

## **Influence of Collective Decision Making in Participative Leadership Style on Improving the Quality of Education in Public Secondary Schools in Arusha Region, Tanzania**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study addressed the influence of collective decision-making in participative leadership style on improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania. The study was guided by participative system theory. The correlation survey design was adopted to establish the influence of collective decision-making on improving the quality of education. To this end, two hundred and ninety-one (291) respondents from 18 public secondary schools were selected in the mix of stratified and random sampling techniques from three (03) district councils in Arusha region. The study involved three (03) district education officers, eighteen (18) heads of schools, eighteen (18) academic masters/mistresses, one hundred and eighty (180) teachers, and seventy-two (72) students. The study collected data by using multiple instruments such as questionnaires for teachers, students, and academic masters/mistresses, interview schedules for district education officers and headmasters/mistresses, and document analysis schedules. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages summarized data collected. Multiple Regression Analysis technique was used to analyze inferential statistics by testing hypotheses. The study findings revealed that collective decision-making is the crucial strategy of involving teachers and students in participative leadership by making them be part of the solution to the education challenges confronting the education sector. The academic masters/mistresses appeared to be more involved in collective decision-making than teachers and students. The study concluded that there is an existence of contradiction of application of collective decision making due to the manifestation of a top-down leadership system based on directive decisions from the highest authority. Based on the research findings and conclusions, the study recommended the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology to develop a clear policy that will guide headmasters/mistresses towards implementing the collective decision making by involving teachers and students for improving the quality of education in public secondary schools.*

**KEYWORDS:** Participative leadership style, collective decision making, quality of education

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Collective decision-making refers to a participative leadership style that focuses on incorporating teachers' and students' views and opinions before making final decisions for improving the quality of education. It gained momentum in the 1990s by accommodating the decentralized and

transforming schools in self-managing systems compatible with the new age of technology (Latham, 2020; Safari, 2018). The education sectors act as the prime agent of change of endorsing the 21st-century skills namely critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy, flexibility, leadership, initiative, productive and social skills to suit the current information age. Gindo et al. (2019) pointed out that the global changes of the world educational leadership patterns and quality education pre-requests encompassed the heads of schools to adopt the decentralized decision-making strategies by focusing on improving the quality of education provision to prepare human capital essential for social, economic, and political sectors development. According to Taiwo and Ogunlade (2020) despite these efforts of preparing fertile grounds for improving the quality of education, teachers are not adequately involved in the collective decision-making process as opposite school management tends to be more autocratic and static.

The contemporary world experienced the gradual evolution of leadership from the traits of effective leaders to follower-centered leadership focusing on incorporating employees' and other subordinate voices in the organization's leadership decision-making process (Belyh, 2020). Collective decision-making enhances education leaders' role of influencing others, building strong teams, resolving conflicts, and removing the traditional top-down leadership frameworks. According to Ngussa and Gabriel (2017) employees' contribution and participation in leadership, decisions can have a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction. The employees' participation in collective decision-making can be a contributing factor in increasing efficiency and morality, productivity, and developing innovative and competitive ideas towards achieving the organization's goals. Amos and Koda (2018) and Migwi (2018) pointed out that teachers for instance at the school level are more involved in the management of student affairs such as the setting of students' targets and rewards, appointment of student leaders, student discipline, rules and regulations, and admission of continuing students than higher administrative decisions like financial management of school-based income-generating activities. Jinyevu (2013) verified that teachers are regarded as the number one stakeholders of education, yet involved only in the final stage of implementation and not in the decision making.

