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The Unheard Voices: Challenges Facing Teacher Participation in Ghanaian Basic Schools: A Study of Basic Schools in the Central Region of Ghana

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Abstract:

In developing countries like Ghana, research has shown that little is done about teacher participation in decision-making (PDM) which is crucial for school improvement. However, despite various efforts made by various governments through the implementation of numerous educational policies which calls for teacher participation in school decision-making, still Ghanaian basic school head teachers and teachers are daunted with challenges in school decision-making. PDM is the extent to which teachers who are the implementers of educational policies are consulted and involved in school decision-making. The study adopted the case study design through micro-ethnography approach. Data was collected through interviews, observations and document analysis. The study explored the challenges facing teacher participation in school decision-making. 10 basic schools, 20 teachers, 10 head teachers and 10 circuit supervisors were involved through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. In addition, 2 basic schools were observed. The study established that there are four major challenges facing teacher PDM in Ghanaian basic schools and these are lack of implementation of decisions made, time factor, leadership style and lack of trust among staff members. The study recommends that there should be regular in-service training on leadership and school management for head teachers, teachers and other staff members, school leaders should also be encouraged to practice distributed leadership style and generate funds internally to implement decisions made.

Keywords: *decision-making, teacher participation, Ghanaian basic school, circuit supervisor*

1. Introduction

As Ghana is part of the rapidly changing world, among the primary pre-requisites for improving the quality of teaching in basic schools is full teacher participation in school decision-making process (Dampson, 2010 & 2011). In this regard, one of the programmes that have made positive contribution to training of head teachers in Ghana is the Leadership for Learning Programme (LfL). The LfL, the Cambridge Network was established in 2001 as a value-based network concerned with learning, leadership and their interrelationship (Jull, Swaffield, and MacBeath, 2014). In Ghana, the LfL partnership with the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) at the University of Cape Coast have been able to train and organise workshops for an estimated 3000 head teachers throughout the country. Additionally, the LfL's five policies: focus on learning; conditions for learning; shared leadership, dialogue; and shared accountability has been adopted by the Ghana Education Service (GES) and included in the head teacher's handbook. Such positive impact in policy implementation and training of head teachers in leadership and learning, perhaps, is yet to be felt across basic schools in Ghana because Dampson (2010 & 2011) argues that the majority of the basic school teachers lack participation in school decision-making.

In this context, Somech (2010) and Harris (2012) remind us that the participation of teachers in school decision-making may motivate teachers to exert their intellectual and emotional involvement in group situations that may enable them to contribute to group goals and share responsibilities for better school improvement. In addition, Atakpa and Ankomah (1998) claim that lack of teacher participation in decision-making is the cause to lack of student academic achievement in Ghana. Furthermore, Dampson (2010 & 2011) believes that Ghana's fCUBE will be fully achieved through teacher participation in school decision-making. Therefore, the researchers believe that the lack of participation of teachers in school decision-making has become a matter of great concern in the field of education in Ghana in recent years (Agebure, 2013). With the

quality of teaching being one of the major requirements of school improvement and the concern that an alarming number of teachers are under performing as evidence from the 2011-2013 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) indicates poor performance of students (MOE, 2013; MOE, 2014), increasing teacher participation is a necessity for academic productivity and excellence in Ghanaian basic schools (Somech, 2010; Harris, 2012; Kuku and Taylor, 2002). The Ministry of Education, Ghana (1999), in trying to understand the reasons for low achievements among pupils in schools suggested 10 key causes of which unmotivated teachers owing to unattractive incentives and the poor appreciation of the roles of teachers (teacher participation in school decisions) were considered as key factors to school improvement.

The above concerns indicate the importance of teacher participation in school decision-making in Ghanaian basic schools. However, regardless of the importance of teacher participation in school decisions, only few studies (Agebure, 2013; Kweggyir-Aggrey and Yelkperi, 2012; Drah, 2011) have been conducted in Ghana to find solutions to the lack of teacher participation in school decision-making. Nonetheless, the majority of the studies to which most references are made, were conducted in Europe and the United States of America where school culture and dynamics are totally different from Ghana. This situation has created paucity of literature in the field of study which has resulted in the perceived causes and effects of teacher participation in school decision-making in Ghana. The researchers therefore justify that the paucity of literature within the Ghanaian context justifies the need for a study that focuses on the challenges/barriers to teacher participation in relation to school improvement in Ghana in the midst of low academic achievement among basic school pupils. Thus, the research question guiding this study is '*What are the challenges facing teacher participation in school decision-making in the Cape Coast Metro and Mfantseman Municipality?*'.

