study while 4 male teachers and 3 female teachers participated in a focus group discussion.

### **School C**

The school is almost 1.8 km away from CEED offices and it is a community day secondary school operating on a double shift. At the time the study was being conducted, it had an enrolment of 653 students and there were 23 teachers, 11 males and 12 females. The minimum educational qualification for the teachers was a Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE).

However, the majority were holders of diplomas and degrees in education. The school had a male head teacher and two deputy head teachers of opposite sexes.

It also had two males and one female heads of academic departments. Involved in this study were the head teacher, the male deputy head teacher, one male head of department and 4 male and 3 female teachers.

### 3.4.2 Selection of participants

The sample to the study comprised head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of departments and class teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select head teachers and deputy head teachers while convenient sampling was used for heads of departments and class teachers. Head teachers and deputy head teachers were purposively selected by virtue of the offices they held. Teachers occupying the offices of the head teacher and the deputy head teacher were specifically targeted and selected because they held the highest and second highest positions in the schools. Their actions would determine involvement of class teachers in decision making processes. On the other hand, class teachers were conveniently selected. Those who were available and free on the time of focus group discussions were contacted for possible involvement in the study. Twenty-three class teachers participated in the study.

**Table 1: Number of participants with respect to school, position and sex**

School	Category and number of participants involved				Total
	Head teachers	Deputy Head teachers	Head of departments	Class teachers	
<b>A</b>	1 (M)	1 (M)	1 (F)	9(3F,6M)	12(4F,8M)
<b>B</b>	1 (F)	1 (M)	1 (M)	7(3F,4M)	10(4F,6M)
<b>C</b>	1 (M)	1 (M)	1 (M)	7(3F,4M)	10(3F,7M)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3(1F, 2M)</b>	<b>3 (0F,3M)</b>	<b>3 (1F,2M)</b>	<b>23(9F,14M)</b>	<b>32(11F,21M)</b>

Head teachers, deputy head teachers and heads of departments were involved in the study by virtue of holding administrative and management offices and were purposively selected. Head teachers of the three selected schools were involved because they held

the highest offices in the schools and had great influence on determining the extent to which their subordinates were involved in decision making. Three deputy head teachers were involved in the study as they held the second highest offices in the schools and were expected to be greatly involved in many processes carried out in the schools.

Three heads of departments were involved. Their involvement was crucial too because by virtue of their position in the schools they represented class teachers in different forums while at other times they also represented the administration to the teachers. They intermediated. Class teachers were the main respondents in the study. They were in majority in the schools and the problem in this study concerned them more hence, their participation in this study was vital.

### **3.5 Data collection procedures and tools**

Data was collected using interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and document analysis. Nieuwenhuis (2007) defines an interview as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions in order to collect data. Semi structured interviews involving uses of guides were administered to gather information from three deputy head teachers and three heads of departments concerning their involvement in decision making on financial matters. The interviews were scheduled to take not more than forty-five minutes. The method is less costly and extremely effective in acquiring information about people's opinions and perceptions. In addition, it is more convenient as it gives the researcher the opportunity to probe more on issues. Interview guides were used for each category of the participants in which nine questions were placed in three major groups related to ways teachers participate in decision making, levels of

involvement of teachers in decision making and challenges that affect teachers' involvement in decision making related to finances.

FGDs scheduled to take forty-five minutes were conducted with class teachers to gather information on their involvement in decision making on financial matters as well. Twenty-three class teachers from the three secondary schools participated in the discussions with one group coming from each school (Refer to Table 1). Three female and six male teachers from school A, three female and four male teachers from school B and three female and four male teachers from school C participated in focus group discussions. The discussions were also guided by nine questions that fell under three major categories as the ones in the interview guides.

The FGDs allowed the researcher get a wide range of responses during one meeting and also provide participants opportunities of reminding each other points that they might otherwise have forgotten (Dawson, 2002). The researcher took notes of important points raised during the discussions. The discussions were also recorded to complement note taking. Interviews were conducted with head teachers to find out the extent to which they involve their staff in decision making processes on issues to do with financial management. Each session took not more than forty-five minutes.

Interviewing head teachers allowed the researcher to gather more information from them as it would be possible for the researcher to probe more (Dawson, 2002). The interviews were also recorded.

Analysis of some school documents was also used to complement the two other tools. Focus was on the minute books of the meetings of Departments, Internal Procurement

Committees and Management Committees. According to Bell (2005), documents used to provide data in a research should be critically analyzed. It follows that both authenticity and genuineness of the documents were assessed and their contents were subjected to rigorous analysis. The analysis involved scrutinizing names of members who attended the meeting to verify if class teachers were involved and items discussed to see if matters of finances were discussed.

### **3.6 Data analysis procedures**

According to Creswell (2009), qualitative data analysis involves organizing, explaining the data collected and making sense of it in terms of the participants' definition of the situation. Therefore, in this qualitative study thematic analysis was used.

The researcher listened to the interviews and FGD recordings, read through the notes and produced transcripts. The analysis further involved reading through all the collected information from participants using the transcripts and then tabulating them according to identified themes. Information collected from analysis of documents complemented the data gathered through interviews and FGDs. The data was then interpreted. Descriptions and narratives were used in interpreting the data.

### **3.7 Ethical issues**

Ethics were considered in the study. Clearance to conduct research in the intended schools was sought from the Education Division Manager as shown (Refer to appendix A and the head teachers of the schools (Refer to appendix B). Informed consent was also sought from the participants themselves. Cohen et al (2007) describes informed consent as a procedure that accords an individual the opportunity to choose whether to participate in a study or not.

Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality in the study and they were informed of their freedom to withdraw from the study when they wished so. Use of codes instead of names helped hide the real identities of the participants as well as the schools involved. Data collected was in safe custody of the researcher for confidentiality. Much of it was kept in a personal computer with a password.

### **3.8 Credibility of findings**

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), assessing trustworthiness of research findings is a test of data analysis, the findings and conclusions in a study. To ensure that the study produces credible and trustworthy findings data sources were triangulated. Information was gathered from head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of departments and class teachers. Methods of collecting data were also triangulated. Interviews, focus group discussions (FGD) and document analysis were used. Triangulation enables the researcher conduct a coherent study and valid study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Information from the different categories of participants makes the study gather rich and adequate information. In the present study information from head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of departments and class teachers together made the study have adequate data. Furthermore, data from the different sources in the study helped the researcher to gather well grounded, justifiable and correct information and arguments. In addition, participants were offered an opportunity to comment on the data collected. This procedure helped the researcher determine accuracy of the data.

### **3.9 Pilot study**

The interview guides used in the study were pilot tested with respondents from one of the schools from the Municipality. According to Bell (2005), pilot testing the instruments enables the researcher to check that all items and instructions are clear so that they can be modified and made perfect before using them in the main study. One head teacher, one deputy head teacher and one head of department were involved in pilot testing the interview guides. Nine teachers from the school were involved in a focus group discussion held in pilot testing the FGD guide. After the pilot tests the instruments were improved by making a few changes to some items. In the biographic data years of service at the current school which was initially not included in the guides was included as it was noted to be an important element about participants.

To be able to gather adequate information from participants some supplementary questions were introduced. For instance, a supplementary question inquiring how often teachers participated in decision making processes was introduced on the item that sought to find out when teachers participated in decision making related to finances. The improvements were made to allow the researcher acquire adequate and useful information about the study using these tools (Refer to Appendix A).

### **3.10 Chapter summary**

In summary, a qualitative research method was employed in the study and it followed the interpretivist paradigm. Purposive and convenience samplings were used to select schools and teachers to participate in the study. Data was collected using interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and document analysis and qualitative data analysis was employed. Ethics were considered in the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This research examined the views of head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of departments and class teachers on how class teachers were involved in decision making related to finances in three public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality. For anonymity, the schools were named A, B and C and the participants were given codes as illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Codes of participants**

<b>School</b>	<b>Head teacher</b>	<b>Deputy head teacher</b>	<b>Head of department</b>	<b>Class teachers</b>
<b>A</b>	HTA	DHA	HAD	CTA1, CTA2, CTA3, CTA4, CTA5, CTA6, CTA7, CTA8, CTA9
<b>B</b>	HTB	DHB	HDB	CTB1, CTB2, CTB3, CTB4, CTB5, CTB6, CTB7
<b>C</b>	HTC	DHC	HDC	CTC1, CTC2, CTC3, CTC4, CTC5, CTC6, CTC7

This chapter therefore, presents results and a discussion of the findings of the study. The presentation of the findings follows themes that emerged from data analysis. However, it looks at the biographic data of the participants first.