The provision of quality of education focuses on preparing the learners to become economically productive, developing sustainable livelihoods, contributing to peaceful and democratic societies, and enhancing individual well-being (UNESCO, 2014; Bianca, et al., 2017, Mosha, 2018; Amos et al., 2021). The student's academic performance depends on the effective leadership style set behind by school heads for ensuring adequate provision of educational resources and maintaining teachers' time effectively (Achimugu & Obaka, 2019; Purwanto et al., 2020; Akpoviroro et al., 2018). Silva et al. (2018) recommended that students' academic performance could be affected by contextual factors such as external factors like socioeconomic status and parental involvement; internal factors like school resources and teacher quality; and the emotional and motivational factors towards learning habits of students. Kagendo (2018) stipulated that the success of students' academic performance depends on the involvement of stakeholders such as students and teachers in decision-making. This implies that despite having varieties of factors for improving the quality of education, the collective decision-making strategy of participative leadership should be adequately considered. Godda (2018) emphasized that heads of public secondary schools need to

change their mindset of leadership to meet the demand of education evolution under the fee-free secondary education policy.

Education and Training Policy (2014) the education system focuses on ensuring an educated and knowledgeable Tanzanian, skilled, proficient, with the ability and positive outlook to be able to contribute in bringing about National development. To attain the aforementioned vision of the country, enhancement of quality education and training and provide for structures and procedures that produce many educated Tanzanians and those willing to educate themselves further so that they could contribute to the attainment of the development goals of our Nation. Meanwhile, The implementation of competency-based assessment fosters the understanding of concepts, skills, and competencies of resolving societal problems based on critical thinking to prepare the fertile grounds for transforming the country to a middle industrial economy as stipulated in the National Vision 2025. According to Billaiya et al. (2017), students' voices in collective decision-making cannot be underestimated for effective school administration strategies design and implementation. These demands for the stakeholders' involvement in collective decision-making to enhance the provision of quality education by eliminating content-based teaching approaches as well as assessment tools.

Ngussa and Joseph (2017), Mwinuka (2016), Nzowa and Ngusa (2019), Lyimo et al. (2017) carried out their studies in Arusha region, established that public secondary schools are confronted by challenges such as high enrolment rate caused by fee-free education program as of 2016 which increased students number without considering the status of school physical infrastructures. This is signified by the teacher-student ratio which has increased to 1:50, increased working loads beyond 15 hours per week, as well as majority of teachers receiving low salaries of Grade D and C, which leaves them unsatisfied. Charles and Mkulu (2020) insisted that teachers complain of the existence of a higher teaching load, especially in science subjects. This turned teachers to have limited time for teaching and learning process and participating in administrative work through collective decision making. In all those stated scenarios by the previous researchers, there seems to be no clear evidence of invitation or solicitation by school administration to get teachers' opinions, perceptions, and thoughts on how to improve the quality of education in their schools. Therefore, the current study focused on examining the influence of collective decision-making in participative leadership style on improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha, Tanzania.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Public secondary school education is the catalyst to national development by preparing knowledgeable and skilled human resources to manage varieties of important sectors (Mosha, 2018; Amos et al., 2021). The existence of poor students' academic performance in public secondary schools depicts unsolved challenges relating to the quality of education provision. Studies done by Mfaume and Bilinga (2017); Mokorere and Mrisha (2019), and Mayenga (2017) in Tanzania revealed that school administrators face challenges such as shortage of funds, high enrolment rate of students, and poor cooperation of stakeholders. However, little attention has been focused on reviewing empirical studies on the influence of collective decision-making in

participative leadership style on resolving the challenges associated with the improvement of quality of education provision in public secondary schools. The previous studies as carried out by Ndijuye and Tandika (2016) and Lyimo et al. (2017) have paid much attention to the role of participative leadership style on teachers' motivation and job commitment without focusing on the students' academic achievement for improving the quality of education. In filling this gap, therefore the current study intended to examine the influence of participative leadership style in improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha, Tanzania.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS**

Rq: How does collective decision-making in participative leadership style influence the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania?