2. Review of Literature

A review of literature on teacher participation in school decision-making processes points to some factors that play a role in determining the extent and the manner in which teachers can be involved in school decision-making processes. Some of these factors are organisational trust, teacher motivation, decisional zones, teacher empowerment, past experiences and individual differences (Somech, 2010, Oduro, 2007; Anderson, 2002; Johnson and Kruse, 2009; Blasé and Blasé, 2001; Hoy and Tarter, 2010). As per the aims of the study, these factors are important not only for how the study was designed, but also for understanding how teachers, head teachers and circuit supervisors make sense of TPSDM.

2.1. Challenges/Barriers to Teacher Participation in Decision-Making Process

Participative management is believed to be an ideal way of leading and managing any organisation including the school. However, participative management is not easy; it is fraught with challenges which make it difficult for both the leaders and sub-ordinates to work together. It is important that practitioners of participative management should be aware of these challenges so as to develop measures to mitigate their impact. Different barriers have been given with regards to different studies, its context and its location (Duze, 2011; Swanepoel, 2008; Wadesango, 2011). However, the researchers found the following barriers to be more related to the study's context and location. These barriers include the fact that participative management is time consuming, the lack of requisite skills, as well as, the lack of trust and the bureaucratic structure of school management.

2.2. Time Consuming

Time is believed to be a very important resource for any organisation (Steyn, 2001). It is against the backdrop of such a view and belief that teacher participation in school decision-making processes can be regarded as time consuming for any head teacher in terms of time management. One of the most documented hindrance to participative management in general (Somech, 2002; Swanepoel, 2008), and financial management in particular (Newcombe and McCormick, 2001) is the fact that it is time-consuming. Other studies in Ghana, Drah (2011), Kenya, Kiprop and Kandie (2012), Nigeria, Duze (2011) and Lewis and Naidoo (2004) in South Africa all found some element of time as a barrier to teacher participation in school decision-making. Regardless of time being a barrier, Tschannen-Moran (2001) believes that collaborative decision-making has the potential benefit of higher quality decision and greater ownership and implementation of decisions when time is managed well. However, he also cautions that it can also be costly in terms of time and energy and that despite such huge investment in time, there is no guarantee that potential benefits will actually be realised.

2.3. Lack of Requisite Skills and Knowledge

Steyn and Squelch (1997) point out that head teachers' lack the requisite skills and knowledge that will enable teachers to effectively participate in the school decision-making. White (1992) concurs Steyn and Squelch's view by stating that both head teachers and teachers lack the specific training in shared decision-making, school budget, curriculum, as well as, staffing decisions. This situation, according Tschannen-Moran (2001) makes the head teacher feel reluctant to extend genuine influence to teachers, perhaps assuming that they do not have the expertise to make valuable contributions or make decisions in the best interest of the school.

Corroborating the above facts, evidence research (Jull *et al.*, 2012; Mensah and Dampson, 2013; Afful-Broni and Dampson, 2008; Oduro, 2009; Bush and Oduro, 2006) indicate that a considerable proportion of teachers and head teachers in some Ghanaian basic schools are not sufficiently qualified, trained or have the required skills and knowledge to lead schools or

take part in decision-making processes. In this regard the researchers argue that it is therefore going to be difficult for teachers who are overworked and sometimes regarded as unqualified to accept and embrace the tenets and demands of participative decision-making.

2.4. Lack of Trust

Robinson (1996) defines trust as believing that the other party will not work against him or her and will not stand in the way of his or her interests. Fukuyama (2000) on the other hand sees trust as expectations that arise in societies where the members share common norms, behave honestly and cooperate with each other. In addition, Yilmaz and Kabadayi (2002) describe trust as the beliefs about the unselfishness of the other party, readiness to risk-taking and dependency at a certain level. Regardless of these definitions, studies reveal that the most important discrimination about organisational trust is the distinction between setting one's trust in an individual and in the organisation. "Trusting somebody" and "trusting an organisation" are different concepts. This implies that an employee working in an organisation can trust the organisation and the other people in organisation at different levels.

