Teachers' Perceptions Towards Decision-Making Processes: A Case Study of Secondary Schools in Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

The significance of participatory decision-making in educational institutions is widely acknowledged as essential in school management and administration. This study aimed to determine how involved teachers are in making decisions in their schools and what role they think they play in shaping different parts of school policies and procedures. It also looked at their perspectives on how decisions made by others are carried out in schools. Semi-structured interviews with 10 secondary school teachers focused on teachers' role in decision-making related to their routine school tasks, strategic decision-making, participatory role in making school decisions, and their willingness to participate in decision-making. This study showed that teachers' low participation is attributed to their shared desire to be involved in school management and administration-related decisions. Teachers expressed that participatory school-based decision-making can promote collaboration and collectivism among the school staff, and it plays a significant role in shaping their work satisfaction and motivation. By gaining insights into teachers' perspectives, this study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of participatory school decision-making in the Rwandan secondary education system and communicate potential improvements for fostering a more collaborative and inclusive educational environment.

KEYWORDS: teachers' perceptions, qualitative research, decision-making, secondary schools.

The importance of including teachers in school decisions is incresingly recongised in education systems wordwide. Collaborative decision-making is important because teachers, have unique knowledge and skills that can contribute to school improvement in significant ways. This study is important because secondary school teachers are not only the key figures in imparting knowledge to students but also to individuals who are making school-based decisions and are responsible for implementing decisions with significant implications (Mohammad & Bano, 2020). However, Liz-Morell (2024) noted that the teachers' absence in the school decision-making process presents significant challenges for effectively implementing decisions and policies. Rwanda's secondary education system is considered to work relatively well and in order to have inclusive decision making it is essential to know how

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teachers feel about being involved in making decisions at school. The Rwandan ministry seeks to improve education, and the Rwandan school system has gone through a lot of changes. As the government continues to invest in creating a knowledge-based culture, secondary schools plays a critical role in forming the future of the next generation. Children in Rwanda move on to secondary school after completion of a primary school cycle. Secondary school is often seen as a link between primary school and higher school. Secondary education is perceived to prepare children to be good members of society and is also commonly perceived as a route to higher education (Obi & Obiorah, 2023). It is an integral part of the education continuum. Participatory school leaders try to engage teachers jointly to identify their vision, goals, and strategies and involve them in critical decision-making (Meintjies, 2018). This inclusion of teachers in decision making plays a significant role in enhancing their morale and motivation, increasing levels of job satisfaction, and promoting a sense of responsibility and commitment towards effectiveness and improvement of the whole school organization (Sarafidou&Chatziioannidis, 2013).

The participation of teachers in school-based decision-making processes facilitates school leaders' acquisition of essential and necessary perspectives of staff of underlying factors contributing to various school-related challenges (Sarafidou&Chatziioannidis, 2013). Failure to involve teachers in school-based decision-making may hinder the making of informed decisions, ultimately affecting the effectiveness of school functions (Obi & Obiorah, 2023). The extant literature evidecnes that the active participation of teachers in school decision-making processes is necessary for both school and student development (Mager & Nowak, 2012; Kippers et al., 2018; Obi & Obiorah, 2023). Musengamana et al., (2024) articulated that teacher participation in school-based decision-making engenders belief that the decision-making process is collaborative and that every member has room to participate, providing a legitimate and well-supported decision making process. Active involvement is pivotal in achieving comprehensive understanding, facilitating adaptability, and effectively implementation of decisions (Rwigema & Andala, 2022). The involvement of individuals in decision-making processes within an organization, such as a school, facilitates their learning and enables them to recognize the organization's collective goals and objectives (Kilag et al.,2023). However, Bazirete et al.,(2020) anticipate that it will also provide high-quality decisions, incorporating perspectives from individuals inside an organization throughout the decision-making process. Furthermore, these individuals are likely to understand better and exhibit greater acceptance towards the decisions in which they actively participated. The active involvement of teachers in school decision-making is paramount as it can significantly enhance the educational institution's overall performance (Denis et al., 2023).

