

Decision Making Involvement among Graduate School Students in One State College: A Link for Educational Leadership

Judith S. Rabacal (PhD)

Northern Negros State College of Science and Technology
judithmsolasco1982@yahoo.com

**Asia Pacific Journal of
Multidisciplinary Research**

Vol. 7 No.3, 79-85

August 2019

P-ISSN 2350-7756

E-ISSN 2350-8442

www.apjmr.com

CHED Recognized Journal

ASEAN Citation Index

Date Received: October 5, 2018; Date Revised: July 27, 2019

Abstract - *Decision making is a process of making a choice from a number of alternatives to achieve a desired result. This study was conducted to assess the extent of decision-making involvement among graduate school students in one state college as implications for educational leadership. The study respondents were the 115 graduate school students and were chosen through stratified random sampling. Findings revealed that most of the graduate school students have high extent of decision-making involvement in terms of instructional programme and school human resources while moderate extent in terms of infrastructural facilities. At the same time results showed that there is no significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programme, school human resources and infrastructural facilities when grouped according to their profile variables. Educational leaders should promote forms of participation in decision making that increase graduate students' actual involvement in decisions concerning their duties and opportunities for development and also provide for more sharing on issues concerning the school management, particularly educational leadership.*

Keywords: *Decision making, educational leadership, graduate students*

INTRODUCTION

Decision making involvement among various stakeholders in the academic community is highly remarkable. Students as one of the most important clientele in the academe must be given an opportunity to involve in such activities. The role of graduate student's involvement in school activities was attributed to the fact that their inputs are very important source of information. Huddleston [1] argues that students should be involved in different aspects of school. He goes on saying that students should be given opportunities for decision making involvement particularly on areas like curriculum, management and development learning.

Decision making is coming up of the best solution from various alternatives or options.

Evidently, most of the graduate school programs of various state colleges and universities had integrated decision making in their curriculum, ensuring that graduate students will become more aware of the different approaches of decision making. Thus, involving students in decision making process as one of the institutional undertakings may increase the students' commitment to learning.

The relevance of the study of student's involvement in decision making makes good sense from a number of perspectives. Research shows that when student voice is not included in reform efforts, these efforts are more likely to flounder [2]. Mager and Nowak [3] found that there is a moderate evidence of positive effects of student participation on life skills, self-esteem and social status, democratic skills and citizenship, student-adult relationships and school ethos.

This study was based on Breen-Goldthorpe Model of Educational Decision Making, this model explains why various variables like educational attainment affects or changes the decision-making approaches of an individual.

Considerable number of studies was focused on involvement of teachers and administrators in decision making. Yet, studies focused on graduate students' involvement in decision making in the academe are scanty in international research and relatively few researches have been conducted in the local context.

Studies uncover that educators shift in their ability to take part in various choices and that teachers key working connections apply the best critical effect on

eagerness to partake across decision areas [4]. Students who took an interest in classroom choices grew more great states of mind toward school and subject, communicated all the more emphatically with peers, worked all the more reliably without supervision, and adapted more than students whose educator decided [5].

In this current study, the researcher determines the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programme, school human resources and infrastructural facilities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Generally, this study aims to determine the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making and its implication for educational leadership. Specifically, this research aims to describe the graduate students attribute in terms of age, gender, highest degree earned, work experience and graduate programs recently enrolled; it also determines the extent of graduate students involvement in decision making as assessed by the respondents when grouped according to profile variables; it likewise determines the extent of graduate students involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes, school human resources and infrastructural facilities and to determine if there is a significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes, school human resources and infrastructural facilities when grouped according to their profile variables.

Hypothesis

The foregoing hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes, school human resources and infrastructural facilities when grouped according to their profile variables.

METHODS

This study is descriptive in nature and utilizes survey research design. Koh [6] maintains that descriptive research is a study of status and is widely used in education. The study respondents were the 115 graduate school students enrolled during the First Semester 2017-18 and were chosen through stratified random sampling.

