

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AT
KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
KUMASI

BY

BENJAMIN BOAMPONG OWUSU

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requirements for the award of the Master of Education Degree in
Educational Administration

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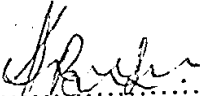
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DECLARATION

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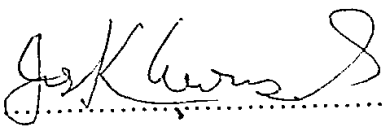
I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in the university or elsewhere.

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Name: Benjamin Boampong Owusu

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature:  Date: *12/11/08*

Name: Dr. J.S.K. Owusu

ABSTRACT

Academic democracy as a tenet of University governance in African universities has generated a lot of concern and debates in recent years. The issue of student involvement in decision-making has manifested in these concerns and debates especially in sub-Saharan African countries. The study was undertaken to find out the level of student involvement in decision-making in tertiary institutions and the benefits it has for both students and university authority. The study was to determine those factors that prevent students from participating fully in decision-making at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). The target population was 21,000 persons and 150 formed the sample size. A descriptive survey was employed in the study. A written questionnaire was used to gather relevant data for the study. The data were analysed by using SPSS Software and summarised into percentages and frequency tables.

Students have very little or no involvement in university decision-making except in the areas of hall administration, student welfare and student discipline. For example, fear of victimisation was found to be a factor that prevents students from participating in the decision-making processes in the university.

Student participation in university governance has positive linkages to effective university management in areas where student participation takes place. It is therefore recommended that students and administrators should critically examine the existing governance structures at KNUST in a bid to identifying core places where student participation in decision-making would be very beneficial to the institution. The SRC needs to re-examine its functions and roles in the light of current global trends. Where necessary, changes should be instituted to improve student contribution to university decision-making.

ABSTRACT

Academic democracy as a tenet of University governance in African universities has generated a lot of concern and debates in recent years. The issue of student involvement in decision-making has manifested in these concerns and debates especially in sub-Saharan African countries. The study was undertaken to find out the level of student involvement in decision-making in tertiary institutions and the benefits it has for both students and university authority. The study was to determine those factors that prevent students from participating fully in decision-making at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). The target population was 21,000 persons and 150 formed the sample size. A descriptive survey was employed in the study. A written questionnaire was used to gather relevant data for the study. The data were analysed by using SPSS Software and summarised into percentages and frequency tables.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family, especially Sister Grace, and Mr. Joseph Boakye, Lecturers at IEPA, all my colleagues especially, Hammond, Ike, Bruce and Ante Florence as well as all administrative staff of Dean of Students office, KNUST.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Several responsibilities lie on the shoulders of administrators and one of them is decision-making. Gorton (1980) states that decision-making is a complex exercise that needs much time and effort. He further states that decision-making employs analytical thought process and utilises relevant sources of information and assistance. Gorton also considers decision-making as the central element of administration. It is required therefore that administrators exhibit great care in handling it. It involves selecting alternative solution, which is subsequently implemented with the view to achieving a set of objectives. Gorton (1980) states the rationale behind involving others in a decision-making process as follows:

- i) It increases the number of different viewpoints and ideas, which might be relevant to the decision being made.
- ii) It may improve the morale by showing the individuals involved that the administrator values their opinion, which may give them greater feeling of satisfaction.
- iii) It makes better utilisation of available expertise and problem-solving skills, which exist within the community.
- iv) It can aid acceptance and implementation of a decision because the people who are involved are more likely to understand the decision and more committed to its success.

- v) It is consistent with democratic principles of our society, which hold that those who are affected by public institutions should have some voice in how they are run.

If the above views are worthwhile, then it can be strongly suggested that there is an appreciable advantage to be gained when the relevant public of university is involved in decision-making process, especially when the decision concerns the relevant public. Christine and Adrain (1989) have this to say, "participatory decision-making processes are crucial to good urban governance which ensures quality, transparency, accountability, efficiency and ultimately, sustainability" (p.1).

According to Hanson (1996) the relevant public that is affected by a decision must be involved in making such decisions so that there might not seem to be a trace of malfunctioning in the decision-making process. This is because "it is not the function of the chief executive officer to make decisions, rather, his function is to monitor the decision-making process to make sure that it performs at the optimum level."(p.228).

The very inception of the introduction of university education to Africa has rested on contradiction. According to Mazrui (1978), the contradiction is the perpetual tension between academic freedom on one hand and academic democracy on the other. Mazrui (1978) further elaborates both academic freedom and democracy below. Academic freedom deals with issues such as:

- a) The right to hold and express opinion
- b) The right to teach and be taught without external interference

- c) The right access to academic knowledge

Academic democracy on the other hand centres itself on such issues detailed as:

- d) How widely distributed is the right of participation in decision-making?
- e) How effectively are different interests within the institution represented within the power structure?
- f) How powerful are heads of departments, vice chancellors and administrative executives within the institution?
- g) What influence do students exercise on decision-making?

In sum, academic freedom is seen as a matter of freedom from interference whilst academic democracy rests on the right to participate. History is full of facts about the uncontrolled movement that academic freedom has taken to reach its present status (Mazrui 1978). Scholars like Mazrui (1978) and Altbach (1992) all agree that though academic freedom has gone through hectic times, to a large extent, it has now attained credible place of university education.