Therefore, it is essential to encourage and foster participation shared decision-making processes within the school. It also fosters among teachers, a belief that they can contribute more to the educational institution outside the scope of classroom instruction (Pashiardis, 1994). The extent to which teachers may engage in decision-making inside schools differs across administrative, managerial, and academic domains (Park et al.,2023). These decisions are regularly interconnected and hold potential ramifications for the educational institution and its internal stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, guardians, learners, and more personnel. There is an apparent tendency for teachers to be more actively involved in academic-related decisions than other decisions within the school context (Denis et al., 2023). Carter et al., (2022) examined teacher involvement in school management and administrative decision-making processes and found that head teachers exhibit moderate involvement in including teachers in organizational decision-making.

In contrast, previous studies have shown limited teacher participation in administrative, curricular, and pedagogical decision-making (Salokangas, Wermke, & Harvey, 2020;Carter et al., 2022; Daas, 2019). Teachers' reticence and ambiguity over their position/capacity/desire to be involved in decision-making might be a factor. The authors in this study aimed to provide

insights into the role and influence of teachers' perceptions in the decision-making processes of secondary schools in Rwanda. Its larger objective is to enrich educational leadership and governance policies and practices.

Statement of the Problem

The government of Rwanda has chosen to allocate significant resources towards the development of its education system, which is evidence for acknowledging the inherent advantages of education for local communities and organizations and recognizing its pivotal role in fostering the economic prosperity of the nation (Tusiime&Imaniriho, 2020). Decision-making in educational institutions, particularly secondary schools, determines their operational and everyday functioning. It would be advantageous if this procedure were conducted by individuals affiliated with the educational institution to benefit its members. Calling for teachers' participation in making school-based decisions is widely believed to positively impact teachers' routine work, student academic achievement, and overall school performance (Carr-Hill et al., 2018; Ingersoll et al., 2018).

In Rwanda's educational sector, secondary schools are crucial in shaping students' academic and personal development. However, there is a significant gap in previous literature on understanding teachers' perceptions of their participatory role during their schools' decision-making processes (Brezicha et al., 2020). The scope of secondary school decisions includes but is not limited to curriculum policies, management, and administrative choices, students' discipline decisions, school-parent communications, and others (Ingersoll et al., 2018), which all necessitate active participation of every stakeholder in the school community particularly teachers as the leading implementers of most of those decisions. This study addresses the gap in the literature by exploring the different aspects that shape teachers' perceptions in the decision-making processes of the school where they work. Understanding teachers' perceptions towards decision-making within their schools is crucial for fostering a collaborative and effective working atmosphere in secondary schools. Moreover, the findings of this study communicate valuable insights for educational policymakers, administrators, and stakeholders seeking to enhance the overall functioning and success of secondary schools in Rwanda. The potential mismatch between teachers' opinions of their participation in their school-based decision-making and the actual decision-making mechanisms within secondary schools can have both theoretical and managerial implications on the mechanism of shared and participatory decision-making within secondary schools and other influencing factors such as institutional culture, communication channels, and school administrative and leadership style.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

- What is the teacher's perceived role and contribution to the school's decision-making process?
- What are the challenges of implementing decisions without participating in the process?
- Are the teachers willing to be involved in the school decision-making process?

Literature Review

In this study, Stosich et al., (2021) argues in an analytical exposition that educators often hold peripheral positions in the decision-making hierarchy of educational institutions, primarily serving as information disseminators and advisors. The discussion emphasizes a clear division between essential concerns that must be addressed to promote a more inclusive approach for

teachers to participate in administrative decisions. The most important thing is for school leaders to create and show a supportive climate that actively includes teacher viewpoints in discussions, especially those related to policy-making and school management (Badruzaman & Adiyono, 2023). This approach emphasizes the need for a fundamental change in the way administrators think, promoting a decision-making model that is more cooperative and inclusive. This model should adequately acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of teachers.

Another crucial aspect is the student's capacity to participate actively in such meetings. According to scholarly research in the field of education, the implementation of a collaborative decision-making approach within schools, wherein the perspectives and input of all teachers are actively solicited and considered, is posited to significantly influence and enhance the overall functioning of the educational institution (Hulpia et al., 2011; Louis et al., 2010). However, Harris (2013) states that it is the responsibility of the school administration to provide a collaborative atmosphere that facilitates the active participation of all members in the decision-making process. Numerous scholarly investigations have offered empirical evidence to substantiate the proposition that the active involvement of teachers in the decision-making processes within educational institutions is positively correlated with the overall success of the school and has a discernible impact on the academic achievements of students (Musengamana et al., 2024; Rwigema & Andala, 2022; Smylie & Hart, 1999). Ruter et al. (1979) revealed a significant correlation between incorporating teachers' emotions in the school's decision-making process and students' academic performance.