#### 4.2 Biographical details of some participants

Apart from twenty-three class teachers, two male head teachers, one female head teacher, three deputy head teachers and three heads of departments also participated in the study. Table 3 and table 4 that follows shows the biographical details of all the participants.

**Table 3: Biographical details of Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers and Heads of departments**

Category of participants	School	Code	Sex	Age (years)	Highest qualification	Years of service	Years of service at the position
Head teacher	A	HTA	M	41-50	Bachelor of Education Degree	21-30	9
	B	HTB	F	51-60	Bachelor of Education Degree	21-30	9
	C	HTC	M	41-50	Bachelor of Education Degree	21-30	8

<b>Category of participant</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age (years)</b>	<b>Highest qualification</b>	<b>Years of service</b>	<b>Years of service at the position</b>
Deputy head teacher	A	DHA	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20	4
	B	DHB	M	41-50	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20	4
	C	DHC	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20	4
Head of department	A	HAD	F	41-50	Diploma in Education Degree	11-20	3
	B	HDB	M	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10	3
	C	HDC	M	51-60	Malawi School Certificate of Education	21-25	4

**Table 4: Biographical details of class teachers**

<b>School</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age(years)</b>	<b>Highest qualification</b>	<b>Years of service</b>
A	CTA1	F	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10
	CTA2	M	21-30	Diploma in Education Degree	01-10
	CTA3	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20
	CTA3	F	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20
	CTA4	M	41-50	Diploma in Education Degree	21-30
	CTA5	M	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10
	CTA6	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20
	CTA7	F	31-40	Diploma in Education Degree	21-30
	CTA8	M	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10
CTA9	M	41-50	Diploma in Education Degree	21-30	

<b>School</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age(years)</b>	<b>Highest qualification</b>	<b>Years of service</b>
B	CTB1	M	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10
	CTB2	F	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10
	CTB3	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20
	CTB4	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20
	CTB5	F	21-30	Diploma in Education Degree	11-20
	CTB6	F	41-50	Bachelor of Education Degree	21-30
	CTB7	M	21-30	Diploma in Education Degree	11-20
C	CTC1	M	31-40	Bachelor of Education Degree	11-20
	CTC2	F	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-20
	CTC3	F	31-40	Malawi School Certificate of Education	11-20
	CTC4	M	21-30	Diploma in Education Degree	01-10
	CTC5	M	41-50	Malawi School Certificate of Education	21-30
	CTC6	M	31-40	Diploma in Education Degree	11-20
	CTC7	F	21-30	Bachelor of Education Degree	01-10

### **4.3 Emerging themes from data analysis**

Six major themes emerged from analysis of transcripts from interviews and focus group discussions and notes taken from analysis of school documents and consideration of elements that Vroom and Yetton's model of decision making exposes. The model exposes factors that managers can use to determine approaches to employ in making decisions and displays levels of involvement of subordinates by managers based on approaches employed. Findings of related studies too influenced choice of the themes in the present study. Studies conducted in Nigeria and Ghana to examine teachers' participation in decision making in secondary schools found contrasting results. While in Nigeria the study revealed that teachers were involved in all areas including in making decisions concerning finances and that they were significantly involved, in Ghana it was revealed that the class teachers were not usually involved in making decisions related to finances and that they were not highly involved in decision making related to finances (Agubere, 2013; Olayemi & Olorunsola, 2011). These findings prompted inclusion of areas of decision making and levels of involvement in decision making related to finances among themes in the present study. The themes were participants' understanding of participative decision making, areas of decision making in schools, structures facilitating teacher involvement in decision making, ways in which teachers were involved in decision making, level of involvement of teachers in decision making and challenges that affect their involvement in decision making related to finances. The themes are discussed with reference to data collected from each school.

### **4.3.1 Findings from school A**

#### **Understanding of participative decision making**

The study revealed that all participants from school A displayed understanding of participative decision making. The head teacher of the school said;

*“In the context of a secondary school, participative decision making is where not only the head teacher makes decisions by himself but where other stakeholders in the school are involved.”* HTA, (Interview: May 25).

A class teacher from the same school said;

*“In the context of a school, participative decision making implies head teachers involving teachers in making decisions”.* CTA4, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

The study revealed that deputy head teacher and the head of department too displayed understanding of participative decision making.

#### **Areas of decision making in schools**

Asked to identify areas of decision making in the school, the head teacher said:

*“Decisions are made in different areas. They are made when dealing with discipline, academic and financial issues.”* HTA (Interview: May 25).

The deputy head teacher, head of department and class teachers from the school collaborated with the head teacher. A class teacher said:

*“Decisions at this school are made in areas of student’s discipline, learning and teaching and procurement.”* CTA3, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

All participants from the school acknowledged there were several areas where decisions were made.

### **Structures facilitating class teachers' involvement in decision making**

Participants from the school pointed out several structures that could facilitate involvement of teachers in decision making related to finances. The head teacher had this to say;

*“We have departments, management and internal procurement committees as structures that deal with resource allocation and management.”*

HTA, (Interview: May 25).

Class teachers too pointed out that subject based committees, academic departments and internal procurement committee were some structures in the schools that could facilitate involvement of teachers in decision making related to finances.

A class teacher in a focus group discussion said;

*“Subject based committees, academic departments and internal procurement committees are structures that can help us participate in decision making related to finances.”* CTA6, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

The deputy head teacher and head of department too admitted that the school had structures that could facilitate involvement of class teachers in decision making related to finances.

### **Ways in which class teachers are involved in decision making related to finances**

The study revealed that class teachers at school A are involved in financial decision making indirectly. A class teacher said;

*“I would say at this school we participate in decision making related to finances through heads of departments because they are members of IPC and management committees where financial decisions are usually made. However, we are rarely consulted on issues concerning finances.”* CTA5, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

Head of department concurred with the class teachers.

*“I am a member of the IPC and management committees of the school. This is where matters of finances are mostly discussed and I represent members of my department.”* HDA, (Interview: May 25).

The excerpts show that class teachers at the school were not directly involved in decision making related to finances.

### **Level of class teachers’ involvement in decision making related to finances**

The head teacher said;

*“Generally class teachers are highly involved in making decisions concerning finances at this school although they are variations in involvement. The deputy head teacher and heads of department are involved more compared to class teachers. Actually, class teachers are the least involved. But they are all at least involved”.* HTA, (Interview: May 25).

Concurring with the head teacher the deputy head teacher said;

*“Class teachers are involved. However, it is I and head of departments that are involved most times.”* DHA, (Interview: May 24).

While the deputy head teacher concurred with the head teacher that they were highly involved, the head of department from the school claimed heads of departments and class teachers were not highly involved.

*“We are not highly involved in matters of finances. Usually we just see things involving finances happening in the school without our knowledge.”* HDA, (Interview: May 25).

A teacher from the same school said;

*“We are rarely involved in discussing matters concerning finances. Often times we just see things happening. Sometimes we are just told decisions the management team makes concerning issues in the school”.* CTA5, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

While the head teacher and deputy head teacher thought class teachers were highly involved, the head of department and class teachers felt they were not highly involved in decision making related to finances.

### **Consideration of class teachers' views by the head teacher**

The head teacher said views of all teachers from the school on finances were highly considered in decision making. The head teacher said;

*“When views of class teachers get to my office I highly consider them in making decisions. I usually base my decisions on teachers' views.”* HTA, (Interview: May 25).

The deputy head teacher concurred with the head teacher.

*“Most suggestions put forward to the head teacher are implemented provided they are in line with the strategic plan of the school and the school has funds available.”* DHA, (Interview: May 24).

Commenting on the same the head of department said;

*“In the rare times an opportunity is accorded to us to comment on issues of finances, the suggestions we make are not usually considered as valuable may be because we are juniors. Those we make concerning discipline matters are the ones that are often considered and picked”.* CTA2, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

The case of heads of departments confirms what class teachers said. One class teacher said; *“Sometimes they are considered but not always”.* CTA5, (Focus Group

Discussion: May 24).

Rarely were views of class teachers concerning finances sourced and used by the head teacher at school A.

### **Challenges that affect class teachers' participation in decision making related to finances**

Lack of adequate opportunities for class teachers to participate in decision making and ineffectiveness in the way heads of departments worked were the two factors that participants from school A said affected class teachers' participation in decision making related to finances.

Class teachers from school A said that though staff meetings, subject based meetings and departmental meetings were conducted in their schools and were enough to source out views from them concerning finances in the schools, they were not effectively used.