Ha: There is a significant relationship between teachers' education level, gender status, teaching experience, and age status mean scores on the influence of collective decision making in improving teaching and learning strategies for improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study was anchored by participative system theory developed by Rensis Likert in 1967. Likert developed this theory after conducting a study in Michigan to determine the strategies of leadership that led to productivity and job satisfaction. He developed the theory based on a questionnaire administered to leaders in over 200 organizations and research into the performance characteristics of different types of organizations. According to Likert (1967) the findings of the study indicated that participative system theory boosts the mutual collaboration engine among the education stakeholders towards the achievement of organizational goals. The participative system theory is embedded in the principle of empowering employees through collective decision-making strategy. To attain the aforementioned principle, the organization's leaders must develop open communication systems based on a bottom-up approach and effective focusing on a collaborative approach of empowering subordinates towards the implementation of organizational goals. The theory informed the current study of the significance of collective decision-making in improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The collective decision-making process is the crucial process of making choices by identifying a decision, gathering information, and assessing alternative solutions. The participative leadership style calls for a collective decision-making process by creating a fertile environment for everyone in the group to have a chance to speak their mind in the improvement of teaching and learning instructions (Siamoo, 2013). The study reviewed different literature relating to this study.

Rawis and Kaligis (2017) researched participatory decision-making in Indonesia. The study aimed at examining the teacher participation in decision-making in high school achievement at Negeri I Manado. The study conducted a qualitative approach study using a case study design. The study

failed to inform the current study on the data collection instruments. The findings of the study revealed that participatory decision making such as behavior pattern call for the perception of principles on the need for teachers to participate in decision-making by giving them opportunities in decision-making and the types of decisions needed in improving school achievement. The study findings emphasized the necessity of the teachers being involved in problem resolving such as problem dimensions, alternatives identification, alternative strengths and weaknesses diagnosis, implementation, and assessment in Indonesia. Though the study carried by Belli (2014) contradicts the previous study findings in some aspects relating to participative decision making as its emphasis on the sharing influence in decision making by the superior and his or her subordinates to increase the quality of decisions, employees' motivation, and commitment.

Azeska (2017) conducted a study on the styles of decision-making in the Republic of Macedonia. The main concern of the study was to evaluate the styles of decision-making and management and the dimension of the personality of school principals. The previous study employed a statistical program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) – 20 version to analyze descriptive data (arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and range) collected through a self-administering questionnaire to a sample of 61 respondents (principals of primary and secondary schools). The findings of the study indicated that 85% of school principals have a significantly dominant directive decision-making style as compared to the democratic-participatory decision-making style, which suggests the predominance of the autocratic leadership of education organizations. The findings of the study revealed that school principals make decisions quickly and prefer clearly defined rules and regulations without involving teachers who are the implementers of the education plans. The study concluded that subordinates (teachers) are not involved in the decision-making to make better decisions to influence their creativity and intuition. The findings of this study differed from the theoretical framework that guides the study, the participative system theory by Likert (1967) which emphasizes the bottom approach decision-making strategy as opposed to the directive decision-making. Although the findings of the previous study showed the dominance of directive decision-making, the knowledge of collective decision-making remains unknown, the situation which caused the present study to fill the unclosed gap.

Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011) carried out a study on teachers' participation in the decision-making process in Nigeria. The study aimed at examining the extent of teachers' involvement in decision making in schools specifically on making rules and regulations, school development plans, staff development, the discipline of the students, coordination of school examinations, taking part in staff welfare schemes, and environment protection. The study employed a descriptive survey research design to collect data from 200 teachers using a questionnaire instrument from five secondary schools selected in this study. The findings of the study revealed the existence of the maximum cooperation rated between 93% and 72% between teachers and the principals in secondary schools in Ekiti state in Nigeria. The study concluded that the involvement of teachers in decision-making creates a fertile environment for the excellent performance of students. Teachers feel empowered when involved in decision-making. The study recommended based on the finding of the study that, continuous involvement of teachers in decision-making by the principals would empower teachers. The contrary study done by Kagendo (2018) remarked on the involvement of students in decision-making rather than teachers only enhances the improvement



of their discipline and academic performance in Kenya. This indicates the necessity of researching to investigate manners in which collective decision-making operates in public secondary schools to close the left vacuum.