2.5. Bureaucratic Structures of School Management

The bureaucratic structure of school management is also a hindrance to authentic participation (Steyn, 2001). In Ghana for example, the bureaucratic nature of schools has made it difficult for head teachers to effectively involve teachers in all aspects of school decision-making (Dampson, 2010 & 2011). In bureaucratically structured schools, Somech (2002 & 2010) argues that significant decisions about strategy, policy and organising mode may lie outside the arena of participation. The inability to create flatter management structure is believed to militate against authentic management. Such views are echoed by Wiggins (2004) when she stated that the increased emergence of participative management in schools reflects the wide shared believe that flatter management and decentralised authority structures carry the potential for achieving outcomes unattainable by the traditional top-down bureaucratic school. In this regard it has become very easy for some Ghanaian basic school head teachers who believe they are accountable only to external bodies to justify the non- involvement of teachers by citing their official position as a deliberate excuse. The researchers therefore believe that such perceptions and comments by head teachers discourage teachers from genuinely participating in decision-making, which in turn creates conflicts and tension among head teachers and teachers.

3. Methodology

The study was designed in two phases. In each phase the researchers adopted specific research tool(s) to answer the research questions. Phase one of the study was designed to collect data from respondents using semi-structured interview to elicit responses from participants, while in phase two a case study approach was employed through the use of micro-ethnography/participant observation and analysis of documents to garner data to support the findings from the semi-structured interviews in phase one.

The researchers adopted the qualitative paradigm which fits into the two phases of data collection. In this regard the researchers adopted the case study (micro-ethnographic design) suggested by Bryman (2012) as a method of studying a group of people within a short period of time. Bryman suggests that "in studies where it is unlikely to conduct a full-scale ethnography involving long period of time on the field in an organisation, as part of a community, or a company of a group, such study can be referred to as a micro-ethnography" (p.433).

The purpose of the participant observation (micro-ethnography) was to allow the researchers to formulate their own version of what was occurring independent of the participants. Furthermore, the inclusion of participant observation enabled the researchers to provide a more complete description of the phenomena than would be possible by just referring to interview statements or documents (Gall, Gall, and Borg 2003). Just as important, the participant observation (micro-ethnography) provided the researchers an alternate source of data for verifying the information obtained through interviews, and analysis of documents (triangulation).

3.1. Sample and Sampling Technique

Gall, *et al.*, (2003) recommend that a researcher who wishes to study experience of different schools from different locations (rural and urban) should adopt the maximum variation sampling technique. This sampling technique according Gall, *et al.*, (2003) involves selecting cases that illustrate a range of variation in the phenomena to be studied. For example, the researcher studied teacher participation in school decision-making from two study sites (urban and rural-urban). This sampling technique served two purposes: it enabled the researcher to have equal participation levels among respondents from the two study sites, and also enabled the researchers to determine whether common themes, patterns, and outcomes cut across the two study sites. In using the maximum variation sampling strategy, the researcher created a "pool of participants" (Seidman, 2006) from the two sites during their first contact with participants. This pool included 25 teachers, 10 head teachers and 10 circuit supervisors from 10 basic schools.

In all 40 respondents comprising of teachers, head teachers and circuit supervisors from the two study sites responded to the researcher's emails and phone calls indicating their willingness to participate. The researchers then adopted purposeful random sampling which according to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) involves selecting at random to sample 20

teachers, then the census sampling technique was employed to sample 10 head teachers and 10 circuit supervisors. However, the purpose of the random sampling adopted by the researchers was not to represent the population which is the purpose in a questionnaire survey, rather, the purpose was to establish the sampling procedure which is not biased. In all 20 teachers, 10 head teachers and 10 circuit supervisors were interviewed from the two study sites. After the analysis of the interview, 2 schools were purposively selected, observed and their documents analyzed.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

Each interview began with an explanation of the informed consent form and time was provided for the participant to sign the document. All respondents were satisfied with the researcher's explanation on the form; they skimmed the contents and signed the required page. Also, the researcher asked all respondents' permission to tape record their interview for later transcription and analysis as indicated in the consent forms. To establish trust and rapport with respondents the researcher presented themselves as teachers and researchers (Gal, Borg and Borg, 2003).

After data have been collected and saved, the researchers listened and transcribed the data on the same day or a day after each interview. In general, the researchers focus was to identify common ideas, themes, and/or patterns that emerged from participants responses (Bryman, 2012; Merriam, 2009; Seidman, 2006; Gal *et al.*, 2003). Specifically, the researchers utilized the data collected to help inform the study's research questions.