There is a belief that a correlation exists between teachers' engagement in school decision-making and their work performance, leading to heightened motivation and job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers have a sense of belonging and involvement in the many activities undertaken by the school. The active participation of teachers in the decision-making process enhances the overall quality of choices and facilitates the implementation of decisions and policies (Uy et al., 2023). Firstly, the research process reveals diverse perspectives from each member of the academic institution. Furthermore, individuals can comprehend choices more efficiently as they thoroughly understand and actively participate in them, particularly those about academic matters inside educational institutions. According to Memedi and Ameti (2023), teacher participation is crucial in making schools more successful and improving education. The study shows that many factors affect teachers' involvement in making decisions.

The amount of help and openness administrators are seen to have is very important because it fits with what Bektaş et al., (2022) says about how vital relationship trust is in schools. The study also examines how cultural and environmental factors unique to Rwandan schools affect students. The extant literature evidences how important setting is in school leadership (Mohammad & Bano, 2020). According to Udo and Akpa (1997), when teachers are sufficiently engaged in decision-making, it fosters dedication, and receives meaningful support from the administration, facilitating the achievement of the school's objectives. However, the prevailing sentiment on the ground was indifference, resulting in decreased resistance inside the educational institution. The results suggest that teachers are not actively engaged in the decision-making processes inside their educational institutions.

Wadesango (2012) examined teacher participation in decision-making on student achievement within secondary schools in Zimbabwe and found that there is notable dissatisfaction among teachers due to the infrequent solicitation of their perspectives on significant matters inside their educational institutions, such as disciplinary concerns. Furthermore, their participation in crucial administrative and curriculum-related decision-making processes was seen as consistently disregarded despite their possession of specialized knowledge in several domains. According to Nias (1996), teachers reported a lack of regular and serious consideration of their opinions on many subjects. Additionally, it was shown that administrators exhibited a higher frequency of decision-making compared to actively seeking

input from teachers. However, Mehta et al.'s (2010) findings, including participatory decision-making (PDM) in the decision-making process inside educational institutions or organizations, was perceived as crucial for success in educational management. The authors advocate that implementing this practice across all levels of school management and administration would yield significant benefit.

Methods

A qualitative case study design was adopted because it enabled the researchers to investigate the teachers' perceptions of decision-making processes. The method was chosen because a case study seeks to clarify why a decision was made, the process of implementation, and the outcomes (Creswell, 2014). Case study helps illuminate participants' perspectives in tandem with their experiences in real-life circumstances (Shaoa et al., 2023). It also ensures that the phenomenon under investigation is not explored through a single lens but rather a variety of lenses that reveal and yield understanding of different aspects of the phenomenon (Muganga et al., 2021). The researchers used interviews in a semi-structural form. Semi-structured interviews are primarily used in qualitative studies and occur when researchers use open-ended questions and address one or more participants in general (Creswell, 2014). When invititng participation, the researchers gave the participants the research details for this study and informed the participants that the interviews would be recorded. Participants were assured that their names and personal information would be synonymous if they agreed. All interviews were recorded and transcribed to facilitate the authors' further data processing and analysis procedures. Interviews help uncover the story behind participant's experiences and for in-depth information. Open and semi-structured interviews allow new ideas to emerge, hence why they were suitable for the study. All the interviews were conducted online, from 45 minutes to 1 hour, with ten Rwandese secondary school teachers. Three participants choose to respond in their mother language (Kinyarwanda). The first section of the interview procedure was regarding collecting participants' background information, whereas the second section included asking questions regarding participants' perspectives on their participation in school-based decision-making, their willingness to participate in decision making, and other related aspects.