A class teacher from the school said;

*“Staff meetings, departmental meetings and the IPC are enough to source out views from teachers on finances only that they are not effectively used hence we lack opportunities for involvement”*. CTA3, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

Another teacher said;

*“At this school there is no transparency on matters of finances. Our involvement would mean that there is transparency in handling finances. Nevertheless, we are not involved on matters to do with finances. We only get reports when things have gone wrong and we are told to stop asking for funds from management”*. CTA6, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

Class teachers from the school were eager to participate in decision making concerning finances. However, they lacked opportunities to do so. The class teachers also mentioned ineffectiveness in the manner heads of departments worked as another challenge.

One class teacher said;

*“Though the set up in the schools is such that head of departments are the ones to represent us at higher levels, usually these head of departments attend meetings like the internal procurement and management meetings before getting views from us.”* CTA5, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

The implication is that views presented at such meetings originated from heads of departments themselves and did not represent the views of the class teachers.

### **4.3.2 Findings from school B**

#### **Understanding of participative decision making**

Participants from school B displayed good understanding of participative decision making. The head teacher of the school said;

*“Participative decision making is when you involve teachers of different levels in making a decision.”* HTB, (Interview: May 22).

On the other hand, the deputy head teacher described participative decision making as inclusion of others in the process of decision making while a head of department said;

*“Participative decision making is a process whereby a decision is arrived at by consulting fellow members.”* HDB, (Interview: May 22).

Class teachers from this school too showed that they understood participative decision making. A class teacher said;

*“Participative decision making in a school context is where class teachers are involved in decision making.”* CTB2, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

All participants from the school clearly understood participative decision making defining it as involvement of others in the process of decision making.

#### **Areas of decision making in schools**

Asked to state areas of decision making in the school, the head teacher had this to say;

*“Decisions concerning teaching and learning, running of clubs, sports and procurements are made in the school.”* HTB, (Interview: May 22).

Other areas were mentioned by class teachers, deputy head teacher and head of department from the same school.

A head of department said;

*“Decisions are made in teaching and learning, discipline and resource management.”* HDB, (Interview, May 22).

Discipline, teaching and learning, clubs and societies and procurements were the areas where decisions were usually made at this school.

### **Structures facilitating class teachers’ involvement in decision making**

The head teacher acknowledged that the school had structures that could facilitate participative decision making. The head teacher said;

*“We have home economics in the school where the teachers budget for items they need for the term. The case is similar in other subjects like physics and chemistry. We also have departments that plan and budget”.* HTB, (Interview: May 22).

The deputy head teacher, the head of department as well as class teachers in the school admitted that there were structures in the school to facilitate involvement of teachers in decision making. In a focus group discussion conducted at the school a class teacher said;

*“Yes we have structures. However, it is usually the head teacher and his management team that makes decisions. I would say teachers are at the receiving end because it is what the management decides that is articulated during staff meetings without giving room for our views”.* CTB2, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

All participants from school B admitted that the school had subject based committees, academic departments, IPC and management committees as structures through which teachers could participate in decision making related to finances.

### **Ways in which class teachers are involved in decision making related to finances**

The head teacher said class teachers in the school were involved in decision making directly as individuals and members of committees where issues of finances were discussed or indirectly through representation.

The head teacher said;

*“Class teachers’ participation is from individual to members of departments. In IPC and management committees they are represented by heads of departments.”* HTB, (Interview: May 22).

However, the view of the deputy head teacher of the school was different.

*“I would not say that class teachers are directly involved but through their heads of departments. Usually such types of decisions are made at management and IPC where heads of departments are members.”* DHB, (Interview: May 23).

The head of department involved in the study supported the view of the deputy head teacher;

*“I am directly involved in decision making related to finances since I belong to IPC and management committees. As for class teachers I just represent them.”* HDB, (Focus Group Discussion: May 22).

Class teachers also thought they were mostly involved indirectly. During a focus group discussion, a class teacher had this to say;

*“It is only when something related to finances is put as an item for discussion in departmental and staff meetings that we take part. However, this rarely happens.”* CTB4, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

The views of the participants show that teachers are involved in decision making related to finances directly or indirectly. However, at this school, teachers are mostly involved indirectly. They are represented by heads of departments in meetings that directly discuss issues concerning finances in the school.

### **Level of class teachers’ involvement in decision making related to finances**

The head teacher explained that class teachers in the school were highly involved in decision making related to finances. The head teacher said;

*“Yes they are involved in planning and procurement. I even send them to procure things for the school but not in budgeting where I mostly involve the deputy head teacher and heads of departments.”* HTB, (Interview: May 22).

The views of class teachers contradicted with the head teacher’s. While the head teacher thought class teachers were highly involved, class teachers thought they were involved less. One class teacher said;

*“There is less involvement of class teachers in decision making related to finances at this school. We are the least involved.”* CTB7, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

However, the views of the class teachers matched with views of the deputy head teacher and the head of department. They argued that the level of involvement for class teachers was very minimal. Emphasis was on heads of departments representing them at committees that discussed financial matters.

### **Consideration of class teachers’ views by the head teacher**

Head teacher, deputy head teacher and head of department of school C said views of class teachers on finances are highly valued whenever they get to the management team. The head teacher said in an interview;

*“I can say their views are highly valued in the school though as a controlling officer sometimes I do not pick their suggestions.”*  
HTB, (Interview: May 22).

While the head teacher, the deputy head teacher and head of department said views of class teachers in the school were highly valued, class teachers thought their views were not usually valued. In a focus group discussion, a class teacher said;

*“Sometimes we make contributions but they are usually not taken into use.”* CTB1, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

Teachers’ suggestions on finances were rarely sought by the head teacher and they were rarely used in making decisions.

### **Challenges that affect class teachers’ participation in decision making related to finances**

Participants stated lack of maturity in class teachers, lack of experience and poor leadership as factors that hinder class teachers’ involvement in decision making related to finances. The head teacher stated that lack of maturity in some of the teachers made the highest office at the school not involve them in matters of finances.

This is what was said;

*“Some teachers are not mature enough. So I do not involve them to avoid exposing issues of finances to people who are not concerned in matters of the school. I look for maturity.”* HTB, (Interview, May 22).

As such, Head teachers are likely to involve mature and committed teachers more in decision making processes related to finances in their schools.

Furthermore, according to the head teacher experience also mattered in coming up with decisions concerning finances. Where a teacher seemed to have less experience in the service chances of involvement in making decisions concerning finances were slim. However, with vast experience a teacher had more chances of being involved in such matters.

The head teacher said;

*“Less experienced teachers do not usually know the priority areas in the running of schools. As such I do not just get anyone to be involved in decision making related to finances”.* HTB, (Interview: May 22).

The excerpt implies that due to lack of experience the class teachers sometimes gave priority to other things which at that particular time were not a priority at all. These forced head teachers not to make use of their suggested decisions. Eventually they came up with alternative decisions without involving them.

During a focus group discussion, teachers from school B stated that poor leadership skills on the part of head teachers resulted in poor relationships with their subordinates.

One teacher from the school said:

*“Sometimes the way our head teacher speaks to us and conducts herself makes us afraid to give views pertaining to finances in the school to avoid being persecuted. This limits our participation in the decision making processes concerning finances.”* CTB6, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

Another class teacher from the same school said;

*“Poor leadership on the part of head teachers hinders us from participating in decision making concerning finances. Usually they are not democratic and are not open and transparent on matters of finances”.* CTB4, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

The class teachers said that the way head teachers treated them and talked to them sometimes instilled fear in them. The poor relationship hindered them as class teachers from participating in making decisions related to finances.

### ***4.3.3 Findings from school C***

#### **Understanding of participative decision making**

The head teacher of the school described participative decision making as partaking of decision making by every teacher at the school. Similar descriptions were stated by the deputy head teacher and head of department. The deputy head teacher said;

*“Participative decision making involves a number of people discussing to come up with a decision.”* DHC, (Interview: May 21).

A class teacher from the same school had this to say;

*“Participative decision making means many teachers coming together to make a decision.”* CTC2, (Focus Group Discussion: May, 21).

All participants from the school understood participate decision making. They understood it as involvement of teachers in the decision making process.

### **Areas of decision making in schools**

Several areas where decisions are made were stated by participants from school C. The head teacher said;

*“Decisions about teaching and learning are made in academic departments. Other decisions concern procurement of necessities in the school.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

A class teacher from the school said:

*“There are many areas where decisions are made at this school. Clubs and societies, academic departments, discipline, management and procurement are some of the areas.”* CTC5, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21).

### **Structures facilitating class teachers’ involvement in decision making**

The study revealed several structures through which class teachers could participate in decision making related to finances. The head teacher said;

*“The major structure is IPC. The IPC looks at distribution and allocation of funds so that teaching materials and other needs are made available. However, at departmental level each department comes up with needs to which the IPC allocates funds. We also have clubs and societies. So committees from these ones when the term opens, plan activities and where they need funds, they channel their plans and requests to the head who then notifies the IPC”.* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

Class teachers also mentioned structures that could facilitate their involvement in decision making related to finances. In a focus group discussion, a class teacher said;

*“Yes we have structures such as subject based committees and departments in the school. We hold meetings in the structures where issues of finances are thoroughly discussed before coming up with decisions. Such discussions are sometimes held during staff meetings”.* CTC1, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21).