Taiwo and Ogunlade (2020) carried out a study on teachers' participation in decision-making. The study investigated the relationship between teachers' decisional participation and job satisfaction in secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design with a sample size of 270 teachers selected by multistage and simple random sampling techniques. The study data were collected by using a question instrument with a reliability coefficient of 0.84. The data obtained were analyzed by using descriptive methods such as frequency counts, mean scores, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment, and multiple regression hypotheses analysis procedures. The findings of the previous study revealed that teachers were rarely involved in decision-making in school financial matters, conflict resolution, examination matters, staff welfare, disciplinary matters, school academic work, and co-curricular activities. The previous study differed in some aspects from the findings of the study done by Baluyos, (2019) which suggested the significance of teachers involved in decision making in all aspects including financial acquisition, allocation, and utilization to enhance job satisfaction and work performance. The study concluded that government and stakeholders in education should ensure that teachers are actively involved in school decision making which will somehow influence their teaching profession.

Dampson and Afful-Broni (2018) carried study on teacher participation in Ghana. The study focused on evaluating the teacher participation in school-decision-making in Ghanaian basic schools; looking back and moving forward, what stakeholders say. The study employed the explanatory sequential mixed method design involving semi-structured interviews with 11 teachers, 4 head-teachers, and 4 circuit supervisors. Close-ended questionnaires were administered to 2019 teachers, 29 head-teachers, and 11 circuit supervisors. The study also employed a document analysis data collection instrument. The findings of the previous study indicate that teachers participate in different levels such as at the classroom level through student assessment, teaching, learning materials, content, and methods. There is the formation of the school committee to deal with student and teacher welfare, student discipline, co-curriculum activities, subject-department level, and at school level, teachers participate in decision-making concern hiring and teacher recruitment, student admission, budget and expenditure, goals, and vision of the school. The findings of this study informed the current study on the significance of involving teachers in decision-making. Based on the existence of different contexts of the study, it was, therefore, appropriate for the current study to be carried out in Arusha region.

This has also been observed in the study carried out by Migwi (2018) on the study of the influence of teacher participation in decision-making on job motivation in public secondary schools in Nyeri, Nairobi, and Kajiado counties, Kenya. The study identified the areas of decision making where teachers participate ranking from the students' affairs, curriculum and instructions, community relations, human resource management, management of physical resources, and finance resource. This indicates that teachers are more involved in students' affairs than in other managerial activities that focus on the improving quality of education provision. The previous study focused

much on the methods used by principals to ensure teachers participate in decision-making ranking from asking them opinions on various issues, participatory management meetings arranged for teachers, and regular reviews of the job descriptions by teachers and administration. Thus the gap remained unclosed and driven the current study to assess the influence of collective decision-making on improving the quality of education in public secondary schools.

Msoffe (2017) conducted a study on leadership styles focusing on decision-making in the Same district, Tanzania. The study aimed to analyze the impact of leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools. The study employed a descriptive survey design under a qualitative and quantitative research approach to collect data by using questionnaires, interviews, and documentary reviews from five public secondary schools. A sample of 45 participants was involved in this study to examine three leadership styles namely democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire. The findings of the study indicated that the democratic leadership style plays a significant role in encouraging open participatory decision making through involving teachers and students and students, allows discussion among teachers and students. The findings of the study recommended school heads use the most appropriate leadership style to ensure collective decision-making and responsibility.

The findings of the study informed the current study on the role of the significance of open participatory decision-making on academic performance. The findings of this study contradict the studies done by Alamoglu et al. (2019) and Rimaa (2020) in some aspects such as the creation of a sense of trust among the teaching staff once they are involved in decision-making. A similar study was conducted in Arusha by Aunga and Masare (2017) that focused on investigating the effect of leadership styles on teacher's performance in primary schools and identified participative leadership style attracts more involving of teachers in decision making as compared to autocratic, laissez-faire, and transformational leadership style. However, these studies were insufficient to justify the influence of collective decision-making in participative leadership style on improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania.