In this study, participant observation (micro-ethnography) was used as a tool to observe the interaction of staff during morning briefings and meetings to triangulate the themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews. All the related events that took place during the observation were recorded and were subsequently used in this study as part of the 'rich insight' and respectable data (Denscombe, 2003).

Data collected through interviewed and participant's observation (micro-ethnography) were first coded using the Nvivo software version 10 into thematic categories and sub-themes. As the case study involved two different schools, the within-case analysis and the cross-case analysis (Merriam, 2009) were used by the researchers to analyse the data. Within-case analysis, each case was first treat as a comprehensive case in and of itself.

5. Findings of the Study

5.1. Challenges/Barriers to Teacher Participation

Oduro (2009) reminds us that basic schools in Ghana are faced with daunting challenges ranging from improving supervision skills of head teachers, enhancing female capacity for participation in school leadership to improving teaching and learning in the classroom. Oduro further noted that the head teacher's role is critical in facilitating the implementation of quality education initiatives.

In accomplishing their tasks, however, he claims that head teachers encounter a number of challenges including dealing with low motivation; managing class sizes; dealing with inadequate and delayed textbook supplies; handling the misuse of teaching time resulting from lateness and absenteeism of teachers and pupils; etc. With all these daunting challenges facing basic school head teachers in Ghana, perhaps one might be tempted to believe that their inability to involve all teachers in school decision-making may be justified.

In this regard the following themes emerged from the transcript and were subsequently grouped under the 4-main overlapping thematic categories that evolved from the interview and the research questions of the study. The four main thematic categories are Unimplemented Decision, Insufficient Funds, Leadership Style and Attitude of Teachers

5.2. Unimplemented Decisions

The findings of the study revealed that teachers believe that when they are involved in all the levels of school decision-making, decisions will be implemented because they are the implementers of all school policies. In a study among Zimbabwean schools, Wadesango (2011) established that the end product of decision-making among Zimbabwean teachers lies in its implementation. Similarly, Drah (2011) revealed that teachers in Sunyani in the Eastern Region of Ghana were willing to implement all school decisions as long as they participate in it. Both Drah and Wadesango cautioned school leaders not to impose decisions on staff members as problems may arise during its implementation stage. At its implementation stage, Wadesango (2011) noted that teachers may reject the ideas for the simple reason that they were never part of its development. Juru (2002) further added that imposed decisions are not fully implemented by teachers due to a number of factors which includes misinterpretation of the requirements and rejection of ideas by teachers.

In this study, almost all the teachers (18 out of 20) interviewed share the view that the majority of the decisions made were not implemented due to insufficient funds and non-involvement of teachers in the school decision-making process. Teachers were, however, quick to indicate that on a number of occasions head teachers intentionally refuse to involve them in most of the decisions concerning finance and other administrative work. This deliberate refusal by some of the head teachers to involve teachers in school decision-making, according to the majority of the teachers' made them feel alienated from the decision taken thereby refusing to play any role in its implementation. The following are some of the views captured from participants:

A male head teacher (2) from Cape Coast said:

"I still keep to the lack of implementation of decisions, finance and leadership styles are some of the challenges but lack of implementation is first. Teachers feel that whenever you make decisions they must see something."

A female teacher (12) from Cape Coast also added:

"When they (head teachers) take decisions, they should make sure that the decisions are implemented; you don't take decision and leave it just like that."

These views were affirmed by a female circuit supervisor (3) from Mfantseman when she said:

"Yes, lack of implementation of decision, finance and leadership style is some of the major challenges. However, some teachers don't participate because their views are not taken and those taken are not implemented, this makes them feel rejected and keep silence and not involve at all"

It appears that both head teachers and circuit supervisors, on the other hand, believe that while teacher participation in school decision-making plays an important role, the major challenge in implementing decisions is inadequate funding. They also share the view that with available funds, school head teachers will be in a good position to implement most of their decisions. The study's finding that the majority of the schools' decisions are not implemented concur with Abahunmna (2010) who claims that the majority of the head teachers in Nigeria would confine teacher's participation to merely expressing their reaction to a tentative decision already made by the head teacher which in effect leads to decisions not being implemented. Similarly, a study by Kwegyir-Aggrey and Yelkpieri (2012) in Ghana indicate that the lack of implementation of decisions was mostly due to the unavailability of funds and lack of teacher participation as also revealed by the findings of this study. They argued that in reality there is still minimal teacher participation in decision-making process in most basic schools in Ghana which has resulted in unimplemented decisions.