The deputy head teacher and the head of department concurred with both the head teacher and the class teachers. They too stated that subject based committees, academic departments, IPC and management committees are structures in the school that could facilitate teachers’ involvement in decision making related to finances.

### **Ways in which class teachers are involved in decision making related to finances**

The study revealed that teachers at school C participated in decision making related to finances both directly and indirectly. The head teacher of the school said;

*“We have clubs and societies, subject based committees and departments where class teachers are members. In these committees class teachers plan activities and make budgets.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

The excerpt shows that teachers participated directly in planning and budgeting as members of the stated committees. The deputy head teachers also said;

*“When we meet in departments class teachers give us what they need. These needs are presented at management and IPC meetings by us.”* HDC, (Interview: May 18).

Class teachers too acknowledged that they were involved directly and indirectly in decision making related to finances. One teacher in a focus group discussion said;

*“I take part in planning and budgeting in subject based committee and academic department as a member.”* CTC4, (Focus Group Discussion, May 21).

Another class teacher from the same school said:

*“May be because of my experience, the head teacher sometimes consults me on decisions to be made related to finances.”* TCC4, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21).

Another teacher also said;

*“We give our suggestions during staff meetings when an issue on finances comes as an agenda. Therefore, we can also say that we participate in making decisions related to financial management. However, this is rare.”*

TCC3, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21)

The study therefore, revealed that class teachers at school C were directly as well as indirectly involved in decision making related to finances. They participated as members of committees that discussed plans and budgets. Besides some of them participated directly in the decision making process as individuals. Head teachers sometimes involved individual class teachers in making decisions pertaining to finances.

#### **Level of class teachers’ involvement in decision making related to finances**

The study revealed that the head teacher of school C thought class teachers were highly involved in decision making related to finances.

The head teacher in an interview said;

*“Class teachers are highly involved. Each and every member of this school participates in matters of finances at some level. For instance, at departmental level heads of departments get views from teachers which are passed to the IPC and the management team”.* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

The head teacher further said;

*“My subordinates are involved at different rates. At time of budgeting I involve as many as the committee but now when it comes to managing finances mainly I will discuss with the deputy head teacher to come up with priority areas looking at the funds available”.* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

Both the deputy head teacher and the head of department had the same view. They too thought class teachers in the school were highly involved in decision making related to finances. However, they admitted that the deputy head teacher and heads of departments were highly involved compared to class teachers. One teacher from the school had this to say:

*“We are involved in getting quotations and buying items. We also take part in subject based, departmental and staff meetings where matters to do with finances are also discussed. So I feel as teachers at this school we are involved more in matters concerning finances.”* CTC5, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21).

Another teacher from the same school said;

*“We are involved in a number of areas that concern finances. We participate in budgeting and procurement. So we are involved more. However, the deputy head teacher and the heads of departments are involved more compared to us.”* TCC2, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21).

All participants in the school believed class teachers were highly involved in decision making related to finances. However, they all accepted that class teachers were involved less compared to the deputy head teacher and the heads of departments. .

### **Consideration of class teachers’ views by the head teacher**

The head teacher highly valued views of class teachers on financial matters.

*“Teachers views are highly considered. Most views from teachers are got through contributions they make during staff meetings. The views are taken and at management level, they are used. They help us make good decisions.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

The deputy head teacher also confirmed that views of class teachers are highly valued in the school.

*“Just like our views, views of class teachers concerning finances are taken seriously. They are highly considered during management and IPC meetings.”* DHC, (Interview: May 21).

A class teacher from the school also said;

*“Most of our views are considered and they are highly valued in the school.”* CTC2, (Focus Group Discussion: May 21).

The study clearly showed that views of class teachers at school C were highly valued.

### **Challenges that affect class teachers’ participation in decision making related to finances**

Lack of adequate time and inadequate funds were mentioned as factors that affected involvement of class teachers in decision making related to finances at the school. The head teacher said;

*“When there is an issue that requires immediate attention and solution and it involves finances, it becomes time wasting to wait and call for a meeting to discuss the issue in order to come up with a decision. As such in scenarios like these decisions are made without involving teachers to avoid wasting time while the situation worsens.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

The urgency demanded by issues affected involvement of subordinates in decision making processes concerning finances. The deputy head teacher from the same school also said:

*“Sometimes something that needs immediate attention just comes and a decision is made without involving teachers.”* DHC, (Interview: May 21)

Lack of adequate resources sometimes forced head teachers not to involve others in making decisions on finances. The head teacher also said;

*“Sometimes when we have very few funds in the school I just decide how to allocate them based on what I know as priority areas. The others and the IPC are just informed.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

When schools had inadequate funds and when a decision had to be made quickly, involvement of class teachers in making decisions related to finances was not considered by the head teacher at school C.

#### ***4.3.4 Measures that can improve class teachers' participation.***

Having mentioned challenges that affected participation of teachers in decision making related to finances in their schools, participants in the study were also asked to suggest possible measures that can improve teachers' participation in the area.

#### **Creativity and activeness of heads of departments**

In order to encourage teacher participation in decision making concerning finances one head teacher suggested that heads of departments needed to be creative and active.

The head teacher said:

*“Heads of departments may see the need for something for instance an in service training and may delegate teachers to plan and budget for the training. In that case the teachers will be able to participate in planning and budgeting thereby getting involved in financial matters.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

Delegating class teachers in some tasks related to finances would likely improve their involvement in financial management.

#### **Improved relationship and communication between head teachers and subordinates**

The Head teacher from school A spoke about the importance of relating well and communicating with the subordinates. He said;

*“Head teachers must be open and transparent. They should relate well and be communicating with their teachers on the status of the school when there are problems and even when things are smooth in the school”.* HTA, (Interview: May 25).

He further added that head teachers should be providing justifications why certain things are given priority and why others are left out in the school. He said this can help avoid discouraging class teachers and reducing their morale in offering suggestions on issues to do with finances in the schools due to head teachers deciding not to implement the suggestions the class teachers offered just because they did not follow within the priority areas. Another head teacher commented on head teachers' leadership skills. He said;

*“Head teachers don't have to be feared by teachers though this is the case in many secondary schools. Look, a teacher might have noticed that students in a certain class are sitting on the floor. The head teacher may not be aware. He or she may approach the head teacher if that head teacher is approachable; inform him or her of the problem. A listening head teacher may take that up, give it priority and in the end the problem would be solved.”* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

The above excerpt implies that head teachers must be approachable. They should be willing to hear and learn from subordinates. They should create conducive environment for all teachers to air out their views on matters to do with finances.

### **Adhering to guidelines provided by the government on how to deal with finances**

Deputy Head teachers too suggested measures that could promote teachers' participation in decision making related to finances. One deputy head teacher said;

*“Following the procedures which were laid down by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology can help ensure that every teacher participates in matters of finances as required”.* DHA, (Interview: May 24).

Government provided guidelines and procedures on handling finances and matters concerning procurement of services and materials in public institutions which include secondary schools (MoEST, 2004, MoEST, 2015). Implementation of the procedures and following of the guidelines demand involvement of stake holders in activities

related to decision making concerning finances. Where guidelines are followed, subordinates are involved in finances. The guidelines and procedures focus on promoting transparency and accountability.

### **Planning and budgeting starting from lower levels**

The Head teacher of school C suggested that planning and budgeting starting from lower levels would promote teacher involvement on finances. He said;

*“Head teachers should ensure that planning and budgeting start at lower levels such as at departmental level”.* HTC, (Interview: May 18).

This would ensure that teachers are involved right from the beginning of setting the plans and budgets so that they have a good picture of what happens in the school especially because they are usually the implementers of what is budgeted for. Furthermore, this process would help in coming up with a realistic school budget which would eventually become part of the national budget. According to Kampanje (2011), public schools being government institutions are involved in the process of formulating the national budget.

### **Ensuring transparency in managing finances**

Teachers from school A in a focus group discussion suggested that school administrators should be transparent by including issues of finances on items discussed during staff meetings and departmental meetings. They emphasized that head teachers should stop the tendency of coming to the teachers with issues when things have gone sour for them or always coming to them with reports or updates on finances.

Teachers from school B suggested that there must be respect for structures in the schools. Head teachers should let the structures in the schools work as required by the government policies and guidelines which facilitates transparency and accountability.