Table 1
Participant Background Information

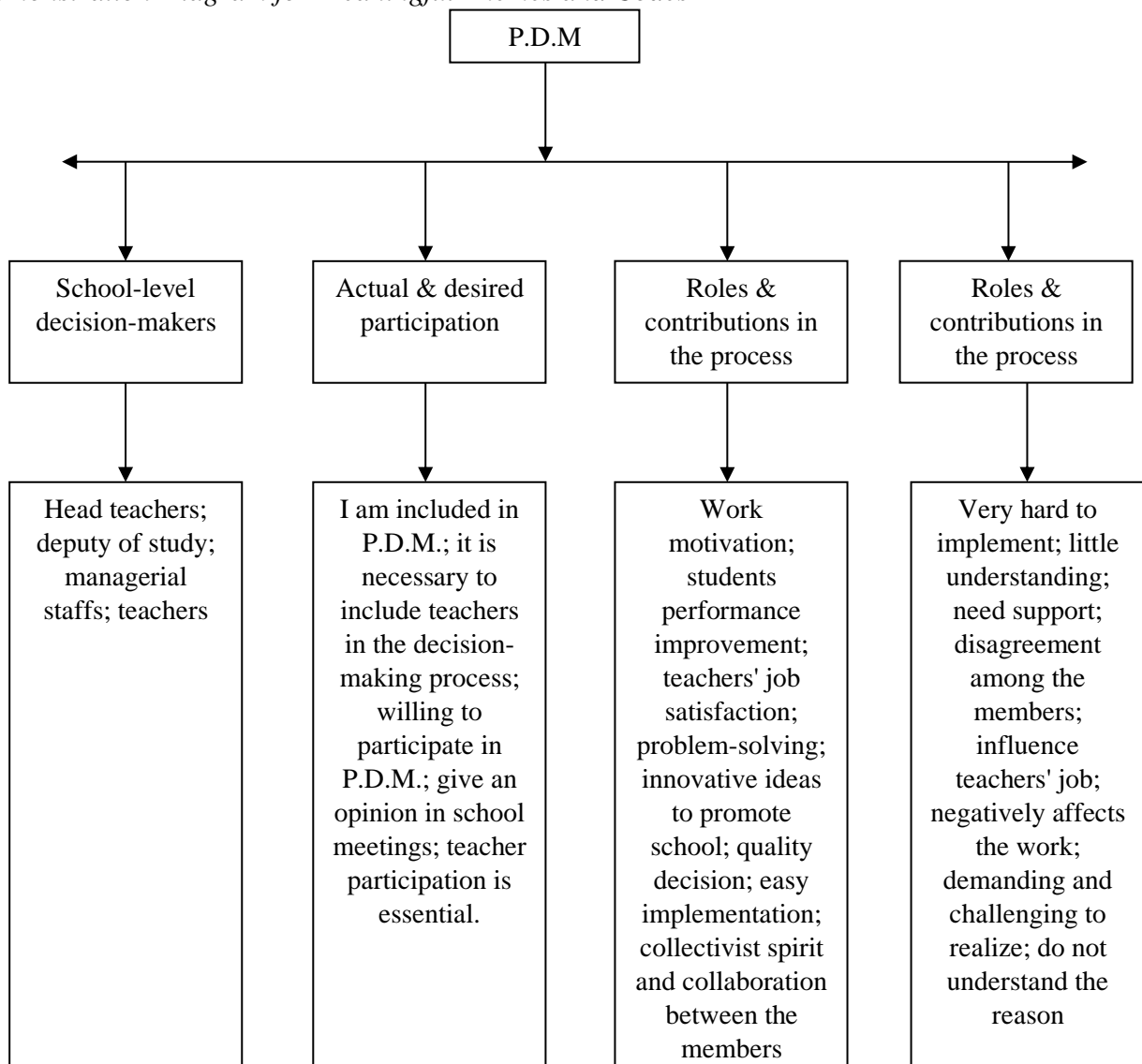| Participant	Teaching qualification	Career stage
A-1-M	Junior secondary school	Middle career stage
A-2-M	Junior secondary school	Middle career stage
A-3-F	Senior secondary school	Early career stage
A-4-M	Junior secondary school	Early career stage
A-5-M	Senior secondary school	Early career stage
A-6-M	Junior secondary school	Early career stage
A-7-F	Senior secondary school	Middle career stage
A-8-F	Senior secondary school	Early career stage
A-9-M	Senior secondary school	Middle career stage
A-10-M	Senior secondary school	Early career stage

Note. A= anonymized; M= Male teachers; F= Female teachers; Early career stage (0-5 years of teaching experience); Middle career stage (6-15 years of teaching experience).