Until the 1960's however, when students through various militant actions began to demand to participate in decision-making, most tertiary institutions gave little or no attention to the issue. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), like all other tertiary institutions has also experienced the same tension, which are identified by Mazrui and others. Cases in point to illustrate the above points raised are: In 1999, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Government disclosed the institution of Facility User fees in all the state universities every academic year. Effort by students to get the issue abrogated

ended up in a standstill and subsequent deliberations by the student leaders proved futile. Students made their assessment and realised the policy was rather "cost-shifting" and not cost-sharing, resulting into disruption of academic calendar for that year. A few weeks after re-opening, the students' request had still not been adhered to. Students then boycotted lectures and undertook demonstrations to create public awareness about their demands, Daily Graphic (September 14, 1999) p.3.

Ejiogu (1987) observes that democratisation of any administrative process implies the active involvement of subordinates in the decision-making process. This clearly shows that members of the community must be allowed by their authorities to get involved in the decision-making activities. According to Daily Graphic (19th April 2007), the authorities of University of Ghana came out with a new residential policy "in-out-out-out" policy; where an undergraduate student enjoys university residence during the first year and lives outside campus for the rest of the programme (Accra, April 19, GNA). Students of the University of Ghana on Thursday 19th April 2007 staged a demonstration to protest against the University's new residential policy, which gives official accommodation to only first year students. Signs of a possible march by the students were visible early in the morning when scores of policemen were seen at the Castle Junction and on the street leading to President John Agyekum Kufuor's house on the main Accra-Legon road. The students, who were staging the second protest in one week, wanted the university authorities to halt the new policy called "in-out-out-out". The authorities said the new residential policy, which replaces the present "in-out-

out-in" policy is necessary because of pressure on them for residential accommodation. The students wearing red attire or red bands presented their petition to the Ministry of Education, saying they wanted a decision by April 25 or they would boycott the second semester examinations. One of the students told Ghana News Agency (GNA) that they then marched towards the Castle where their leaders presented their petition to the Government authorities. He said there was misunderstanding between them and the police and they were chased away from the Castle Junction.

The past seven years at KNUST have observed the greater involvement of students in the decision-making process at the Academic Board meetings, Council meetings, some ad hoc and standing committees of the institution in defence of the principle of academic democracy, which is on the ascendancy. However, the gradual increase in occurrence of students' agitations within different parts of the administrative set-up of the university requires an in-depth examination of students' involvement in the university's decision-making process. Even though this has called for an annual orientation by the Office of the Dean of Students for the newly elected Student Representative Council, since 2002, the issue should still be looked at.

It has been noticed that the period of an individual's life spent in the university is a period of self-search and self-training as people try to acquire identities within the adult world. Gaidzenwa (1994) contends that universities need to foster rational discourse and disputation about governance within their campuses. Gaidzenwa's prime concern is the fact that universities should, to a

large extent, encourage all sectors of the university community to avoid the use of force and violence in handling disagreements. Also, Gaidzenwa discloses that it is essential for constituents of the university campus to understand and accept that good governance is better promoted through consultation and negotiation rather than coercion. Students and university authorities need to revisit their strategies for problem solving, encouraging all parties to take part in substantive debates and discussions where possible. The study is therefore based on student participation in decision-making process at the tertiary level.

Statement of the Problem

Right from the beginning of the establishment of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, avenues have been paved for the students to channel their grievances to the topmost level in the institution. In spite of this, there have been various confrontations and student unrests within the university. A current observation by the researcher indicates that there has been some dissatisfaction among students of their involvement in the university decision-making.

It seems student involvement in university decision-making has not been given priority attention and questions that naturally arise are that: Are students fully involved in decision-making? What factors impede student involvement in decision-making? There is therefore the need to provide an in-depth examination to these and other questions. This constitutes the focus of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine students and administrators' views regarding student involvement in decision-making process at KNUST.

Specifically, the study tries to:

- a) Explore the perceptions that students and personnel in administration have concerning the actual level of student participation in decision-making at KNUST.

- b) Identify those factors, which can enhance student participation in decision-making at KNUST.
- c) Determine those factors that impede student involvement in decision-making
- d) Find out the benefits of involving students in decision-making.

Research Questions

The following questions are formulated to guide the course of the study:

1. What is the present level of student involvement in the decision-making at the KNUST?
2. What benefits does student participation in decision-making at the university have on general university management of KNUST?
3. What factors impede student participation in decision-making at KNUST?
4. What factors can enhance the present status of student participation in decision-making at KNUST?

Significance of the study

It is anticipated that the findings from the study will pave way for the authorities of the KNUST to accept factors that influence decision-making among students and their perceptions towards student rate of involvement in decision-making. Such an acceptance could be utilised to improve on policy making with regards to students' involvement in decision-making process at KNUST. It is also envisaged that the findings of this research will enable the university authorities to have in-depth knowledge on how to reduce confrontations between them and students.

On the part of the students, it is hoped that results of this research will help them understand their roles in decision-making as well as factors, which help to improve their present status in management of the university. Such understanding can help in the choice of future student leaders who can lead students to effectively contribute towards decision-making as a means of reducing the constant friction that presently exist between students and university administration. The study will contribute to knowledge in educational research.

Delimitation of the Study

This research work is delimited to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. It would have been prudent to have carried out the study in a bigger area but this was not possible due to the time frame given for the completion of the study. The respondents are the Deans, Directors, Heads of Department, Hall Masters and Wardens, Registrars and students. The areas covered were present level of student involvement, factors that impede, enhance

and benefits derived in decision-making process. Findings from the study apply to only KNUST selected for the study. However, other tertiary institutions in the country with similar characteristics could adapt the findings to the solution of their own educational problems with regard to decision-making.