Commenting on the same a teacher from the school said:

*“There should be transparency and for it to be there it means information concerning what is happening in the school is accessed by us.”* CTB4, (Focus Group Discussion: May 23).

Class teachers thought that for transparency to reign they ought to be involved in making decisions. They have to be aware of how things are being done as regards finances. Government guidelines require accountability and transparency in managing finances as national education standard 26 stipulates.

It states that schools should promote accountability and transparency through public display of income as well as expenditure (MoEST, 2015).

Finally, a teacher from school A had this to say:

*“We hear the policy states that in the structure of internal procurement committee, the deputy head teacher, the accounts officer and the bursar can handle finances independently which means the teacher is 100% separated from issues of finances. If this is the case then the policy needs to be revised so that it should at least accommodate teachers.”* CTA9, (Focus Group Discussion: May 24).

The above excerpt shows that teachers lacked adequate knowledge of policies and guidelines concerning finances.

#### **4.4 Summary of findings**

The study revealed that all the three schools involved the study had structures to facilitate teacher participation in decision making related to finances. The structures included subject based committees, departments, internal procurement committees and management committees. However, the study established that in schools A and B the

structures were not efficiently and effectively used to promote teachers' participation in decision making related to the same. Issues of finances were rarely discussed in these committees since matters of finances were often discussed during IPC and management forums where class teachers were not members. To improve teachers' involvement, it was suggested that head teachers should allow matters concerning finances start being discussed at lower levels. For instance, planning and budgeting could start at departmental level where class teachers were always involved. This is what was practiced at school C.

Furthermore, the study revealed that class teachers were the least involved in decision making despite being in majority in all the three secondary schools compared to heads of departments and deputy head teachers. In all the three schools, class teachers were not members of the IPC and management committee in which matters of finances were mostly discussed.

Members of IPC were heads of departments, bursar and deputy head teachers. Management committees were led by head teachers. Heads of departments and deputy head teachers were the other members of the management committees. This explains why class teachers were the least involved. Participants in the study asserted that involvement in critical issues depended on the position held by one in the school hierarchy. It is evident from the class teachers' responses that head teachers from schools A and B preferred consulting the deputy head teachers and to some extent heads of departments when dealing with issues of finances. The implication was that class teachers' involvement was very minimal in these two schools. This finding supports the findings of studies that were done in Ghana, Ethiopia and Botswana. The purpose

of the study conducted in Ghana was to find out the state of teachers' involvement in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in the Bolgatanga Municipality. In Ethiopia, the study looked at practices of teachers' involvement in decision-making in government secondary schools of Jimma town. In Botswana, the study aimed at exploring the relationship between teacher participation in decision making and job satisfaction. These studies revealed less involvement of teachers in the crucial areas that dealt with resource allocation which includes finances (Agubere, 2013; Mosheti, 2013; Gemechu, 2014).

The study further revealed that class teachers were involved in decision making related to finances mostly indirectly and rarely directly while the heads of departments and the deputy head teachers were mostly directly involved. Participation of class teachers was mostly through representation. The findings further revealed that there were variations in the way the head teachers allowed class teachers to comment on finances. Similarly, there were disparities on the way the head teachers considered the views of subordinates on finances. In two schools (A and B) head teachers were not concerned much with getting views of class teachers on finances before making decisions. The case was different with school C where the study found that the head teacher usually sought views of teachers before making financial decisions. It was further revealed that the head teacher of school C was more transparent on issues of finances. Head teachers of schools A and B did not prefer making issues and decisions concerning finances public.

This concern corresponded with head teachers' lack of transparency on financial matters and poor leadership which the study revealed. The two head teachers preferred keeping matters concerning finances confidential. However, this was against national

education standard 26 which states that schools have to make public matters of finances to stakeholders (MoEST, 2015).

The study also found that there were several challenges that hindered teachers' participation in decision making related to finances. These originated from class teachers themselves while others concerned head teachers. They included lack of experience and maturity in teachers, lack of adequate time and poor leadership. The latter concerned head teachers more.

Some were not transparent on how they managed finances probably because of personal interests. As such, they chose not to involve teachers in discussing issues of finances.

Several measures that could help improve teachers' participation in decision making related to finances were suggested in the study. The measures mostly required the attention of the head teachers. They included improving relationship and communication with subordinates, adhering to guidelines provided by the government on how to manage finances, planning and budgeting starting from lower levels and ensuring transparency.

#### **4.5 Findings based on biographical data**

Demographic information collected during the study revealed a number of things. All the three head teachers in the study were well educated and experienced. They were all holders of bachelor's degrees in education and had served as head teachers for more than 10 years. Two were aged between 40 and 49 years while one was over 50 years. This variation in ages according to the study did not create any differences in terms of

the way these head teachers involved their teachers in decision making in financial management.

Two of the three head teachers were men and one was a woman. The study showed no disparities in the way the male head teachers and the female head teacher involved their subordinates. They employed the same approaches in involving their subordinates. This was mainly reflected in schools A and B which were headed by male and female teachers respectively.

The study also revealed that educational qualifications did not hinder head teachers from involving subordinates in decision making processes but the number of years in the service. This is evident by considering heads of departments who participated in the study. They had different qualifications. The head of department from school B was a holder of a degree. The one from school A held a diploma while the one from school C had a Malawi School Certificate of Education. Despite the differences in qualifications, they all participated in decision making related to finances. This implies that even class teachers' educational qualifications could not hinder them from participating in decision making processes. This supports findings of a study done in Nigeria by Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011). The study revealed that in schools of Ekiti State teachers were involved in decision making processes irrespective of their qualifications.

The current study also revealed that the number of years of service of the teachers mattered. The more the years the greater the chances of being involved in decision making. Probably the assumption was that the more the years of service the more the

experience one had. This worked mainly to the advantage of teachers with low education qualifications. Their chances of getting higher positions and getting involved in decision making processes in the schools increased with years of service. While those with higher education qualifications could be offered positions where they could be involved in decision making after a few years in the service, the teachers with low qualifications could be offered such opportunities after serving for many years. This was noted among heads of departments that participated in this study.

Furthermore, this study revealed that there was no disparity in involvement of male and female teachers in decision making in the schools. This was evidenced by having both male and female deputy head teachers and heads of departments who mainly participated in IPC and management meetings where issues of finances were mostly discussed. This could be extended to class teachers. The implication is that both male and female class teachers had similar opportunities of participating in decision making related to finances.

#### **4.6 Discussion of results**

The general view of participants in the study was that participative decision making is a case where by managers consults their subordinates when they want to make a decision so that they can get their input before they come up with a decision. Their view supported Omubede & Igbudu's description of participative decision making. The two viewed participative decision making as an element of participative management that entails stakeholders participating in the process of decision making (Omubede & Igbudu, 2012). The participants' view reflected the consultative approaches managers use to come up with decisions illustrated in the Vroom and Yetton decision making

model (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). The model shows approaches where managers seek subordinates' views on matters in the process of coming up with decisions. In schools, it meant head teachers involving teachers in discussions leading to some important decisions. This includes decisions on allocation of funds for procurement of teaching and learning materials.

Students' discipline, teaching and learning, planning, budgeting and procurement were areas where decisions were usually made in secondary schools involved in the present study. Agubere (2013) in a study conducted in Ghana which was looking at the state of teachers' participation in decision-making in public senior secondary schools in Bolgatanga Municipality also found that decisions in schools were oftentimes made in areas of curriculum and instruction, students discipline and guidance, school operation, school planning and budgeting.

However, the present study revealed that decisions related to finances could be made in areas of teaching and learning, planning, budgeting and procurement in the involved schools. Most decisions made in the other areas such as discipline did not concern finances.

Secondary school management guidelines and procedures state that secondary schools must have structures such as subject based committees, academic departments and management committees while the procurement regulations stipulate that public secondary schools as government institutions must have internal procurement committees to facilitate procurement of services and other resources in the schools (MoEST, 2014, MoEST, 2015). This is also reflected in the Malawi national education

standards. Education standard number 17 focuses on school governance and states that schools should have functional committees (Government of Malawi, 2015). All the three schools involved in this study had these structures as required. The structures were meant to help in running of the institutions and could facilitate involvement of teachers in decision making related to finances.

However, the study showed that although all the three schools had the structures available there were variations on how teachers were involved in discussions and decision making on financial matters. In schools A and B financial matters were mostly discussed at management level where class teachers were not participants while in school C such matters were discussed both at higher and lower levels where class teachers had the opportunity to participate. It follows that teachers from school C expressed satisfaction with the way their head teacher involved them in financial decision making through the structures that were in place in the school. The study shows that structures in some schools are not functioning effectively and efficiently despite government's efforts in providing guidelines.