On the contrary, this study's finding disagrees with Olorusola and Olayemi (2011) who found high teacher participation in decision-making in some selected secondary schools in Ekiti state in Nigeria. They attributed such high participation to quality leadership style adopted and availability of structures, resources and funds to implement decisions. Making inferences from the findings of Olorusola and Olayemi, perhaps, with the availability of structures, resources, funds and good leadership in place, most decisions made in Ghanaian basic schools could be implemented.

5.3. Insufficient Funds

In Ghana, most school improvement initiatives have been undertaken by Non-Governmental Organisations such as Consortium for Research on Education, Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) funded by DFID, Whole School Development (WSD) funded by the World Bank, and the School Improvement Fund (SIF) funded by UK government (Essuman and Akyempong, 2011). Available literature on school improvement in Ghana appears to show that the Whole School Development project had had the kind of impact expected from school improvement initiative focusing its efforts on decentralised decision-making to enhance local community participation in school improvement (Essuman and Akyempong, 2011). Contrary, the researchers argue that such benefits and impact are yet to be experienced in majority of the basic schools in Ghana as it emerged from this study that almost all the schools from both sides of the study were faced with financial problem, bureaucratic leadership system, and lack of local community participation to implement decisions made. The current educational reform in Ghana gave a mandate to local communities to own, participate and support schools financially. The implication is that the mandate given to communities is yet to be fully utilised as head teachers and teachers complain about the lack of community support and participation in school activities.

The field notes gathered by the researchers through observation and documents analysis affirmed that majority of the schools have uncompleted projects and those that never began. The findings of the study also revealed that the only source of funding for basic schools is the capitation grant and internal generated funds. The capitation grants are sums of money given to each basic school by the government to run the school. However scanty this money is, head teachers complained about its delay in reaching the school.

In addition, all the head teachers claim that they sometimes have to pre-finance the school budget with their own money to keep the school functioning. This system of pre-financing to a large extent, according to some of the teachers enable head teachers to choose who to involve and who not to involve in some aspect of school decision-making.

The study further established that the pre-financing of the schools' budget by the head teacher has enabled some head teachers to implement some of the decisions taken, regardless of their financial challenges. All the head teachers interviewed seem to agree that finding money to implement decisions was a major challenge. However, the situation of pre-financing the schools' budget seems to deter teachers from participating in school decision-making because after wasting instructional hours at meetings their views will not be considered and decisions will not be implemented. This is what circuit supervisor (1) from Cape Coast said:

"Yes, sometimes teachers feel like wasting teaching hours to sit in a meeting that will not yield any benefit or that its decision won't be implemented"

Nonetheless, few schools have experienced minimal school improvement in discipline and academic standards where finance did not play a major role as per leadership style adopted by the school head teacher and positive attitudes exhibited by teachers. This finding implies that regardless of the decision made, funds play a major role in the implementation of school decisions. However, the researchers also opine that good leadership style and positive attitudes by teachers perhaps, might also be the additional key to implementation of school decisions.

5.4. Leadership Style and Attitude of Teachers

Although inadequate funds were considered by all the head teachers as the major challenge in implementing school decisions, leadership style and attitude of teachers were also recognised by head teachers and teachers as also a challenge to teacher participation in school decision-making. According to Northouse (2013), leadership is a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Leadership style consists of the behaviour pattern of a person who attempts to influence others. Literature On leadership indicates that leadership styles include both directive (task) behaviours and supportive (relationship) behaviours (Northouse, 2013). Northouse claims that directive behaviours help group members to accomplish a goal by giving directions, establishing goals and showing how goals and methods are to be achieved, whereas, supportive behaviours help group members to feel comfortable about themselves, their co-workers and the situation. This implies that if teachers are to participate meaningfully in decision-making, basic school head teachers need to develop both their directive and supportive styles if they are to achieve the end product of decision-making which is implementation.