Participants

The participants were recruited by convenience sampling through personal networks. There were three females and seven males from two public secondary schools in Rwanda's

Southern province. Six held senior high school teaching qualifications, which can be converted to ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) 6.In Rwanda, ISCED stands for the International Standard Classification of Education. It is a system used to classify and document educational programs and certifications in a standardized and globally comparable way (Du Toit, 2015) the rest held junior high school teaching qualifications (ISCED) 5. The age range of our study's participants is from 25 to 44 years; at the time of the interview, they had teaching experience from two to 15 years, which were categorized into two stages of career (early career stage for novice teachers and middle career stage for experienced teachers). All participants were assigned pseudonyms to ensure ethical concerns and maintain participants' anonymity. Table 1 (above) shows the participants' detailed background information.

Figure 1
Demonstration Diagram for Meaningful Themes and Codes

P.D.M			
School-level decision-makers	Actual & desired participation	Roles & contributions in the process	Roles & contributions in the process
Head teachers; deputy of study; managerial staffs; teachers	I am included in P.D.M.; it is necessary to include teachers in the decision-making process; willing to participate in P.D.M.; give an opinion in school meetings; teacher participation is essential.	Work motivation; students performance improvement; teachers' job satisfaction; problem-solving; innovative ideas to promote school; quality decision; easy implementation; collectivist spirit and collaboration between the members	Very hard to implement; little understanding; need support; disagreement among the members; influence teachers' job; negatively affects the work; demanding and challenging to realize; do not understand the reason

Data Analysis

After transcribing all interview recordings, we started the process of data analysis. The authors analyzed the data iteratively using qualitative analysis software (ATLAS ti. 23). This study employed thematic content analysis (a methodology used to identify, examine, and provide main themes within collected data.), which consisted of three main steps because

themes had already been established through the description-focused coding-based procedure (Shaoan et al., 2023). Initially, the authors thoroughly read all interview transcripts to familiarize themselves with the whole data set. It allowed us to gain a comprehensive overview of the interview transcripts and ensure all information was recorded, verifying the credibility of respondents' answers. Secondly,we sought to identify and assign initial descriptive codes to interview transcripts categorized into different areas of participatory decision-making in school environments.

We repeated the same process by setting the same codes to interview transcripts that referred to teachers' actual and desired participation and teachers' perceived role in school participatory decision-making explored using a constructivist-interpretation approach. This approach uses qualitative data collection and empirical methods to establish data meaning trends (Muganga et al., 2021). Finally, after assigning initial descriptive codes to all interview transcripts, authors discussed possible code adjustments before categorizing all codes into final categories. We adopted the six-phase framework Braun and Clarke (2006) proposed for data organization. The coding process was used to partition the data into smaller units of semantic significance. During the coding procedure, the researchers in this study gathered comparable data organized into distinct categories and codes. These codes were interpreted to facilitate comprehension for the intended audience. We analyzed research and interview questions and completed initial codes to acquire relevant categories. The interview transcripts in languages other than English were subjected to simultaneous coding and translation into English. Figure 1 illustrates the main components and codes used in this investigation.

Results

The authors investigated the fundamental components of the involvement of teachers in the decision-making process at the school level, as derived from the principal themes identified in the raw data provided by participants. Through this analysis we aimed to elucidate the strategies employed in decision-making and to identify the key individuals responsible for making decisions in public secondary schools in Rwanda.

In addition, an analysis has been conducted on teachers' genuine and preferred level of engagement in making decisions within the school. The former pertains to whether teachers are given opportunities to engage in school decision-making or perceive adequate representation throughout this process (Stefanou et al., 2004). The latter, however, seeks to ascertain the willingness of teachers to engage in the decision-making process inside their educational institutions. Based on available studies, the desire to engage in decision-making may include two key dimensions. The first dimension pertains to teachers' inclination to participate actively in decision-making activities. The second dimension focuses on the dedication of head teachers to include teachers in the decision-making processes. In conclusion, we will now examine the responsibilities and contributions of teachers concerning school choices. This section will also discuss the difficulties teachers encounter when adopting options or policies in which they do not participate in decision-making.

School-Level Decision Making

The school staff, including teachers, make crucial choices regarding the school's daily operations and overall welfare. Typically, school decision-making includes budgetary and financial matters, curriculum development and instructional approaches, the well-being of school employees, teachers, and students, the recruitment of new staff, and the management of kids' disciplinary concerns (Kruse et al., 2020). Most of these choices are expected to be taken at regular or intermittent school meetings concerning the personnel responsible for decision-making within the educational institution. The decision-making process includes the active

participation of several stakeholders within the academic setting, including school officials, teachers, non-teaching personnel, and representatives from the student and parent community. In some instances, perspectives from other educational stakeholders are included. According to educators, their sense of representation is heightened when they can express their views throughout the decision-making procedures inside the educational institution, given their integral role within the school community. *"I also feel that I am represented and respected when my voice heard, or my idea is taken into consideration during the process of decision making"* (A-4-M).