The reviewed literature related to collective decision making in participative leadership style globally, African countries, and Tanzania in particular. Different studies by Rawis and Kaligis (2017), Azeska (2017), Taiwo and Ogunlade (2020), and Aunga and Masare (2017) have underscored the role of collective decision in improving the quality of education. However, these had not necessarily shown the influence of collective decision-making in improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania. This knowledge gap had justified the need for conducting the current study. Thus, the current study sought to examine the influence of collective decision-making in improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlation survey research design under the quantitative method approach to investigate the relation between collective decision-making in participative leadership style and the improvement of quality of education in public secondary schools (Cohen & Morrison, 2018).

This design enabled the researcher to cover a wide range of variables that are not easily produced in the laboratory and their interrelations. The study involved a sample for the study was 18 secondary schools in 3 districts councils selected as the sample of the study. A total sample of 291 respondents comprised of 72 students, 180 teachers, 18 headmasters/mistresses, 18 academic masters/mistresses, and 3 district education officers. The validity of the instruments was determined by research experts and the reliability of the questionnaire was tested by the Cronbach Alpha technique. Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.803, 0.794, and 0.834 were obtained for teachers, students, academic masters/mistresses' questionnaires respectively while the coefficient of 0.878 and 0.921 was obtained for interview schedule for headmasters/mistresses and District Education Officers respectively. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for quantitative data analysis. Summary of data was presented in frequencies and percentages through tables. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant levels for the Multiple Regression Analysis techniques.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research question intended to investigate the influence of the collective decision-making in participative leadership style on improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania. The information sought in this question was on the status of collective decision-making in public secondary schools and the extent to which collective decision-making influences the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region. To generate information on this question; questionnaire, interview schedule, and document analysis schedule data collection instruments were used to collect data from teachers, students, academic masters, headmasters/mistresses, and District Education Officers (DEOs). This research question was designed to disclose the status quo of collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Arusha region. The information to address this question was attained from teachers, students, academic masters/mistresses, heads masters/mistress, and DEOs. Table 1 presents responses from DEOs, headmasters/mistresses, academic masters/mistresses, teachers, and students on whether collective decision-making exists in public secondary schools.

**Table 1: The status of Collective Decision making in Public Secondary Schools**

Variable			DEOs (=3)		Head masters/mi stresses (n=18)		Academic masters/ mistresses (n=18)		Teachers (n=180)		Students (n=72)	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Status of Collective Decision Making</b>												
Yes			3	100	17	94.4	15	83.3	74	41.1	35	48.6
No			0	0	1	5.6	3	16.7	106	58.9	37	51.4



**Source: Field data (2021)**

Responses in Table 1 indicate that 100% of DEOs appreciated the existence of collective decision-making in public secondary schools. The responses also indicate 94.4% of the headmasters/mistresses confirmed the existence of collective decision-making for fostering a participative leadership style in public secondary schools, whereas 5.6% denied the existence of collective decision making. Most of the academic masters/mistresses responded that by 83.3% that collective decision-making existed in public secondary schools, whereas only 16.7% denied its existence. Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011) described that school principals claim to involve teachers in decision-making on the management of human resources in schools. The findings of the study also show that teachers denied the presence of collective decision making in participative leadership in their public secondary schools by 58.9% while only 41.1% indicated the existence of collective decision making. Moreover, most of the students indicated the non-existence of collective decision-making by 51.4% while only 48.6% agreed with the presence of collective decision-making in their secondary schools.

The findings also revealed that the majority of teachers and students denied being involved in collective decision-making in all aspects for fostering a participative leadership style in their secondary schools. The current study findings concur with the results of Migwi (2018) which indicated that teachers are more involved in decision-making concerning students' affairs than utilization of financial resources. This implies that teachers and students who are the most important human resources in the implementation of teaching and learning activities are not directly involved by the headmasters/mistresses in making decisions through a collective decision-making strategy. This indicates the contradictions in responses between headmasters/mistresses and academic masters/mistresses against the teachers and students in public secondary schools. The findings of this study were contrary to the Likert participative system theory which emphasized the involvement of all stakeholders in decision making.