Research Instruments

The research instruments utilized in this study was adapted and modified from the study of Nwankwo [7] on the Students Participation in Decision Making.

The instrument consists of two (2) parts. Part I, profile attributes of the respondents of the study. Part II contains the questionnaire items organized into three sections that includes the extent of Graduate Students' Involvement in Decision Making.

Validity of the Instrument

The adapted instrument was modified in terms of the inclusion of other profile variable such as highest degree earned and graduate programs recently enrolled. Some items in each parameter were also modified to suit to the present study. With the modification done on the research instrument, the researcher opted to undergo face and content validation of the instrument. Experts' validation was done in order to measure the validity of the instrument. Jury validation shows that the instrument is valid to a very high degree with a mean of 4.3.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, it was pilot tested to a group of graduate school students who were not the actual respondents of the study. The reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha. The obtained reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.86 which denotes that the instrument was reliable to a high degree.

The Data Collection Procedure

To ensure precision and accuracy of data collection, the researcher follows and observed the proper procedure in this study. The study respondents were gathered in one place and were given a research instrument, before allowing them to engaged in the instrument, the researcher orient them on the nature and purpose of conducting the study. The respondents who were not around on that day, the researcher reach them out through the use of media to ask their time availability to complete the instrument. The data collection was completed after four (4) weeks. All the instruments given were retrieved, tallied, tabulated and analyzed.

Data Analysis

To determine the respondents' profile, frequency and percentage distribution was used.

To describe the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making, the scale and its interpretation below was used.

Scale	Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very High Extent
3.40 - 4.19	High Extent
2.60 – 3.39	Moderate Extent
1.80 – 2.59	Low Extent
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low Extent

To determine if there is a significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes, school human resources and infrastructural facilities when grouped according to their profile variables, t-test was used.

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software.

Ethical Considerations

In the course of conducting the study, some ethical considerations were observed. Study respondents were asked if they are willing to participate in the study and they were given a consent form. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents. They were also informed that the data being gathered in the study were solely for research and academic endeavour and that will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, highest degree earned, work experience and graduate programs recently enrolled. Data in Table 1 revealed that out of 115 respondents 51 or 44.34 % were 20-30 years old, 31 or 26.95 % were 31-40 years old, 28 or 24.34 % were 41-50 years old and 5 or 4.34 % /were 51-60 years old. As to gender, 53 or 46.08 % were males and 62 or 53.91% were females. When highest degree earned was considered, 77 or 66.95% with Masters Units, 19 or 16.52 % were Master's degree holders and 19 or 16.52 % with Doctorate units. When grouped according to work experience, 62 or 53.91% were having 11-20 years in service, 28 or 24.34% were having 1-10 years in service and 25 or 21.73 % were having 21-30 years in service. Lastly, when respondents were grouped according to graduate programs recently enrolled 14 or 12.17% were enrolled in Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management (PhD EM), 5 or 4.34 were enrolled in Doctor of Philosophy in Technology

Management (PhD TM), 40 or 34.7% were enrolled in Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Management (MAED), 23 or 20% were enrolled in Master in Public Administration, 13 or 11.30% were enrolled in Master in Master in Information Technology, 15 or 13.04% were enrolled in Masters in Nursing, 3 or 2.60% were enrolled in Master of Science in Agriculture and 2 or 1.73% were enrolled in Master of Science in Fisheries.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents (N=115)

Profile	Groups	f	%
Age	51-60	5	4.34
	41-50	28	24.34
	31-40	31	26.95
	20-30	51	44.34
Gender	Male	53	46.08
	Female	62	53.91
Highest Degree Earned	W/ Doctorate Units	19	16.52
	Master's Degree	19	16.52
	W/Masters Unit	77	66.95
Work Experience	1-10 years	28	24.34
	11-20 years	62	53.91
	21-30 years	25	21.73
Graduate Programs Recently Enrolled	PhD EM	14	12.17
	PhD TM	5	4.34
	MAED	40	34.7
	MPA	23	20
	MIT	13	11.30
	MN	15	13.04
	MSA	3	2.60
	MSFi	2	1.73

The result presented in table 2 revealed the extent of decision-making involvement among graduate school students when grouped according to profile variables.