It explains how necessary it is that school leaders involve and consider teachers' perspectives when making school-related decisions. However, in the case of an emergency head teachers, school leaders sometimes may have to make decisions without consulting their teachers' opinions. Teachers *"think it is OK"* *as it is not applicable to consult their opinions for every school matter because of the nature of their job. "According to the emergency of the situation, sometimes the headteacher can decide without consulting teachers and other staff members," (A-1-M).*

Teachers' Actual and Desired Participation in Decision-Making

The term "actual participation in decision-making" refers to the teachers' current degree of participation in meetings and decision-making procedures at their respective schools (Peng & Nair, 2022). It demonstrates the involvement of teachers in decision-making on the part of school administrators, and teachers have corroborated that their opinions and ideas were routinely solicited during meetings and decision-making at the school. *"I am included in the decision-making process because, at our school, we usually give our ideas in decision-making meetings and make a decision together as a team" (A-3-F).*

Teachers explained that they usually contribute to making teaching and learning decisions, class management, student assessment and evaluation, and other extra-curricular-related decisions related to their expertise (Ayo et al., 2020). For school leaders, there were different reasons to welcome teachers' opinions and views on the table of decision-making at schools. School leaders revealed that it is of great importance to allow teachers to contribute to the decision-making, and one of the main reasons is to let the decision-maker be exposed to different opinions and ideas when seeking to solve a specific problem which is believed to improve the quality of the decision or solution. Another reason is that shared decision-making would bring a sense of responsibility among the members, which will ultimately influence the success of the decision or policy. In the cases of issues that are not easily reconcilable, there will be someone in charge.

The desired participation of teachers in the decision-making process is a double-sided phenomenon. One side refers to teachers' desire to be included in different decision-making discussions and meetings, which also shows the willingness of the teachers to participate in school decisions on various critical issues. One of the participants stated, *"Schools should involve participative decision-making, and all teachers should be willing to participate and give their opinions, especially when deciding on issues that can enhance teachers' jobs or affect teachers' lives" (A-8-F).*

On the other hand, school administrators want teachers to participate in meetings where decisions are made. The need for teachers to participate in decision-making by school leaders is influenced by (a) school leaders' willingness to do so, which can be justified by various factors as previously discussed; (b) teachers' deliberate nonparticipation (unwillingness). This raises a critical question: Why would teachers purposefully choose not to participate in school decision-making?

For those not willing to participate reasons included, the perception that some decisions are made beyond their concerns and that even though they participate in decision-making, their opinions were not considered during final choices. To some extent, they also perceived that the process will result in an additional workload. Lack of experience and knowledge regarding the decisions were reasons for not including teacher (s) in schools' decision-making, given by the school leader (H2).

Teachers' Roles and Contributions in the Process of Deciding on a School

Including teachers in the decision-making process in schools is seen as a reciprocal arrangement that yields advantages for the overall advancement of the institution (Smith, 2021). Simultaneously, it is advantageous for educators themselves. This section will primarily focus on the many roles that teachers see themselves fulfilling and their contributions to the decision-making process. However, it is beneficial to quickly explore the potential benefits of including teachers in decision-making, particularly concerning their professional roles. In the context of public school environments, it is customary for higher-ranking administrators to convey information on school decisions and policies to teachers who are perceived as passive recipients. Such leaders may sometimes have a limited comprehension of the potential impact of such choices on teachers' employment and the complexity involved in their implementation. Educators assert that including their emotions, viewpoints, and thoughts is vital while engaging in conversations about crucial matters at the classroom level. Including teachers in the decision-making process is often regarded as a means to elicit a diverse range of inventive ideas about various school matters during meetings or conferences. This inclusion can potentially enhance the overall quality of choices and policies created. *"My colleague and I can provide important advice and innovative ideas on how to solve some school issues" (A-5-M).*

An additional advantage of including teachers in the decision-making process inside the educational institution is that their active participation will foster a heightened feeling of community and collaboration among the group members. Furthermore, it has the potential to contribute significantly to the overall progress and advancement of the educational institution. Another factor to consider is that implementing choices about teaching, learning, and classroom management is likely more efficient and straightforward when teachers actively engage in decision-making.