According to Lunenburg (2010), teachers are expected to participate in decision making directly or indirectly. They participate as individuals or as members of a committee. This is supported by findings of the present study. Class teachers in the involved schools participated in decision making directly or indirectly.

They participated as individuals, as members of a committee or as members of a group of teachers. The study found that sometimes teachers directly participated in decision making processes related to finances. This happened when issues concerning funds were discussed during staff meetings, subject based meetings and departmental

meetings. In these meetings, they sometimes found themselves taking part in planning and budgeting. However, class teachers stated that such issues were rarely brought before them in such forums. On rare occasions, individual teachers were consulted by head teachers on matters concerning finances directly. Mostly experienced teachers had the opportunity of being consulted in this way.

On the other hand, the study revealed that the most common practice in the schools was involving the class teachers indirectly through representation. It was noted that in the internal procurement committee and the management committee meetings where issues of finances were often discussed, class teachers were represented by heads of departments. Class teachers expected heads of departments to consult them before attending such meetings in order to gather views from them on items concerning finances. However, this was not the case in schools A and B.

Head of departments attended IPC and management meetings to discuss financial matters before gathering views from class teachers. This meant that views the heads of departments presented at these meetings were not views of class teachers. This conflicts with what Ncwane, (2011) found in a study conducted in South Africa which examined the role of teachers in decision making processes that related to school financial management in Pinetown district schools. In the study, it was found that heads of departments were always consulting their teachers before attending meetings at higher levels with the intention of getting their views on items to be discussed.

However, Ncwane's findings support what the present study found at school C. Heads of departments at this school consulted class teachers before attending IPC and

management meetings. Since the study found that class teachers were mostly involved in decision making related to finances indirectly, the practice of heads of departments in such schools affected class teachers' participation in the same.

It denied them the opportunity of sharing their views, following and getting involved in financial matters as stakeholders. Because teachers are crucial in the teaching and learning processes, such a situation affected teaching and learning and eventually the performance of students in the schools.

Furthermore, the findings of the study imply that different decision making styles were used by head teachers in these schools. Situations determined the approaches the head teachers employed to come up with decisions (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Some financial decisions were made in consultation with committees. Sometimes head teachers made some decisions after consulting individual teachers while other decisions were made by head teachers themselves without consulting anyone in the school. A study conducted by Wadesango and Bagaya in Zimbabwe revealed similar findings. The study was conducted to investigate teachers' involvement in decision making processes in the management of schools in Gweru District. It was learnt that school management teams used different approaches in coming up with decisions. In some schools, head teachers made certain decisions without consulting teachers (Wadesango and Bagaya, 2013). The findings of both the study conducted in Zimbabwe and the present study support the situational and contingency theories this study focused on. The use of different approaches in decision making by the head teachers is also portrayed in the Vroom and Yetton decision making model.

The model focuses on that different situations demand different approaches to decision making. It therefore provides different approaches managers can use to arrive at decisions (Vroom and Yetton, 1973).

The approaches are autocratic while others are consultative determining how subordinates are involved in decision making. Contingency and situational theories of Fielder, Hersey and Blanchard too support the finding. The different approaches the head teachers used depict different leadership styles. The theories state that there is no single leadership style effective in all situations. It asserts that successful leaders adjust their leadership styles based on situations (Kouzing, 2009). According to findings of the present study, there are variations in the schools in terms of leadership.

Government policies focus more on democratic principles in running its institutions knowing that it promotes transparency and accountability (MoEST, 2004, MoEST, 2015). However, the present study shows that in some schools, transparency and accountability on financial matters lacked due to leadership styles head teachers preferred.

The study also revealed another practice that involved head teachers making financial decisions without involving anyone. In some cases, neither class teachers nor heads of departments and deputy head teachers were involved in making decisions related to finances. The practice was noted in schools A and B. Head teachers claimed that the approach was used in dealing with issues that required immediate attention. This act of coming up with a decision without involving others reflects Vroom and Yetton's approach managers deliberately choose to employ especially when they do not have adequate time to look into an issue (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). The model shows that

when the prevailing situation does not provide adequate time to the manager to look at an issue, involvement of many people in making a decision would delay the process of arriving at a decision hence not a priority.

Although the findings of this study supported the Vroom and Yetton's Decision making model, reasons that made the head teachers focus much on such approaches might not be the ones the model considers. They might have had other reasons besides the ones the model focuses on. Teachers in the study said head teachers sometimes chose to make decisions without involving them to protect their personal interests a reason the model does not depict. Furthermore, the model does not consider other factors such as emotions that may as well affect the choice of decision making style.

The study showed that class teachers were the least involved in decision making related to finances in all the three secondary schools compared to heads of departments and deputy head teachers. This resulted from head teachers' tendency of including only deputy head teachers and heads of academic departments in committees that mostly discussed issues of finances such as internal procurement committee.

Government guidelines allow head teachers as controlling officers to include other members in the committee whose membership could be rotated (MoEST, 2015). This therefore, entails that class teachers had the opportunity of being part of such important committees. However, this option was not utilized by head teachers in order to involve class teachers deliberately or due to inadequate knowledge about the guidelines. Nevertheless, findings of the present study support a study conducted in Botswana that

aimed at finding the correlation between teacher participation in decision making and job satisfaction.

The study found that class teachers participated less in financial matters such as budgeting compared to heads of departments and deputy head teachers (Mosheti, 2013). However, the findings conflict with findings of a study that examined teachers' involvement in decision making process in secondary schools in Ekiti state. The study found that generally teachers in secondary schools were significantly involved in decision making in all areas (Olorunsola & Olayemi, 2011). The findings showed that there were variations in the way head teachers allowed teachers to comment on finances. Similarly, there were disparities on the way head teachers considered the views of subordinates on finances. In two schools (A and B) head teachers were not concerned much with getting views of class teachers on finances. As such, they provided little opportunities for them to comment on such matters. However, teachers' concerns were usually related to teaching and learning activities.

Furthermore, teachers were best positioned to know teaching and learning resources needed in the school as they were directly involved in teaching and learning activities. It followed that their views usually focused on directing finances towards teaching and learning. Such decisions were often aired out during departmental meetings. The situation in schools A and B meant that teachers' concerns related to teaching and learning were rarely tackled and addressed during internal procurement committee meetings where class teachers were not involved. Failure to consider and address the teachers' concerns resulted into failure for the schools to prioritise teaching and learning materials. This affected teaching and learning processes in these schools hence

students' concerns of poor teaching and learning. The situation was different with school C where teachers were most often given the opportunity to comment on matters concerning finances through different forums.

The opportunity allowed teachers to have their concerns and needs concerning teaching and learning heard and addressed to their satisfaction. Decisions made during departmental meetings were upheld during internal procurement meetings. Teaching and learning resources were procured as requested by teachers thereby allowing teaching and learning activities to progress well. The differences noted among the schools were probably due to differences in leadership styles used by the head teachers. According to Vroom and Yetton (1973) autocratic leaders tend not to involve subordinates or involve them less in decision making while leaders who are democratic consult subordinates when making decisions. These findings support findings of a study conducted in Kenya which assessed the teachers' involvement in managerial decision making in secondary schools within Keiyo district. The study found that teachers in secondary schools are involved in making decisions but at lower levels implying that their views are not needed at higher levels (Kipkoech et al, 2011). However, this affects several areas in the school where class teachers are main actors. This includes the teaching and learning area where views of teachers which may not be known and addressed because of not involving them in decision making processes related to finances are crucial.

The study further revealed that class teachers as well as head teachers are not properly informed about government policies, guidelines and procedures concerning handling

of finances and procurement of goods and services in schools. Teachers are not aware that procurement regulations accommodate their involvement in such matters.

According to the Public Procurement Act and the Public Procurement Regulations, public institutions are required to have internal procurement committees (IPC) to handle procurement issues (Government of Malawi, 2003; Government of Malawi, 2003). These committees are supposed to have a minimum of three and maximum of seven members. The controlling officer or his deputy, the head of procurement unit and the bursar are compulsory members of the committee.

The controlling officer has the powers to choose the other members. Furthermore, the controlling officer may rotate membership of the internal procurement committee as he or she deems appropriate as this is allowed by the regulation. This implies that class teachers have the opportunity of being members of the IPC. However, in the schools involved in the study head teachers as controlling officers preferred incorporating deputy head teachers and heads of departments only giving no room for class teachers' participation in the IPC.

Several factors that hindered class teachers from participating in decision making related to finances were identified by participants. According to the head teacher of school B preference was on involving mature teachers in making decisions related to finances compared to those perceived immature. It was further added that mature teachers were usually committed to their duties. Hence involving them in decision making on crucial areas was a common practice among head teachers. This is also identified in the Vroom–Yetton Decision –Making model as one of the factors managers consider when deciding the approach to arrive at a decision. Where the target

is to come up with a high quality decision on a matter, involvement of committed members is necessary (Vroom & Yetton, 1973).