Limitation of the Study

The core of the study is to investigate student participation in the decision-making process at KNUST. Some administrators believed to have relevant information were hard pressed with time in such a way that it was difficult to get in touch. Such people had rich experience and knowledge such that their input would have been much relevant in improving the quality of the final results of the study.

Definition of Terms Used in the Study

For the purpose of this study, the following have been defined operationally as indicated below:

Governance: This refers to the act of directing public affairs of an organisation or institution, thereby administering or managing that organisation.

Decision-making: it is a process of making a choice from identified alternatives in order to solve a problem so as to achieve an objective or goal through proper implementation and evaluation.

Teaching personnel in administration: This refers to senior members of the teaching field mostly known as lecturers who are also into administrative work as heads of departments, hall wardens/masters and others within the status of the university.

Non-teaching personnel in administration: Senior members with professional background such as internal auditors, director of works, registrars, counsellors and others who undertake administrative work in the university.

Administrators: Teaching personnel who engage in administrative work of the university.

Student leaders: students who have been elected into offices as statutorily stated in the SRC constitution to represent the views and interest of the general student body of the University.

Organisation of the Study

The study has five chapters:

The first chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study and definition of terms used. Chapter two is on literature review related to the study of decision-making. The third chapter deals with the research design and population. The data analysis and presentation is undertaken in chapter four. The last chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher examines related literature on student participation in decision-making. The literature, mostly of foreign origin, is related to studies connected to the administrative set-ups and student leaders as co-operate bodies at the decision-making level of the universities.

This review concentrates on:

- a. The decision-making concept.
- b. Participatory decision-making in education.
- c. Modes of decision-making in education system.
- d. Models in Decision-Making
- e. Benefits of participatory decision-making to organisational decision-making.
- f. Benefits of participatory decision-making to the subordinate.
- g. Implication of participatory decision-making on the management of tertiary education.

What is Decision-Making?

It would be appropriated to know what decision is all about before we proceed to decision-making. According to Wright and Noe (1996), decision is a choice from among alternative courses of action. Peretmode (1985), quoted in Atta (2000) maintains that decision-making is a central responsibility of the educational administrator. According to Etzioni (1964), a decision is a conscious

and deliberate choice between two or more alternatives. A decision is a conscious choice among analysed alternatives followed by action to implement the choice, Ivancevich, J.M., Lorengi P., Skinne S.J. and Cosby P.B.(1994). Ivancevich et al (1994) understand decision-making as series of steps that run from clearly identifying a problem to implementing and assessing.

According to Ukeje (1992), decision-making is, thus, the act of determining a course of action following more or less deliberate considerations of often competing alternatives. Simon (1960) maintains that decision-making is the process of choosing from among alternative ways of achieving an objective of providing a solution to a problem. Decision-making as distinct from decisions can be analysed to mean the act or process of making choices from a set of identified alternatives in order to solve a problem or to achieve an objective, target or goal. Musaazi (1982) observes that various authors have explained the concept from their particular perspective. For example, Newman and Sumber (1961) assess decision-making to be synonymous with planning. Dorsey (1957) views decision-making as a series of interrelated communication events. Owens (1995), on the other hand stresses that, decision-making generally may be seen as the key function of activity of administrators.

Participatory Decision-Making

Participation in decision-making is an important tool for the facilitation of both organizational goal attainment and personal need satisfaction and motivation. Owens (2000) defines participation as the mental and emotional involvement of a person in a group situation that encourages the individual to contribute to group

goals and to share responsibility for them. Participation is a notion of "ownership" of decision, which is motivating to the participant; it releases one's energy, creativity and initiative. The ego involvement encourages people to accept greater responsibility for the organization's effectiveness. Participatory decision-making requires collaborative problem solving. Each individual is responsible for whatever decision the group arrives at.

Coch and French (1948) conducted an early study on the effects of participation in decision-making. They found out from their study that even when the needed working conditions are available, workers were resistant to changes and therefore, they could not increase production. In their effort to find ways of overcoming the resistance which simultaneously increasing productivity and reducing turnover, carefully matched three groups of employee and studied their behaviour.

In the first group, according to Coch and French, the workers were given only short, routine announcements concerning the need for change and the changes to be made. There was no opportunity to participate in the decision. In the second group, the employees were notified of a proposed change, the necessity of the change was explained, and specifics were elaborated. This group of workers had some of their or group members represented in designing those changes. The third group represented employees were treated much the same as those in group two, except that there was total representation (with everyone involved in planning the new jobs).

One month after implementing the experimental procedures, Coch and French reported that the differences noticed were that those in the 'no-participation group had no improvement in production. Again absenteeism, employee turnover, and the number of grievances increased. In the two other groups where there was some participation, production rose to impressively high levels, and employee turnover absenteeism, and grievances were quite limited. This result shows the positive effect participation has in production in any organization.

Other studies on teacher participation as quoted by Hoy and Miskel (1982) supported the importance of participation in decision-making in business as well as in educational organisations. The following were the generalisations made from the research on teacher participation in decision-making:

1. The opportunity to share in the formulating of policies is an important factor in the morale of teachers and in their enthusiasm for the school organisation.
2. That participation in decision-making is positively related to the individual teacher's satisfaction with the profession of teaching.
3. That teachers prefer principals who involve them in decision-making.
4. Teachers neither expect nor want to be involved in decision-making. In fact, too much involvement can be detrimental as too little.
5. They further went on to say that participation in decision-making has consequences that vary from situation to situation.
6. The roles and functions of both teachers and administrators in decision-making need to be varied according to the nature of the problem.