> *We, teachers, have a big contribution in school decision-making. For example, teachers are a direct intermediate between school and students. Teachers understand students more than school leaders do. So, they contribute to the easy implementation of decisions and inform leaders and students' reactions about these decisions.* (A-7-F)

Enhancing students' academic performance via the involvement of teachers in decision-making, is supported by several empirical data identified in the literature study. However, it is essential to note that there are more factors that teachers contribute to the decision-making process in schools. There are many pertinent advantages for educators who engage in this shared decision making. Most of these advantages relate to teachers' everyday work including job satisfaction, job commitment, motivation, and professional happiness. During the interview, several educators expressed a sense of validation when school administrators sought their input on various matters during the decision-making process, leading to a discernible enhancement in their professional responsibilities.

Challenges for Implementation Without Participation

As previously mentioned, the significance of engaging in school decision-making cannot be overstated. However, considering this, the inherent characteristics of the teaching profession, comprehensive involvement of teachers in all choices and concerns about the school may not always be feasible. In public school settings, it is standard for a policy or procedures to be mandated externally to the school environment but then implemented by teachers in the school. This presents difficulties for shared decision making. According to educators, there were instances when the implementation of decisions in which they were not involved posed challenges. Commonly, individuals lack comprehension of the underlying objectives and rationales behind these actions and policies: *"...it is tough for me to offer my fullest contribution during the implementation of most of the decisions that I have been told to do so"(A-2-M).*

Another obstacle is the teachers' struggle to have choice when it comes to aspects that directly impact their professional responsibilities. This include several aspects, such as teaching methods, curriculum, pedagogy, and class-level matters. Ultimately, when individuals without sufficient knowledge endeavor to execute choices, they must seek assistance and support, perhaps leading to the postponement of decision implementation and their respective tasks: *"I always hesitate to ask my colleagues' help because I don't want them feel my distarbance, the process can also delay my task and their task as well"(A-10-M).*

Discussion

The primary focus of this study was to examine the overall circumstances surrounding school-based decision-making in primary education in Rwanda, with a particular emphasis on public secondary schools. The primary objective of this research was to investigate the extent of teacher involvement in shared decision-making within their respective schools. Additionally, the study examined teachers' roles during this decision-making process and the advantages of their active participation. Furthermore, the study sought to assess the contributions made by teachers toward establishing high-quality school choices.

The ancient adage "many heads are better than one" suggests an inherent disparity between the outcomes achieved by a collective effort and those accomplished by an individual. In this context, choices collectively made by members of an organization hold greater quality and impact/compliance compared to those made without input from all members or by a limited number of individuals in the organization's upper echelons (Cortes-Mejia, 2021). Based on the results of this research, it is evident that the participants believe that their engagement in school decision-making processes to be of great importance, as it contributes significantly to generating sound choices within their respective educational institutions. The inclusion of teachers in school decision-making processes has been shown by (Brezicha et al., 2020; Carr-Hill et al., 2018;Mokoena &Machaisa, 2018). Teachers' involvement in school decision-making pertains to their contributions during meetings and decision-making processes and their benefits from such engagements. According to educators, assuming a crucial part in the decision-making process in schools has been shown to enhance work satisfaction. Firstly, the implementation of this process fosters a sense of camaraderie and collaboration, thereby potentially enhancing overall effectiveness. Secondly, including employees in decision-making symbolizes their integration within the organization, catalyzing their commitment and dedication to their jobs. Abad Robles et al. (2020) found comparable findings in their research, indicating that teachers expressed satisfaction with their professional trajectories due to the consideration given to their perspectives and contributions in the decision-making processes at their respective schools. These choices, in turn, directly or indirectly impacted their daily work. Dincer and Osman (2015) established a correlation between the logical decision-making style of administration and the levels of job satisfaction and work motivation among teachers. Educators have a sense

of fulfillment in their profession while engaging in activities that contribute to the productivity and advancement of their educational institution.