Class teachers from schools A and B said the biggest challenge that affected their involvement in decision making on matters related to finances was lack of adequate opportunities for them to air out their views related to finances. Class teachers thought head teachers deliberately avoided involving them. They thought head teachers avoided them in decision making on matters concerning finances so that they were not aware of how finances were being handled in case they started questioning. This however, is a reason that the Vroom-Yetton model neglected. The model did not look at this as a reason that can make managers decide not to involve subordinates in decision making (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). The model fails to take into consideration all possible reasons that can make managers choose specific approaches of decision making. It is important that head teachers change and start embracing involvement of class teachers in making decisions related to finances.

Lack of adequate time and need for urgency to look into an issue hindered class teachers from involvement in decision making related to finances. This is highly reflected in the Vroom –Yetton Decision –Making model. According to the model when the prevailing situation gives the manager adequate time to look at an issue, involvement of others to boost the quality of decision is possible. However, where the problem requires immediate solution, time becomes limited for the decision making process, and involvement of others may not be feasible (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). This explains why head teachers sometimes made decisions on issues concerning finances on their own or they just consulted some individuals such as deputy head teachers only.

Teachers from schools A and B added that head teachers' leadership styles in some instances weren't democratic. The head teachers were not open and transparent on issues concerning finances deliberately. As such it was difficult for them to involve class teachers. However, according to National Education Standard number, 26 school managers are required to promote accountability and transparency on how public finances are handled and they are not expected to hide the financial transactions of the school to teachers as stakeholders (MoEST, 2015).

In brief, participants in the study acknowledged the presence of several challenges that hindered adequate participation of teachers in decision making processes related to finances. Some originated from the class teachers themselves while others were from the head teachers. They included lack of maturity, lack of experience in some of the teachers, inefficiency in the way heads of departments worked, lack of adequate time to look at an issue, inadequate funds and poor leadership. Some of these challenges were also noted in a study that was done by Ncwane in South Africa.

In the study that aimed at examining the role of teachers in the decision making processes that relate to school financial management, insufficient funds and lack of transparency were identified as factors that hindered participation of teachers in decision making in primary schools in the Pinetown (Ncwane, 2011).

Possible solutions were suggested by participants in the study. Teachers from school B suggested that there must be respect for structures in the schools. Head teachers should let the structures in the schools work as required by the government policies and guidelines which facilitates transparency and accountability.

Class teachers thought that for transparency to reign they ought to be involved in making decisions. They have to be aware of how things are being done as regards finances. Government guidelines require accountability and transparency in managing finances as stipulated in national education standard 26. It states that schools should promote accountability and transparency through public display of income as well as expenditure (MoEST, 2015).

#### **4.7 Chapter summary**

In summary, the findings show that it is important for head teachers to involve class teachers in decision making related to finances. Class teachers are important stakeholders in schools. They are also implementers of important decisions. Involving them would likely promote transparency and accountability in the use of finances in schools. Consequently, there would be improvements in implementation of several activities including teaching and learning.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents key issues noted in the study and provides recommendations. It ends with suggestions for further studies.

#### **5.2 Summary of key issues found from the study**

It is evident from class teachers' responses that they were rarely directly involved in decision making related to finances. They were often involved indirectly. Class teachers were not participating in IPC and management committee meetings where issues of finances were mostly discussed. Besides head teachers preferred consulting the deputy head teachers and to some extent heads of departments when dealing with issues of finances. As such, class teachers were involved less in decision making related to finances. Head teachers, deputy head teachers and heads of departments too acknowledged that class teachers were involved less.

Variation was noted among involved schools on transparency on matters concerning finances. Except the head teacher of school C, head teachers of schools A and B did not prefer making decisions concerning finances public. The two head teachers were not transparent on matters related to finances.

Furthermore, the study revealed that teachers in the schools did not have clear knowledge about government regulations, guidelines and policies related to finances. This also applied to head teachers as evidenced by their failure to rotate membership of teachers in IPC.

Finally, according to class teachers lack of opportunities to participate in financial decision making was their major concern. In addition, several challenges that hindered their participation were revealed. They included lack of experience and maturity in teachers, lack of adequate time and poor leadership. These challenges could be addressed by interventions by either class teachers themselves or by head teachers.

### **5.3 Conclusions drawn from findings**

The success of a school is critically linked to effective decisions. Involvement of class teachers in decision making promotes effective implementation of the decisions. However, class teachers were involved less in decision making related to finances though in majority. Despite presence of structures that could facilitate their involvement, head teachers failed to use them effectively and efficiently to promote class teachers' involvement. Head teachers did not want to have issues of finances discussed in subject based, departmental and staff meetings which class teachers attended. They preferred consulting the deputy head teachers and to some extent heads of departments when dealing with financial issues. However, head teachers displayed undemocratic leadership styles that hindered class teachers from participating in financial decision making. This was observed in schools A and B. Transparency on how finances were handled lacked among stake holders.

It followed that these head teachers failed to adhere to internal procurement regulations and to meet the national educational standards instituted to help in running the schools. Class teachers as well as head teachers, deputy head teachers and heads of departments were not very conversant with policies, guidelines and regulations concerning finances. Communication of policies, guidelines and regulations has not been effective indicating need for improvement. Mostly these were communicated through circulars that were sometimes not accessed by class teachers. Effective communication and frequent monitoring of implementation of the policies, guidelines and regulations can improve the situation. Adherence to these may promote involvement of class teachers in the schools and in turn improve their work performance leading to improvements in students and general performance of schools. Head teachers and ministry officials should ensure that class teachers are involved (MoEST, 2015). This would also promote accountability and transparency on matters of finances thereby reducing cases of misappropriation and corruption while ensuring proper use of the available finances.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

In view of the key issues found in the study the following can assist improve teachers' involvement in decision making related to finances thereby promoting transparency and accountability in handling finances. The result would be prudent use of finances following informed decisions arrived at in the schools. This would in turn lead to improvements in provision of teaching and learning resources and eventually general performance of the schools.

The study established that class teachers were not usually consulted on financial issues. However, they wanted their views to be heard and acknowledged by the school system.

This followed that matters of resources and finances in the schools were discussed mainly during IPC and management forums where class teachers were not members.

It is a requirement by the Ministry of Education that all secondary schools have structures such as departments, internal procurement committees and management committees functioning (MoEST, 2015). All the three schools had these structures. However, the findings of this study revealed that there were variations on how they functioned. In schools A and B they could not facilitate class teachers' participation in decision making related to finances. The implication was that class teachers' involvement on financial decision making for schools A and B was low. This affected activities of the schools in general, teaching, and learning processes in particular. Therefore, improving the situation by letting class teachers involved significantly in financial decision making can improve the running of the school as teachers are the major implementers of most school activities. Therefore, it is necessary that head teachers allow issues requiring financial decision making discussed from lower levels where class teachers can participate in large numbers. Such matters should be discussed even in subject based and departmental committees.

In addition, the study revealed that in schools A and B head teachers were mostly not democratic. This kind of leadership in the schools hindered involvement of class teachers in decision making related to finances.

This kind of leadership was associated with lack of transparency on matters of finances in the schools further implying that they could not adhere to national education standard 26. The standard states that head teachers should ensure that there is accountability and transparency on matters of finances and that all stakeholders in the schools be aware of

what is happening in financial management (MoEST, 2015). This measure could help minimize cases of corruption and misuse of finances in the schools. The finding reflected the need for head teachers to change the leadership styles they usually used. They should appreciate the importance of working as a team and ensuring availability of transparency in their schools hence the need to use leadership styles that facilitate participation of many teachers in decision making. Democratic leadership style is likely to promote involvement of teachers in decision making related to finances which would in turn promote teaching and learning in the schools.

The study also revealed that class teachers were represented by heads of departments in the internal procurement committee meetings and Management meetings where issues of finances were mostly discussed. However, these heads of departments usually attended these meetings before getting views of class teachers. This implied that what they presented at such meetings were not views of their subordinates. As such, the effectiveness of the indirect participation of class teachers' in decision making on finances was compromised. It was necessary therefore, for heads of departments to consult class teachers on the agenda to be discussed at the higher level meetings well in advance.

The study also revealed that policies and guidelines were not clearly understood by head teachers as well as class teachers. They were not effectively and efficiently communicated. The study, revealed head teachers' failure to efficiently and effectively interpret and apply government guidelines concerning finances. For instance, the Public Procurement Act and the Public Procurement Regulations directed that the IPC should consist of a minimum of three and maximum of seven members.