Most teachers and students are vulnerable to receiving and implementing directives from headmasters/mistresses and academic masters/mistresses without being involved in the designing stages of such directives. Silva et al. (2018) insisted on the importance of involving teachers and students in decision-making as the possible remedy of resolving their challenges related to teaching and learning activities. The study sought it was appropriate to find the data with regards to the respondents' views from students, academic masters/ mistresses, and students on the status of collective decision making in public secondary schools in Arusha region. The participative leadership style calls for a collective decision-making process by creating a fertile environment for everyone in the group to have a chance to speak their mind, where differences of opinion are valued rather than feared. To determine the extent to which participative leadership style through collective decision making influence the improvement of quality education, information was sought from teachers, students, academic masters/mistresses, heads of schools, district education officers. Table 2 summarizes teachers' responses respectively.

**Table 2: Influence of collective decision making on improving the quality of education in public secondary schools (n=180 teachers, n=18 academic masters/mistresses, n=72 students)**

S/ N	Statements	Teachers			Academic masters/mistresses			Students		
		Mea n	Std. Deviat ion	Interpr etation	Mean	Std. Devi ation	Interpre tation	Mea n	Std. Deviat ion	Interpr etation
1	<i>The head of school involves teachers and students in developing and implementing school development plans for improving students' performance</i>	3.71	0.983	Agreed	4.06	1.162	Agreed	4.21	0.649	Agreed
2	<i>The head of school values teachers and students views in decision making relating to teaching preparation</i>	3.60	0.978	Agreed	3.89	0.900	Agreed	3.96	0.458	Agreed
3	<i>My working environment encourages collective decision making for enhancing the teaching process</i>	3.50	1.049	Agreed	3.61	0.850	Agreed	4.00	0.769	Agreed
4	<i>Collective decision making delays the attainment of school plans for improving the quality of education</i>	3.01	1.182	Agreed	1.72	0.958	Disagree d	3.17	1.289	Agreed
5	<i>The head of school encourages teamwork among teachers for facilitating effective teaching and learning activities</i>	3.84	1.002	Agreed	3.50	1.295	Agreed	4.42	0.496	Agreed
6	<i>The head of school decide with teachers on how to conduct monitoring and evaluation related to teaching activities</i>	3.61	1.010	Agreed	3.50	0.618	Agreed	4.04	0.795	Agreed
7	<i>Teachers feel motivated for being involved in collective decision making by the school head</i>	3.58	1.025	Agreed	3.61	0.850	Agreed	4.17	0.805	Agreed
8	<i>The head of school acknowledge my contribution to the staff meeting on teaching strategies</i>	3.50	1.028	Agreed	3.78	0.878	Agreed	3.87	0.803	Agreed
9	<i>The teacher develops a sense of ownership of the school activities once they are involved in decision making by the head of school</i>	3.44	1.058	Agreed	3.72	0.895	Agreed	3.63	1.041	Agreed
10	<i>The collective decision making resulted in the collaborative teaching altitude among the teachers</i>	3.57	1.014	Agreed	3.78	0.878	Agreed	3.67	1.035	Agreed
11	<i>Gives teachers freedom of expression through staff meeting and department meeting</i>	3.64	1.081	Agreed	3.17	0.707	Agreed	3.58	1.084	Agreed
12	<i>Creates innovative skills among the teachers in resolving various issues confronting the process of teaching and learning</i>	3.54	1.027	Agreed	3.61	0.850	Agreed	3.58	1.084	Agreed

#### Source: Field data (2021)

Table 2 contains teachers responses on the extent to which collective decision making influences the improvement of quality education, the findings revealed that the collective decision influence on encouraging teamwork spirit among teaching staff (M=3.84, SD=1.002), developing and implementing school development plans (M=3.71, SD=0.983), and gives teachers and students freedom of expression through conducting various meeting including staff meeting, and students' government meetings. The findings of this study concur with the Likert participative system theory that emphasizes the collaboration tendency of the leadership system to the subordinates. This implies stakeholders need to be involved in decision-making to own the school development plans and thus facilitate easy implementation to the improvement of quality education provision.