The analysis of the interviews established that head teachers' leadership style and attitude of teachers towards staff meetings also hinder teacher participation in school decision-making. The study further revealed that some of the head teachers were not democratic in their leadership management. As captured by male head teacher (2) from Cape Coast said:

"Yes, you know we are spending officers and in most cases, we are not accountable to the teachers, it is the auditors and the authorities above that we are accountable to"

As indicated in the above quote and frequently in other quotes during the interviews, it is clear that some of the head teachers believe that they are not accountable to their staff members but rather to the education office or higher authorities who appointed them as school head teachers. In order to flatter authorities who appointed them and maintain their position, the study found that some head teachers sometimes impose on teacher's decisions that please authorities. This finding from the study is consistent with Bush and Oduro (2006) who found that the traditional top-down bureaucratic educational systems that place authority at the apex, which to them is a common feature in most African countries, including Ghana is an obstacle to shared decision-making. In addition, the study revealed that in many instances majority (9 out of the 10) of the head teacher's decisions and decision styles were affected by their experience and religious affiliation. However, majority of the teachers echoed that basic school head teachers lack quality leadership skills, competency and foresight to lead their school into the 21st century. This is what a female teacher (4) from Cape Coast said:

"I think at times the authority 'head teacher' thinks she is the overall boss so she thinks her decision is final so she doesn't listen to us, she sometimes impose her own decision and we have to comply. To me I see it as her leadership style so I don't complain"

Another female teacher (5) from Cape Coast added:

"I believe that the leadership style of our head is being affected by his religious affiliation because his style of making decisions is like that of his church members"

To support the above views, a male circuit supervisor (1) from Cape Coast affirmed by saying:

"Yes, leadership style does play a role and teacher's attitude; sometimes the leadership of the head, age difference among staff, and length of service hinder participation. Some heads decide alone while some do consult few close members of staff, some are also bossy and autocratic"

In a blame game, head teachers on one hand attributed teacher's inability to participate in school decision-making to their attitude while teachers on the other hand believe that lack of implementation and head teachers leadership style are the obstacles to teacher participation. This blame game has developed tension amongst teachers and head teachers. These tensions emanate from age difference, academic qualification and length of service in a particular school as captured in a quote by circuit supervisor (1) from Cape Coast. It also came to light that teachers were their own enemies as some go to the extent of intimidating others during staff meetings. Furthermore, teachers who have higher academic qualification feel their views are more important than those without their qualification. In addition, teachers who have served in a school for a number of years also feel they know the traditions of the school better than the new ones, while those who are older in terms of age believe they have more experience than the young ones and that their views should be taken into consideration than the less experienced. All these tensions as noted by a head teacher (4) from Mfantseman emanate from the type of leadership that exist in a school. He believes a good and effective leadership will not breed such tensions. The following are some reflections made by some teachers and a head teacher:

A female teacher (4) from Cape Coast said:

"There are lot of teachers here and we have different ideas but at times when someone comes out with a decision or views the way the others shout the person down and those things [sic]. Some also think their views are always the best especially those who talk a lot"

She further explained that:

"I think it's normally associated with teachers who think they have lots of experience under their sleeves. Teachers who normally do that are the old ones who think they've been in the school for longer years"

Another female teacher (7) from Mfantseman added:

"I have realised that during staff meetings when in the process of making decisions and those who bring their inputs which at times contradict with what the leader thinks then [sic] you are marked as somebody who dislike or a rebel"

The above views on teacher's attitudes were affirmed by a male head teacher (2) from Mfantseman who explained:
 "As I said earlier on, some teachers are not interested in the affairs of the school and they want to always sit back and sometimes all that they want to do is to criticise but they won't take responsibilities"

In schools where head teachers seem to be reluctant to extend genuine influence to teachers by assuming that teachers do not have the expertise to make valuable contributions or because they do not trust them to make decisions in the best interest of the school, Tschamen-Moran (2001) believes that teachers may be resentful of the investment of time asked of them when they perceive that their actual influence is limited. This implies that in order for full teacher participation in school decision-making to be achieved, school head teachers need to adopt good leadership styles such as distributed or shared leadership to enable them affect positively the attitude of their teacher's while encouraging and practising participative/shared decision-making in schools.

6. Conclusion

The study's findings have established that the majority of the teachers in the Cape Coast metropolitan area and Mfantseman municipality are faced with challenges such as unilateral decision by head teachers, unimplemented decisions and insufficient funds. Regardless of these challenges teachers expect head teachers to motivate them to participate in school decision-making, trust and be transparent to them in all school related issues. All the head teachers, circuit supervisors and teachers believe that they all need regular training, especially for the head teachers in school decision-making to enable them understand and practice the tenet of participative or shared decision-making in their schools. Regardless of these challenges participants share the common view that the end product of teacher participation in school decision-making is school improvement.

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