The controlling officer or his deputy, the head of procurement unit and the bursar were compulsory members of the committee (Government of Malawi, 2003; Government of Malawi, 2004). The guidelines also gave the controlling officers, who in this case were head teachers powers to choose other members whose membership could be rotated. However, nothing was done to take advantage of the provision to involve class teachers. It was necessary that head teachers start including different class teachers into committees that discuss financial matters by taking advantage of what government guidelines stipulate. Incorporating class teachers in such committees would change the situation in the schools. They would have the chance to participate in making decisions related to finances. This would give class teachers chance to directly inform the school authorities of resources they need for successful implementation of several important school activities. Furthermore, head teachers' failure to efficiently and effectively interpret and apply government guidelines concerning finances might be one of the reasons behind the variations in implementing the same.

They are not properly communicated. Therefore, improvements on methods of communicating and informing schools about policies and guidelines are needed to improve the situation. In addition, monitoring the implementation need to be enhanced.

### **5.5 Suggestion for further studies**

The findings of this study could not be generalized because a very small sample was used. It is therefore necessary that a similar study involving a large sample be conducted in Malawi to give a clear picture of how teachers are involved in financial management in the country's secondary schools.

## **5.6 Chapter summary**

This chapter has provided a conclusive summary, recommendations and possible future study area in the involvement of teachers in financial decision making. Involvement of class teachers in financial decision making promotes effective implementation of the decisions. This in turn would lead to improvements in provision of teaching and learning resources and eventually general performance of the schools.

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## APPENDICES

### **Appendix A: Guide for interviewing head teachers on teachers' participation in financial decision making**

I am a student at Chancellor College. As part of fulfilling the requirements for the achievement of a Master of Education Degree, I am conducting a research on **“Exploring how teachers are involved in decision making in financial management in public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality”**.

In this research, I intend to interview you the school manager to get your views about how teachers in your school are involved in decision making processes related to financial management.

Should you agree to participate in this study, please note that your anonymity is guaranteed. No one will be able to identify you as well as your school and the content of our discussion will remain confidential. In addition, you will have full access to the interview transcript and the report when it is completed. Also, note that all the information collected will be used only for academic purposes. We shall spend no more than 45 minutes in the exercise.

Thanking you in advance.

#### **Part 1 Demographic information**

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: 20 – 29  30 – 39  40 – 49  50 – 59  60 – 69

Highest level of education: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of experience as head teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Years at the current school: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Part 2 Interview questions**

### **Background**

1. How would you describe participative decision making?
2. In which areas of decision making do you allow for your subordinates' contributions?
3. Do you involve teachers in procurement, planning and budgeting processes in the school? If yes, how do you involve them?
4. Are there structures in the school set to help teachers participate in making decisions in financial management? If yes which are these structures?
5. When do you involve teachers in decision making in management of finances?
6. How would you rate the level of deputy head teachers, heads of departments and teachers' participation in decision making concerning procurement, planning and budgeting processes in the school?
7. Do you think views of Deputy Head teachers, Heads of departments and teachers are highly considered in financial management?
8. What hinders you from involving teachers in decision making concerning finances?
9. What measures do you think can help deal with the hindrances?
10. Do you have anything else to speak concerning the issues we have discussed?

THANKS FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW

**Appendix B: Guide for interviewing head teachers and heads of departments on teachers' participation in financial decision making**

I am a student at Chancellor College. As part of fulfilling the requirements for the award of a Master of Education Degree I am conducting a research on “**How teachers are involved in decision making in financial management in public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality**”.

In this research, I intend to interview you the deputy head teacher/ head of department to get your views on how you and other teachers in your school are involved in decision making processes related to financial management. Should you agree to participate in this study, please note that your anonymity is guaranteed. No one will be able to identify you as well as your school and the content of our discussion will remain confidential. In addition, you will have full access to the interview transcript and the report when it is completed. Also, note that all the information collected will be used only for academic purposes. We shall spend no more than sixty minutes in the exercise.

Thanking you in advance.

**Part 1 Biographic information**

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: 20 – 29      30 – 39      40 – 49      50 – 59      60 – 69  

Level of education: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of experience as Deputy Head teacher/ Head of Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Years at the current school: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Part 2 Interview questions**

1. How would you describe participative decision making?
2. In which areas of decision making do you frequently participate?
3. Do you participate in making decisions concerning procurement, planning and budgeting in the school? If yes, how do you participate?
4. Are there structures in the school set to help teachers participate in making decisions in financial management? If yes which are these structures and how they facilitate teachers' participation?
5. When are your suggestions on financial management sought in the school? How often are they sought?
6. How would you rate your participation on financial management?
7. Do you think your views are highly considered in financial management? What about views of other teachers?
8. What issues affects your participation in making decisions in financial management? How can such issues be dealt with?
9. What do you think head teachers consider to involve or not involve you and teachers in Financial management?
10. Do you have anything else to speak concerning the issues we have discussed?

THANKS FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW

**Appendix C: An FGD guide with teachers on teachers’ participation decision making in financial management**

I am a student at Chancellor College. As part of fulfilling the requirements for the award of a Master of Education Degree I am conducting a research on “**How teachers are involved in decision making in financial management in public secondary schools of Kasungu Municipality**”.

In this research, I intend to discuss with you to get your views on how you are involved in decision making processes related to financial management in your school.

Should you agree to participate in this study, please note that your anonymity is guaranteed. No one will be able to identify you as well as your school and the content of our discussion will remain confidential. In addition, you will have full access to the interview transcript and the report when it is completed. Also note that all the information collected will be used only for academic purposes. We shall spend no more than sixty minutes in the discussion.

Thanking you in advance.

**Part 1 Biographic information**

Number of Participants: Males: \_\_\_\_\_

Females: \_\_\_\_\_

Ages: 20 – 29  30 – 39  40 – 49  50 – 59  60 – 69

Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Years at the current school: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Part 2 Questions to guide discussions**

### **A. Background**

1. How would you describe participative decision making?
2. In which areas of decision making do you frequently participate?

### **B. Ways teachers participate in financial management decision making.**

3. Do you participate in making decisions concerning financial matters in the school, how do you participate?
4. Are there structures in the school set to help teachers participate in making decisions in management of finances? If yes which are these structures and how do they operate to involve teachers?
5. When are your suggestions on financial management sought in the school? (How often does this happen?)
6. How would you rate your participation on financial management?
7. Do you think your views are highly considered in financial management by your superiors?
8. Are there problems you experience related to your participation in making decisions in financial management? If yes, what are they and how can they be dealt with?
9. What can be done to improve teachers' participation in financial management?
10. Do you have any additional thing to say concerning the topic we have discussed?

THANKS FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION

**Appendix D: A guide to document analysis on teachers participation in decision making in financial management**

(Internal Procurement Committee Records, School Planning and Budget Committee Records)

1. Do teachers in the school attend meetings discussing financial matters?
2. How often are the teachers involved in meetings discussing matters related to finances?
3. Are teachers accorded the opportunity to contribute during meetings on financial management?
4. Are teachers' suggestions in the school highly considered?

**Appendix E: Request for permission to conduct a research**

P.O. Box 94  
Mtunthama  
15<sup>th</sup> May 2018

The Head teacher

.....  
.....

Dear Sir,

**Re: Permission to conduct research at your school**

I write requesting permission to conduct research in your school as part of fulfilling the requirements for attainment of a master of Education Degree. I am a student at Chancellor College and the research will look at how teachers are involved in decision making related to financial management.

In the research, I intend to interview you as the school manager and get your views about how teachers are involved in decision making processes related to financial management. In addition, I would also like to interview one Deputy Head teacher, one Head of Department and at least seven teachers. To ensure that a balanced and comprehensive view is obtained, I may also like to view some documents kept in the school such as records of meetings where finances are discussed.

Should you agree to participate in this study, please note that your anonymity is guaranteed. No one will be able to identify your school. The contents of our discussion will remain confidential and will solely be for academic purposes. In addition, you will have full access to the interview transcript and the report when it is completed. I shall spend no more than 45 minutes with each participant on the day that will be convenient to them. Care will be taken to ensure that the smooth running of the school is not disturbed due to some teachers participating in this research project.

**Chance Kaonga**

**Appendix F: Declaration form**

I ..... (Full names of the participants) hereby declare that I understand the content of this document (request for permission) and the nature of this research project.

I am willing for my school to be researched.

.....

.....

**Signature of the Head teacher**

**Date**

**Appendix G: Consent form**

I ..... (Full name of the participant) hereby confirm that I understand the nature of this research and I consent to participate.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw at any time should I desire.

.....  
**Signature of the participant**

.....  
**Date**