When age is considered, study respondents from ages 31-60 years old shows a high extent of involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes, school human resources and infrastructural facilities.

When gender is considered, female is highly involved in the decision making with a mean of 3.4753 and an SD value of .39522 respectively, while male got a moderate extent of involvement in the decision making.

As to highest degree earned and work experience is considered, all study respondents were rated high extent of involvement in the decision making.

When graduate programs recently enrolled is considered, respondents from PhD EM, PhD TM, MAED, MPA, MN and MIT got a high extent of

involvement in decision making, while study respondents from MSA and MSFi got a moderate extent of involvement.

Table 2. Extent of Graduate Students Involvement in Decision Making when Grouped According to Profile Variables

Profile	Groups	M	%	I
Age	51-60	3.5700	.40798	High
	41-50	3.4565	.39872	High
	31-40	3.4598	.38801	High
	20-30	3.2685	.40050	Moderate
Gender	Male	3.3434	.44847	Moderate
	Female	3.4753	.39522	High
Highest Degree Earned	W/ Doctorate	3.4444	.31427	High
	Units Master's Degree	3.5848	.39863	High
	W/Masters Unit	3.4400	.41693	High
Work Experience	1-10 years	3.4556	.24259	High
	11-20 years	3.5385	.45098	High
	21-30 years	3.6111	.46300	High
Graduate Programs Recently Enrolled	PhD EM	3.5801	.41798	High
	PhD TM	3.3536	.44946	High
	MAED	3.4402	.41695	High
	MPA	3.5116	.40112	High
	MIT	3.4400	.41693	High
	MN	3.4753	.39522	High
	MSA	3.3312	.44710	Moderate
MSFi	3.3433	.44846	Moderate	

This finding was in contrast to the study of Delaney that age and gender differences found, researchers should acknowledge how age and gender may influence decision-making processes.

This means that profile variables were not considerably a factor when it comes to the extent of involvement in decision making among graduate school students.

Data in Table 3 shows the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes. Results revealed that graduate students' involvement in instructional

programmes were rated as high extent with a mean of 3.4851 and an SD value of .52934.

Table 3. Extent of Graduate Students Involvement in Decision Making in terms of Instructional Programmes

Instructional Programmed	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Graduate students' were Involved in curriculum Decisions such as planning the subjects to be offered.	3.5545	.49950	High Extent
Graduate students were involved in formulating academic objectives of the program. Consultations with students before introducing new subjects.	3.4950	.52199	High Extent
Discussion of academic issues in a forum with students.	3.5149	.52180	High Extent
Initiation of instructional programmes together with students.	3.4554	.52009	High Extent
Students' participation in decision making will facilitate supervision of teachers' attendance to class.	3.4455	.55633	High Extent
Total	3.4851	.52934	High Extent

Results further revealed that graduate students' involvement in instructional programmes such as planning the subjects to be studied, formulating academic objectives of the program, consulting them through stakeholders' forum in crafting their curriculum shows a stronger link for educational leadership of the college. In general findings suggested that graduate students' involvement in decision making in terms of instructional programmes was recognized by the school.

Denoting a similar finding, Jeruto and Kiprof[8] stresses that students' participation in curriculum issues would boost their academic performance.

Students were involved in school activities pertaining to curriculum revision, formulation of academic programs goals and objectives, research activities and extension community outreach program.

This implies that graduate students were empowered to participate and be involved in academic matters of the school.