7. Both internal and external factors affect the degree of participation in decision-making by teachers.

According to the researchers, there are specific questions which administrators should answer in order to maximise the positive contributions of shared decision making and to minimize the negative consequences. These are:

- a. Under what conditions should teachers be involved?
- b. To what extent and how should teachers be involved?
- c. How should the decision-making group be constituted?
- d. What is most effective for the principal?

Hoy and Miskel (1982) quoted Swanson (1959) who identified three major types of constitutional groups, which are classified according to how each group arrives at a decision. These are the democratic arrangements, the parliamentary arrangement and the participant determining arrangement. The democratic arrangement is where the leader presents a problem to subordinates and asks for comments, suggestions, reactions and ideas. The administrator tries to reflect on the subordinates' participation and feelings before arriving at a final decision. The parliamentary arrangement binds group members to whatever a majority agrees on as a given course of action. Every member including the leader has equal vote.

The third one is the participant determining arrangement that requires a total consensus of the group on the appropriate action to be taken. All members have equal vote. This assertion is supported by Stevenson (2001) in his study conducted on shared decision-making and school values, he said that in a participatory democratic organisation, authority is decentralised and resides, not

in the individual, but the organisational collective as a whole, decision-making rather than subscribing to formal rules and procedures, is based on “a consensus process in which all members participate in the collective formulation of problems and negotiation of decisions” (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979, p.511). Beside the basis of authority and the system of rules and regulations, other dimensions for distinguishing participatory democratic organisations from bureaucratic organisations have been identified which includes the form of social control, the nature of social relationships, and the extent of social stratification and differentiation (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979).

Owens (2000) quoted the taxonomy of leadership styles of Vroom and Yetton and the two which are applicable to participatory decision-making are the Consultative Process and the Group Process. The Consultative Process is where the leader shares the problem with relevant members of the group on a one-to-one basis, getting their ideas and suggestions individually without bringing them together as a group. Then the leader makes the decision. The leader later shares the problem with members as a group at a meeting, and then he/she decides.

The Group Process is where the leader, who acts as chairperson at a meeting of the group, shares the problem with the group and facilitates efforts of the group to reach consensus on a group decision. The leader gives information and expresses opinion but does not try to “sell” a particular decision or manipulate the group through covert means.

Participatory Decision-Making in Education

According to Owens (2000), participation is defined as the mental and emotional involvement of a person in a group situation that encourages the individual to contribute to group goals and to share responsibility for them. Decision-making as a management function is increasingly being recognised as one of the major responsibilities of all administrations (Chapman, 1990). House (1968) sees decision-making as a concept, has received a lot of inputs from other fields such as Philosophy, Psychology, Economics and others.

According to Mazrui (1978), academic decision-making is synonymous with academic democracy, which is the right to participate. Crane (1976) defines participatory decision-making as “a management approach, which allows and encourages subordinates to participate in decisions that will affect them”. Alluto and Belasco (1976) argue that participative management is an organisational operation by which decisions are reached through the inclusion of those persons who are to execute those decisions.

Ejiogu (1987) suggests that such participation should not only concentrate on the “involvement of the hand but more importantly, the involvement of the mind, the heart and the head”. Ejiogu goes further that participation should therefore be physical and psychological in operation. Herzberg (1987) accepts that extrinsic motivators are not enduring. He calls for job enrichment programmes like genuine participation of subordinates in the decision-making process. Short and Greer (1977) revealed that leaders who fail to motivate workers by involving them in decision-making process think of being held

responsible should something go wrong. "There is also absence of feelings of worth and value, of importance". In some submissions, emphasis is on workers in organisations and institutions and not students, but they have relevance to this study. In a study conducted by Short and Greer (1977), it was strongly proposed that institutions must not "regard students as product but as workers with a vested interest in the learning experiences in which they participate at school." If students are considered as workers, academic democracy will be promoted thereby leading to smooth implementation of management decisions. Short and Greer (1977) point out that a pseudo-democratic leadership can lead to many disadvantages, ranging from apathy to open hostility.

Argyris (1964) notes that when subordinate involvement is limited, the following may occur, subordinate may;

- a) withdraw through chronic absenteeism.
- b) stay on the job but withdraw psychologically, becoming indifferent, passive and apathetic
- c) form group to address the power imbalance

Musaazi (1982) further notes that non-participation of subordinates in institutional decision-making kills "initiative among students and frequently leads to school riots and strikes" (p.63).

Modes of Decision-Making Existing in the Education System

A review of the literature clearly indicates different views on the modes as of types of decision-making that can be utilized in educational settings. Decision-

making mode could be considered as the system adopted by an organisation in arriving at decisions Asare-Bediako (1990). Asare-Bediako discovered five types or modes that a group can use in making decisions. According to him, the first mode is "decision by authority", which is about a situation where an individual in authority makes decisions for the group. Gorton (1980) backs it by giving the assumptions below for this type of decision-making:

1. The administrator has arrived at the best decision for the situation.
2. There is the possibility of someone else coming out with a better alternative. "Decision by majority" is the second type which refers to the approach where the group members feel at ease to express their views on issues and finally welcome as decision. The third type is the "decision by minority" which is description of an occasion where a single person or a small group takes a decision on behalf of a larger group. The fourth mode is "decision by unanimity" this is a situation where every group member agrees with the decision. The last mode is "consensus decision-making", which is the approach where there are so many deliberations and discussions to enable members come out clearly and support the idea.