From a holistic standpoint, it is widely accepted that teachers enhance their affiliated schools through active involvement in decision-making and collaborative discourse (Salokangas et al., 2020). The perspective of educators expresses a sense of assurance that their participation in the decision-making process can yield several benefits. These include facilitating the smooth execution of school-related decisions, particularly those about academic matters. Additionally, teachers believe that their involvement can foster the introduction of novel and innovative ideas for problem-solving within educational institutions (Calavia et al., 2021). Furthermore, teachers perceive their participation as creating high-quality and effective decisions. Lastly, educators view their involvement in decision-making as a way to distribute responsibilities among members of the school organization.

Another significant finding derived from the outcomes of this research pertains to the limited feasibility of teachers' involvement in the decision-making processes in schools despite the prevailing potential for their participation as self-reported. Possible factors contributing to this problem include the teachers' occupational characteristics, the school's leadership approach, the teachers' inclination to engage in decision-making procedures, and the administration's dedication to involving teachers in such processes and discussions. Wadesango (2012) expressed similar findings and observed in his research that respondents said their engagement in educational decision-making is contingent upon the nature of the issue at hand. Often, teachers are directed on how to proceed. Potential avenues for future study might be explored in light of this study, focusing on investigating the ramifications of teachers' exclusion from management and administrative decision-making processes on school operations and students' academic outcomes.

Teachers face significant difficulties and challenges when implementing choices without considering the many viewpoints involved. Many of these choices are inadequately executed, primarily due to their challenging nature and the occasional lack of understanding among those responsible for implementing the rationale behind a particular decision.

Conclusion and Limitations

Through this present research the authors aimed to investigate and understand teachers' perspectives about their involvement in decision-making processes at the school level. Specifically, the study examined teachers' views of their roles and contributions in decision-making and their willingness to assume decision-making positions. They also sought to ascertain the primary factors influencing the involvement or exclusion of teachers in the collaborative decision-making process led by school administrators. Additionally, they attempted to explore teachers' perspectives on implementing confident choices without a comprehensive grasp of the rationale and process behind their selection.

This research indicates that educators express dissatisfaction with their involvement in decision-making processes and conversations, suggesting a persistent desire for more engagement. Teachers had a sense of engagement and inclusion, primarily in topics about teaching and learning, while being excluded from involvement in school administrative, management, and disciplinary affairs. School leaders disclosed that the limited participation by teachers in decision-making may be linked to their reluctance to engage and their insufficient competence in leadership decisions. Nevertheless, it is necessary for school administrators to include teachers in the decision-making process about allocating responsibilities or implementing collaborative efforts.The teachers' perspective emphasized the importance of teachers' involvement in decision-making processes, as they believe it to be crucial for their professional development and the overall functioning of the educational institution. The degree of teachers' engagement ranges from augmenting their work happiness and motivation to

promoting school and student performance. It implies that the involvement of teachers in decision-making processes inside educational institutions has significant value and continues to be highly sought.

Nevertheless, teachers are sometimes unable to engage in conversations or attend meetings for decision-making events owing to several factors, such as the inherent characteristics of their profession, the leadership style within the school, and their lack of enthusiasm to participate. In this particular scenario, when teachers are expected to adhere to prescribed instructions, it has been noted that complexity and difficulty arise when they are tasked with implementing choices they do not possess a thorough comprehension of. Consequently, this lack of understanding contributes to subpar execution and hinders the timely completion of their daily responsibilities.

This research suggests that it is exceptionally desirable for teachers to actively and proactively engage in decision-making processes. When it is impractical for all teachers to participate in meetings and discussions on school choices, including teachers' representatives might be considered a means to include teacher input. Their inclusion will enhance the collective understanding of the conclusions reached during these deliberations and facilitate the subsequent implementation process. The study was limited to secondary schools in Rwanda, a regional limitation that could made it harder to use the results in widert circumstances. This narrow focus makes it harder to apply the results to more significant situations or other countries' school systems. The fact that the study relies on teachers' opinions adds a biased bias since teachers' views may not truly reflect how decisions are made. Because collecting data is personal, opinions could be highly impacted by the attitudes and experiences of the people who took part. This study's focus on secondary schools within a specific geographical area limits the generalizability of the results to broader educational contexts, including primary schools or tertiary institutions within Rwanda or other countries. Secondly, the reliance on qualitative data through interviews might introduce subjective biases, potentially affecting the objectivity of the findings. We note however that there are potential transferable insights here and in light of the limitations, it is recommended that future research expand the investigation scope to include a more diverse range of educational settings beyond secondary schools, encompassing various geographical regions and educational levels, to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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