Table 2 also contains academic responses which informed the study that collective decision-making involves teachers in developing and implementing school development plans (M=4.06, SD=1.162), and also enables heads of school to value teachers' and students' views and opinions before making a final decision (M=3.89, SD=0.900). Moreover, students' responses revealed that

collective decision-making influences quality education in different ways including encouraging team working spirit ( $M=4.42$ ,  $SD= 0.496$ ), developing and implementing school development plans ( $M=4.21$ ,  $SD=0.649$ ), and enhancing the teachers and students motivation ( $M=4.17$ ,  $SD=0.803$ ). Therefore collective decision-making influences the improvement of quality education in different ways including school development plans development, creation of team working spirit, valuing teachers and students voices before making final decisions, and enhancing motivation to teachers and students.

However there was the existence of contradiction in item number 4 between academic masters/mistresses and teachers and students on the issue of time taken in making collective decisions, the findings revealed that the academic masters/mistresses disagreed with an aspect of delaying of attainment of school development plans, while teachers and students agreed that collective decision making delays the attainment of school plans for improving the quality of education. The findings of this study concur in some aspects with the study done by Charles and Mkulu (2020) which verified that teachers consider making a collective decision as a burden to them due to the extremely teaching loads. This implies that there is a challenge of creating a conducive environment to enable teachers to also participate in decision-making by balancing their teaching loads. The existence of contradiction of responses regarding aspect number 4, The findings of the study was further used to test a hypothesis that focused on finding out whether there was a significant relationship between teachers' education level, gender status, teaching experience, and age in their views towards the deployment of collective decision making.

To test this hypothesis which stated that "There is no significant relationship between teachers' education level, gender status, teaching experience, and age status mean scores on the influence of collective decision making in improving teaching and learning strategies for improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region", data from teachers' responses were used and a multiple regression analysis tests was run at 0.05 significant levels, which is 95% confidence level. The decision rule for the testing hypothesis was determined based on the assumption that "if the P-Value (Sig) is less than the significance level (0.05) then permits to reject the null hypothesis by accepting the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, if the P-Value (Sig) is great than the significance level (0.05), then fails to reject Null hypothesis". Table 3 indicates the multiple regression analysis statistics test;

**Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis of Coefficients Test for Ho 1**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.672	.239	11.192	.000	2.200	3.143
	Gender status	-.026	.075	-.351	.726	-.174	.121
	Age in years	-.158	.102	-1.556	.122	-.359	.042
	Teaching experience	-.016	.092	-.173	.863	-.198	.166
	Education level	.069	.081	.854	.394	-.091	.230

**Source: Field data (2021)**

**Note:** a Dependent Variable: 1. The teaching and learning strategies for improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region.

From Table 3, the p.value for multiple regression test for gender status (0.726), age (0.122), teaching experience in years (0.863), and education level (0.394); is great than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it fails to reject this null hypothesis and be stated as: There is no significant relationship between teachers' education level, gender status, teaching experience, and age in their views towards the improvement of teaching and learning strategies for improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region. The study findings of this study concur with the study done by Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011) which further insisted that less experienced teachers are neglected in collective decision making. This implies that teachers' status especially educational level and age do be considered by the heads of schools in collective decision making. In regards to the extent of collective decision-making in improving the quality of education, the study sought information from district educational officers and heads of schools that interviewed using interview schedule instruments in their respective locations under a special appointment, their responses were summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4: Responses on the influence of collective decision making on quality of education**