Musaazi (1982) identifies four modes as follows;

1. Face-to-face discussion of problems by the school head and teachers. The head takes the final decision. This mode is used to create awareness in teachers of a particular problem.

2. The school head throws a problem to the teachers and collects information from them. He then goes further to take the final decision. The purpose is to ensure that teachers accept the final decision of the head.

3. The third mode described as “democratic” involves a process where the school head presents a problem to the staff.

He then guides them to give suggestions, reactions and ideas. The head goes on to make a decision, which reflects the opinion of the participants.

4. The fourth mode, also described as “parliamentary” utilises debates on relevant issues of a problem. This mode makes room for minority opinions. A decision is made after voting on issues raised just as happens in parliament.

Peprah-Mensah (2000), in analysing a study by Piper (1974), where 82 graduate students in Education at the University of Dakota in “Moonshot” task-oriented decision-making exercise. Participants playing the role of astronauts who had crash landed on the moon, were requested to rank in order of importance 15 items of equipment which might help them to get to the mothership 200 miles away. Respondents did the exercise individually and in groups of threes and fives. Decisions made by individuals acting alone were compared with those made in groups. This was done to determine which process produced the best decisions. It was observed that those that used consensus process model or participative

decision-making model, had more “correct” decisions on the assigned task than the same individuals deciding alone.

Models in Decision-Making

Okumbe (1998) postulates three models which have been designed to describe theoretically and realistically how practicing managers make individual decisions. These are:

1. Econologic or rational or classical;
2. Bounded or administrative man and
3. The retrospective decision-making models

These models are also applied in group or participatory decision-making.

The Econologic (Rational or Classical)

The Econologic model represents the earliest attempt to formulate a decision-making model. According to this model, the decision maker is perfectly and completely rational in all ways. By being rational the decision maker is using the decision strictly as a means to an end. This model assumes that people are economically rational and that they attempt to maximize outcomes in an orderly and sequential process. It is assumed that people search for the most rational decision in a well-calculated and systematic fashion. The model has also been referred to as the economic man model.

Table 1

Steps in the Econologic Decision-making process

Steps	Content
Step 1	Continuous monitoring of the decision environment
Step 2	Defining the problem
Step 3	Analysing the problem
Step 4	Developing alternatives and their consequences
Step 5	Choosing desired solutions
Step 6	Implementing the chosen alternative solution
Step 7	Evaluating the effectiveness of the decision

Source: Okumbe (1998) p. 150.

The Bounded Rationality Model

The bounded rationality model or the administrative man model was presented by Simon (1960) as a more realistic alternative to the econologic model. The basic assumption in this model is that while people seek the best solution, they usually settle for much less because the decisions they confront typically demand greater information processing capabilities than they possess. People look for a kind of limited rationality in decisions.

The bounded rationality concept tries to describe the decision-making process in three ways. The first way is by using sequential attention to alternative solutions. In this case, people examine possible solutions to the problem one had at a time instead of identifying all possible solutions to the problem and selecting the best as suggested by the econologic model. The various alternatives are

identified and evaluated individually. Possible solutions to a problem are tested one after the other, the previous one being discarded until an acceptable solution is achieved. The second way is by using heuristics. A heuristic is a rule that guides the search for alternatives into areas that have a high probability for yielding satisfactory solution. The heuristics are used in order to reduce the magnitude of the problem for a speedy decision-making. The third way is by applying the concept of "satisfying". In this case, the decision maker attempts to look for the alternative, which is satisfactory or "good enough".

The Retrospective Decision Model

The retrospective decision model deals with non-programmed decisions. It is based on the theory of cognitive dissonance. The decision maker attempts to rationalise his or her choice on a retrospective basis. The steps involved in retrospective decision-making are:

1. Goals are set
2. Implicit favourable alternative is identified
3. Implicitly rejected alternatives are compared and ranked
4. A confirmation of other alternative, which is the second best alternative, is made.
5. Decision rule or criterion is established to demonstrate that the implicit favourite is superior to the confirmation alternative.
6. Decision is announced
7. Decision is implemented

Adesina (1990) described a general model of decision-making in the following eight steps:

1. Recognise, define and limit the problem
2. Analyse and evaluate the problem
3. Establish criteria or standards by which a solution will be evaluated or judged as acceptable and adequate to the need
4. Collect data on the positive and negative sides of the proposed decision
5. Formulate and select the preferred decision or decisions
6. Test the referred decision
7. Implement the decision
8. Continual evaluation

Ukeje (1992) and Hoy and Miskel (1982) had categorised the decision-making process into five steps. These are:

1. Recognise and define the problem: At this stage, administrators often define problems narrowly and quickly and so restricting their options. Problems must be defined according to their magnitude. If they are too complex, they can be broken down into sub problems with each sub-problem circled through the decision-making process.
2. Analyse the difficulties in the existing situation: This stage calls for classification of the problem whether it is unique or a new manifestation of a typical difficulty for which a pattern of action has already been developed. Decision makers are free to explore all ideas that are relevant to the problem. The administrator then collects data depending on the importance of the

problem, when? To what extent? Answers to these questions should provide information to map the parameters of the problem.