Table 4. Extent of Graduate Students Involvement in Decision Making in terms of School Human Resources

School Human	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Graduate students' were involve in making school rules and regulations.	3.5545	.49950	High Extent
Students' participation in arriving at disciplinary measures related to erring students.	3.4950	.52199	High Extent
Students' participation in the general orientation and other school related activities.	3.5149	.52180	High Extent
Students' involvement in negotiation in order to ensure school discipline.	3.4554	.52009	High Extent
Students' involvement in the provision of students' welfare.	3.3663	.57832	Moderate
Students' participation in decision making can lead to collaborative school leadership in which human efforts are recognized and rewarded.	3.4455	.55633	High Extent
Total	3.4719	.53300	High Extent

The result presented in table 4 shows the extent of graduate students' involvement in terms of school human resources the study sought to find out on the same. The results shown on Table 4 above reveal a high extent of students' involvement in decision making in terms of school human resources with a mean of 3.4719 and an SD value of .53300 on the parameters concerning the issues on school rules and regulations, disciplinary measures and other school related activities. However, most of the respondents rated moderate extent on the parameter of provision of students' welfare. The results depicted that the respondents were aware of the various roles and functions of a resource manager. Moreover, the

respondents were mostly handling positions in their respective organization as an educational leader or head of office.

This finding was supported by Richter & Tjosvold [9] denoting that students' participation in decision making does not really involve the forfeit of scholarly accomplishment. To be sure, interest can enhance intellectual and in addition social results of the classroom.

Table 5. Extent of Graduate Students Involvement in Decision Making in terms of Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructural Facilities	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Students' participation in taking decision of the school facilities	3.3861	.56516	Moderate
Students' participation in taking decision on the maintenance of classroom furniture.	2.5812	.42331	Low Extent
Students' participation in taking decision on the maintenance of laboratory equipment.	3.3960	.54917	Moderate
Students' participation in taking decision on how to initiate school projects	3.4455	.55633	High Extent
Students' participation in taking decision on the allocation of school facilities.	3.3861	.56516	Moderate
Students' participation in decision making will lead to collective responsibility in ensuring school progress.	3.3960	.54917	Moderate
Total	3.2651	.53471	Moderate

Generally, as revealed in Table 5 the respondents viewed their involvement in decision making in terms of infrastructural facilities as moderate extent with a mean of 3.2651 and an SD value of .53471. The respondents rated low extent on their participation in terms of classroom maintenance. This result may attributed to the fact that since graduate school students were only utilizing the classroom on weekend basis, they do not have direct control on classroom maintenance matters. Similarly, the respondents rated high extent on the issue of students' participation in

taking decisions on how to initiate school projects. The main reason for this result can be contributed to the idea that graduate school students are capable enough to look for other resources in putting up school projects. This finding is similar to those of Mati et.al [10] found that students' involvement in the key decisions of their educational process produces motivation, a sense of ownership and therefore a higher inclination to abide by the set rules, personal drive to meet the individual and collective goals, and an overall higher academic performance.

Data on Table 6 shows that there is no significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making when the respondents are grouped according to age. The p value of .216 is greater than .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Graduate students were involved in decision making regardless of their age, this means that they were given opportunities to actively engaged in whatever activities of the school.

This finding contravenes with that of Oke et.al [11], they argue that most of the students were not allowed to participate in the decision-making process by the school administrators in a university.

Table 6. Test of Difference on the Extent of Graduate Students' Involvement in Decision Making When Grouped According to Age

Age	Mean	f-value	p-value	Remarks
51-60	3.5700	1.513	.216	Not Significant
41-50	3.4565			
31-40	3.4598			
20-30	3.2685			

*Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

Table 7. Test of Difference on the Extent of Graduate Students' Involvement in Decision Making When Grouped According to Gender

Age	Mean	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Male	3.3434	-	.3068	Not
Female	3.4753	1.030		Significant

*Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

The results in table 7 show that the t-value calculated is -1.030 while p value is .3068 which is greater than .05 level of significance. The findings depict that there is no significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making when the respondents are grouped according to gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Earlier studies by March [12] indicated that students' participation in decision making in schools resulted to teachers 'and students' high performance in school and commitment to school goals and vision.

This implies that graduate students' involvement in one state college does not differ significantly when gender is considered.

Table 8 shows that the calculated p value of .351 is greater than the .05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making when the respondents are grouped according to highest degree earned.