S/ N	Responses	DEOs		HOS	
		n	%	n	%
1	<i>It increases cooperation, transparency, and team working among teachers and students</i>	1	33.3	12	66.7
2	<i>Teachers and students feel motivated to work diligently because they are involved in decision making</i>	2	66.7	9	50.0
3	<i>It's a good strategy for creating confidence among teachers</i>	-	-	5	27.8
4	<i>Enhancement of effective communication between teachers and school administration based on promoting education productivity</i>	1	33.4	10	55.6
5	<i>Facilitates information sharing by eliminating top down hierarchy system</i>	3	100	14	77.8
6	<i>Strengthen collective tendencies of resolving students' academic challenges based on academics, discipline on their social welfare systems</i>	2	66.7	15	83.3
7	<i>Enables students to be more involved in collective decision-making concern school improvement plans implementation and setting of priorities in decision making)</i>	2	66.7	6	40.0

**Source: Field data (2021)**

Key: DEOs= District Educational Officers (n=3), HOS= Heads of Schools (n=18)

Response from Table 4 indicates the extent to which collective decision-making influences the quality of education in public secondary schools. The findings from DEOs revealed that 100% of respondents identified the improvement of academic performance as it facilitates information sharing through the bottom approach, 66.7% showed that teachers and students feel motivated once they are involved in decision making, resolving of education challenges, and improvement of school strategic plans. HOS on other hand ranked influence of collective decision making from 83.3% of respondents indicating the influence of collective decision making on resolving education challenges, 77.8% of respondents showing its influence on improving academic performance, 66.7% of respondents indicated the creation of teamwork and cooperation among the teacher, students, and school administration. The findings of this study concurred with studies done by Ngussa and Joseph (2017), Mwinuka (2016), Nzowa and Ngusa (2019), Lyimo et al. (2017) that insisted on the involvement of stakeholders in resolving education challenges for improving the academic performance of students aiming at enhancing the quality of education

provision in public secondary schools. This implies that collective decision-making has a high extent of influence towards the improvement of the quality of education.

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The study findings revealed that there are different ways in which collective decision making influence the improvement of the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region namely creation of a conducive environment for developing and implementing school development plans, valuing teachers and students views on improving the quality of education, creation of team working among the teaching and students, fostering easy monitoring and evaluation of students' academic progress, motivating teachers to create a sense of ownership of teaching and learning processes. The findings of the study also indicated the discrepancy of levels of collective decision making, the academic masters more involved by heads of schools as compared to teachers and students. Concerning the Hypothesis tested by multi regression, the analysis technique revealed the p. value of 0.526 to be greater than the significance level of 0.05 at the 95% confidence level. Thus tested hypothesis failed to reject the null hypothesis and the study stands as there is no significant relationship between teachers' education level, gender status, teaching experience, and age in their views towards the improvement of teaching and learning strategies for improving the quality of education in public secondary schools in Arusha region.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the research findings, the study concluded that; despite the great influence of collective decision making on improving quality education by enhancing positive participation of academic masters/mistresses, teachers, and students in decision making, there is the existence of different levels of collective decision making in public secondary school whereby the academic masters/mistresses are more involved by the headmasters/mistresses in collective decision making than teachers and students. This manifestation leaves disagreements across the region that probably affects the improvement of quality of education provision in public secondary schools. The study calls stakeholders to resolve the contradiction of application of collective decision-making by equally involving teachers and students to enhance the provision of quality education in public secondary schools.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the study would like to put forward recommendations to different stakeholders to raise the application of collective decision-making for improving the quality of education. The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology should develop a clear policy based on the application of collective decision-making in a participative leadership style. The policy will be adopted by public secondary schools during the application of collective decision-making to enhance quality education. Regional and district education authorities should develop a culture of conducting regular meetings directly with public secondary teachers and students instead of basing on directive decisions to the heads of schools. The study recommended the heads of schools develop positive school culture of involving teachers and students in making



decisions from the design stage of plans to the final stage of implementation. Teaching staff and students should depict a positive attitude once involved in collective decision-making by heads of schools as part of resolving different challenges confronting the provision of quality education in public secondary schools in Arusha region, Tanzania.

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