3. Establish the criteria for problem resolution: After the problem has been analysed and specified, the decision maker must decide what constitutes an acceptable solution. What are the minimum objectives that are to be achieved? What are the musts compared to the wants? It is not usual for the perfect solution in terms of outcomes to be unfeasible. What are the criteria for a satisfactory decision? At this point the decision maker may try to rank possible outcomes along a continuum from minimally satisfying to maximally satisfying. Criteria of adequacy must be specified so that the decision is being made. The criteria used to judge the decision should be consistent with the organisation's mission.
4. Develop a plan or strategy for action: After recognising a problem, collecting data and specifying the problem, the decision maker develops a systematic plan of action. The process involves specifying alternatives, predicting consequences and deliberating and selecting the alternatives for action.
5. Initiate the plan of action: This is the implementation stage and the final element in the decision-making cycle. This requires four steps, programming, communicating, monitoring and appraising.

In organisations, most decisions should be made through a participatory approach whereby individuals or groups are involved in the decision-making process.

Benefits of Participatory Decision-Making to Organisational Decision-Making

In a study conducted by Atakpa and Ankomah (1998) on the state of school management in Ghana, schools that were labelled effective according to their constructs included those whose heads “involved the teachers and students in the administration of their schools.” (p.3).

Sackney, *et al* (1998) report in their study that teachers in successful schools felt empowered and were more satisfied with outcomes that were decided by all staff. They felt ownership of the decision and found group decisions were more long lasting. The use of participatory decision modes, among other benefits, increased commitment and higher level of contentment.

Benefits of Participatory Decision-Making to the Subordinate

According to Arikewuyo (1986), in every organisation, the involvement of its members in administration and management is very essential to the achievement of its goals and objectives. As has been emphasised earlier, the democratisation of the administrative machinery is very crucial to effective management.

In a survey conducted by Johnson (1991) among San Francisco principals of schools, it was discovered that collective work structures enabled workers to develop their professional competence. Aseidu-Akrofi, (1978) also points out that subordinate involvement in organisational decision-making is a means to “release their potentials.” (p.132). Sergiovanni, (1989) also points out that subordinate participation in administration is seen as a motivational tool that increases

employee satisfaction, commitment and confidence in the organisation. Patchen (1970), observes that it takes the participation of those who form part of an organisational membership to enhance its smooth management.

In a study conducted by Lansdown (2001) on the topic "Youth Participation in Decision-making", he identified six positive benefits that could be derived when the youth participates in decisions-making.

Firstly, he said it leads to better decisions and outcomes. He asserts the young people are faced with numerous difficulties all over the world. This includes illiteracy, poverty, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, discrimination and forced engagement in armed conflict, unemployment and insecurity at work. These concerns need to be addressed by effective strategies for their resolution. Young people have a body of experience and knowledge, which are unique to their situation. They have views and ideas, which are derived from that experience. They are social actors with skill capacities to bring constructive resolutions to their own situation. Lansdown (2001) explained that young people are not recognised to have legitimacy to contribute to programmes, policies and decision-making. In his view, much of government policy impacts directly or indirectly on young people's lives. Yet it is developed and delivered largely in ignorance of how it will affect the day-to-day lives of young people, their present and future well being.

The second benefit according to him, promotes the well-being and development of young people. He said it is through learning to question, to express views and have opinions taken serious, that young people develop skills,

build competencies, acquire confidence and form aspirations. The more opportunities for meaningful participation, the more experienced and competent the young person becomes. Sen and Knopf (1999) argued that development is a process of expanding the real freedoms people enjoy. The goal of development thus the attainment of health, education and economic growth is to enable people to choose and live the lives they want. Thus a developed community is one, which allows its people to decision making participate.

Another benefit identified by Lansdown (2001) is that youth participation in decision-making strengthens a commitment to and understanding of human rights and democracy. He argued that in both well-established and newly formed democracies there is a need for young people to experience the implications of democratic decision-making and respect for human rights. He pointed out that young people need opportunities to learn what their rights and duties are, how their freedom is limited by the rights and freedoms of others and how their actions can affect the rights of others. He went on to argue that, young people need opportunities to participate in democratic decision-making processes within school and within local communities, and learn to abide by subsequent decisions that are made.

Lansdown (2001) also believed that participation in decision-making would better protect young people. By convention, adults must provide protection for young people. Yet, Lansdown (2001) contended that many young people are denied access to information vital for their well-being. He said a survey of young people undertaken by UNICEF in East Asia and the Pacific revealed that 55%

claim to know nothing about equal relationships, 34% were completely ignorant about HIV/AIDS and 42% in Central Asia, and 69% in South-East Europe claimed to have little or no information about preventing drug abuse.

These findings cited by Lansdown (2001) reflect the view, widespread in many societies, that withholding information from young people, for example, about sex will prevent them from becoming sexually active. However, there is increasing evidence that access to sensitive, non-judgmental information on sexual and reproductive health is essential for the protection of young people and that it does not lead to earlier sexual activity. He further went on to say that with the acute risks associated with HIV/AIDS, denying young people access to such information can lead to loss of life, illness, cessation of educational and employment opportunities and other serious infringements of human rights. Also, engaging young people in the development of strategies to promote sexual health means that their unique understanding of youth perspectives can be incorporated to help achieve more innovative approaches and effective outcomes.