Table 8. Test of Difference on the Extent of Graduate Students' Involvement in Decision Making When Grouped According to Highest Degree

Highest Degree Earned	Mean	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
W/ Doctorate Units	3.4444	1.121	.351	Not Significant
Master's Degree	3.5848			
W/ Masters Unit	3.4400			

Arising from these findings, the institution should create a free atmosphere to enable students actively participate in dialogues and communicate their views about their academic work.

This implies that the educational qualifications of graduate students do not matter when it comes to involvement in the decision-making process of the college.

Table 9. Test of Difference on the Extent of Graduate Students' Involvement in Decision Making When Grouped According to Work Experience

Work Experience	Mean	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
1-10 yrs.	3.4556	.996	.425	Not Significant
11-20 yrs.	3.5385			
21-30 yrs	3.6111			

Results in table 9 shows that the p value of .425 is greater than .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Further, the result shows that there is no significant difference on the extent of graduate students' involvement in decision making when the respondents

are grouped according to work experience. With the results given, the graduate students decision making strongly link to educational leadership they possess in their respective workplace. This is very evident, on their engagement to various curricular activities that requires participation and involvement.

This implies that length of work experience does not play an important role when it comes to involvement in the decision-making process among graduate school students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Graduate school students have been greatly involved in the decision-making undertakings of the college. This clearly manifests that there is a link for educational leadership among the students. Their involvement in the decision-making shows that they are valued and recognized as one of the important stakeholders of the school.

Finally, the study revealed graduate students' participation in school decision making leaves much to be desired, thus conducting a similar study should be carried out considering other variables such as decision-making approaches and strategies and should consider a wider scope of population.

The findings of this study have a lot of implications for educational leadership. For quality education leadership to be instilled on graduate students this requires active students 'participation in decision making in various institutional activities should be strengthened. The students 'participation can act as a guide in taking final decisions on matters that affect students' well-being in school.

REFERENCES

- [1] Huddleston, T. (2007). From student voice to shared responsibility: effective practice in democratic school governance in European schools. Network of European Foundations and Council of Europe, (s 28).
- [2] Kennedy, B. L., & Datnow, A. (2011). Student involvement and data-driven decision making: Developing a new typology. *Youth & Society*, 43(4), 1246-1271.
- [3] Mager, U., & Nowak, P. (2012). Effects of student participation in decision making at school. A systematic review and synthesis of empirical research. *Educational Research Review*, 7(1), 38-61.
- [4] Smylie, M. A. (1992). Teacher participation in school decision making: Assessing willingness to participate. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 14(1), 53-67.
- [5] Richter, F. D., & Tjosvold, D. (1980). Effects of student participation in classroom decision making on

- attitudes, peer interaction, motivation, and learning. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 65(1), 74.
- [6] Koh, E. T., & Owen, W. L. (2000). Descriptive Research and Qualitative Research. In *Introduction to Nutrition and Health Research* (pp. 219-248). Springer, Boston, MA.
- [7] Nwankwo, I. N. (2014). Students' Participation in Decision Making and its Implications for Educational Leadership. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)*, 5(3), 362-367
- [8] Jeruto, T. B., & Kiprop, C. J. (2011). Extent of student participation in decision making in secondary schools in Kenya. *International journal of humanities and social science*, 1(21), 92-99.
- [9] Richter, F. D., & Tjosvold, D. (1980). Effects of student participation in classroom decision making on attitudes, peer interaction, motivation, and learning. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 65(1), 74.
- [10] Mati, A., Gatumu, J. C., & Chandi, J. R. (2016). Students' Involvement in Decision Making and Their Academic Performance in Embu West Sub-County of Kenya. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 4(10), 2300-2304.
- [11] Oke, G. G., Okunola, P. O., Oni, A. A., & Adetoro, J. A. (2010). Relationship between vice chancellor's leadership behavior and work behavior of lecturers in Nigerian Universities. Implication for leadership training for Vice Chancellors. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, 8 (1), pp.123-139.
- [12] March, J. G. (2010). *Primer on decision making: How decisions happen*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

COPYRIGHTS

Copyright of this article is retained by the author/s, with first publication rights granted to APJMR. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4>).