Lansdown (2001) further argued that, the silence that has accompanied sexual abuse within families has served to protect the abuser. Where young people are entitled to challenge what is happening to them and mechanisms through which to do so are established, such violations of rights are far more easily exposed. On the other hand young people who are denied the right to express their views, and taught to be submissive and acquiescent, are more pliable and vulnerable to adult abuse. In Lansdown's view, violence against young people in prisons, abuse in foster homes, racism in schools, misrepresentation of

young people in the media can only be tackled effectively if young people have a voice and can enlist the support of adults with the authority to take appropriate action. He emphasised that young people need to become protagonists in the realisation of their rights.

The other benefit, according to Lansdown (2001) is that young people want to participate. He said that whenever given the opportunity, young people consistently assert their desire for the right to participate to be respected more widely. According to him, this was expressed powerfully in the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy in 2001 at which the participants called upon governments, the UN system and civil society organisations to support young people in their endeavours to obtain the resources for extensive and comprehensive youth empowerment programmes.

The youth participating in meeting on a youth policy in Europe in 2000, also declared their interest in seeing participation transcend all levels of society, whereas, at that time they felt that existing mechanisms were inadequate, inaccessible or purely symbolic. They identified participation as the first of five key targets for politician action and elaborated their expectations in terms of better access to information, improved citizenship education, systematic consultation by governments and the European Union institutions, and regular opportunities for European meetings.

Lansdown (2001) also said that it is a fundamental human right. In this regard Lansdown argued that all people, including young people, have a right to express their views when decisions that directly affect their lives are being made.

Whether it is an issue relating to the rules imposed at school, legislation on the minimum age for full time work, representation of young people in the media or priorities in public expenditure, young people are entitled to articulate their concerns, participate in the development of policy and be taken seriously. Participation represents a means for young people to advocate for their own cause and transform.

Zuo and Ratsoy (1999) found that students' involvement in university governance helps them in their future carriers. Student involvement helps them to understand the university operations, university – community relationships, and university-government relationships. Furthermore, Zuo and Ratsoy (1999) found out that students' as clients of academic and other services on campus provided important feedback. Including their concerns and options, which helped administrators improve the quality of the decisions. Moreover, they found out that as members of the academic community, they have a responsibility to ensure that the academic programmes are appropriately delivered.

According to Kaba and Barker (2001), many theorists have written about the educative and integrative functions of student participation (McGrath, 1970, Ryan, 1976; Ford, 1971). Those who emphasise the educative and integrative functions of participation have an underlying assumption that it alters consciousness in some way that can be beneficial to a democratic society.

Schmerler (1977) suggested that there are four categories of arguments offered by proponents of such educational decision-making. They are morale reason, moral reason, decisional reason and educational reason. McGrath (1970)

offers the best articulation of the moral reason for student involvement in governance. He writes that the most compelling reason for student participation rests in the generally accepted political proposition that in free societies all those affected by a social policy have an inalienable right to a voice in its formulation. Johnson (1991) advanced a moral argument for encouraging student involvement. He believes that such input create among students a sense of ownership and engagement with the school. Stevenson (2001) in his study stated that decentralisation of decision-making promotes greater ownership, morale and commitment among stakeholders. He further stated that decisions made at the local level are likely to be more responsive to the specific school contexts (Rietzing and Cross, 1995).

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) confirmed this argument when he said: "When students are encouraged to take part in the administration of the school, they learn to cultivate democratic attitudes, right attitudes to work, a sense of belonging to both the school and the society. They also learn to be self-directing, responsible and law-abiding." (p. 150). He further said that, the school also sets a platform for sounding student opinion on matters that affect their welfare.

The decisional argument for including students on decision-making bodies is that they have special information and expertise not available to faculty and administrators and which would not be represented if students were not included in deliberations. Webber (1974) confirmed this argument and said that students have something to offer that cannot be offered by any other group in the educational system. He added that students have knowledge, perceptions and

opinion that can only be held by someone who is the recipient, the consumer, and the purpose of the educational process.

According to Kaba and Baker (2001) the educational reason for student participation rests on the premise that one of the main goals of schools has been to educate students for citizenship and democratic living. Northington (1979) states that, in order for young people to learn the democratic process, they must be given every opportunity while in school to be participants in a democratic sitting where they are directly involved in making those decisions which affect them most.

Starkweather (1975) concurred with Northington's assessment and in turn suggests that students would be better able to move from the role of high school students to the role of citizen if they experienced optimum decision making while in secondary school. Ryan (1976) supported students' involvement in school governance when he said that, in involving students in school governance allows for decisions to be viewed as more legitimate by the student body. Other supporters believe that student involvement would improve the quality of educational decisions and policies, diminish student dissent and unrest, give legitimacy to schools and create better citizens. All of these outcomes purportedly foster a sense of equality between students and authority figures. Ryan (1976) further said that being able to participate in decision-making that matters is equivalent to being treated as an equal, something to which everyone of us especially young people is exceedingly sensitive.

Several researchers have shown the value of participatory decision-making in work places and the results were that at work places. Their studies have

revealed that there were higher productivity at work places where subordinates were involved in decision making, than work places where subordinates were left out of the decision making process (Coch & French, 1948; French & Joachim, 1960; Marchington & Wilkkinson, 1994; Miller & Monge, 1986; Patchen, 1970). Regarding students' attitudes toward participation, Ford (1971), Marchbanks (1974) and Northington (1972) found out that students always feel that they should have a role in decision-making and governance.

Kaba and Baker (2001), Mcpartland and McDill (1971) examined the effect of student participation on general school climate and reported a weak relationship between the perceived satisfaction of 3450 students and their participation in rule making. The study found that where students were most satisfied with participation and the resulting rules, there was less truancy and vandalism. Based on his work as a consultant at fourteen high schools, Furtwengler (1985) reported that student involvement was a key to the success of any school. He suggested that when schools treat students more as members of the school organisation than as clients, some of the outcomes included reductions in suspensions, in disciplinary referrals, and in the number of classes cut, as well as an increase in average daily attendance. Anderson (1985) reported that studies have shown that when students are given significant role in decision-making, the school climate improves. She cited other examples like improvements in communication, greater acceptance by students of school norms, greater student satisfaction.

On the other hand, others have found that student participation in decision making does not have any effect on academic achievement. Conway (1984) found out that when students are actively involved in decisions about the instructional process, their attitudes towards school may be more positive, but test performance does not appear to be affected.

Kelly (2003) found out that when students are included in decision making they are skilled in authentic discussion processes, thus class council provides a venue for students to authentically engage in all roles for life-long learning community contributor, designer and creator, active investigator and reflective and self-directed learner.

A study conducted by Ardichivili and Wantling (2003) showed that one of the chief reasons why practicing communities are efficient tools for knowledge generation and sharing is the fact that most of the firm's competitive advantage is embedded in the intangible knowledge of its people, and that competencies do not exist apart from the people who have them. Dougherty (1985) reached a similar conclusion. This means that individual people have knowledge and experience, which they could share with others. In doing so good decisions are made, thus enhancing the progress of the community.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) made a case for the intellectual development of the youth where they are allowed to take part in decision-making. He argues that student participation makes the youth learn to exercise their sense of critical judgment because they learn to speak with the authority of knowledge because they are able to make inquiries and point out mistakes and errors.

According to Owens (2000), participating in decision-making enables the organisation to arrive at a better decision. Secondly, it enhances the growth and development of the organisation's participants. There is greater sharing of goals, improved communication and better developed group process skills.

Okumbe (1998) shares the same view with Owens (2000) that in group a lot of knowledge and facts can be gathered, more alternatives could be considered and therefore a better decision could be taken. Subordinates become more satisfied with the decisions they have collectively made and they support it enthusiastically. When this happens, one benefit the organisation derives is the achievement, expertise and problem solving skills are available which need to be utilised.

A study was conducted by Coch and French (1948) confirmed positive outcomes of participation. A Ghanaian study by Atakpa and Ankomah (1998) on the state of school management in Ghana also clouded that schools which were labelled effective have the head teachers involving the teachers and pupils in the administration of the schools.

Peterson and Solsrud (1993) and Terry (1993) found that the successful redistribution of power associated with school restructuring tends to foster greater faculty commitment to the school but may also foster greater conflict. Rinehart (1994) observed a positive relationship between faculty empowerment and functional forms of conflict based on open disclosure of values and beliefs. A study conducted by Blasé and Blasé (1999) supported this when the principals they interviewed were acutely aware of the potential benefits of conflict, they

understood that conflict was a normal part of group development and was a healthy aspect of problem solving (Glickman, 1990) studies conducted by other researchers suggest that there is a strong link between participatory decision-making and subordinate commitment to the decisions made through the use of this mode (Asare-Bediako, 1990; Agyris, 1964). Similarly, Sackney et al., (1998) reported that teachers in successful schools felt empowered and were more satisfied with outcomes that were decided by all staff. They found that group decisions were more lasting. Participatory decision-making increased commitment and a higher level of contentment.

Implications of Participatory Decision-Making for the Management of Tertiary Educational Institutions in Ghana

Atakpa and Ankomah, (1998) observe that there is the general agreement that effective institutional management is enhanced by active participation by subordinates. CAFA (1994) points out that students' active involvement in institutional decision-making enables them to learn better ways of handling differences in opinions. Students are noted for taking militant actions against authority for reasons of "non-consultation" Active participation of students in institutional decision-making provides an effective tool for training for future living. A call for this training has been stressed upon from various scholars.

Opportunities that can promote training for such empowerment according to Short and Greer (1997) include:

- a) Developing students' problem-solving skills.
- b) Giving students a stake in the success of the organisation.

- c) Developing students' self-evaluative skills and opportunities for engaging in self-assessment.
- d) Developing student academic skills.

Short and Greer (1997) further say as all members of the organisation get involved in decision-making, cohesion within the organisation is facilitated, leading to the achievement of set goals and objectives.

Summary

The literature review treats particular aspects of decision-making. The review in the first place deals with the concept of decision-making. The ideas of authors like Argyris (1964), Owens (2000) and Musaaazi (1982) are reviewed. They consider the concept of decision-making to be a process whereby alternative ways of determining a course of action following more or less deliberate considerations of often competing alternatives.

The two concepts, participation and decisions-making, when put together shows that all units in an organisation must as a matter of fact be involved in the decision making to ensure the achievement of goals successfully. Owens 2000 reviews participation as the mental and emotional involvement of a person in a group situation that encourages the individual to contribute to group goals and to share responsibilities for them.

In a school set up, student agitation in a militancy manner reduces and paves way for conducive atmosphere when allowed to get involved in decision-making. The old concept of "bureaucratic-authocratic" administration is giving way to participatory decision-making. Ukeje (1992), Simon (1960) and Musaaazi

(1982) note that when subordinates' involvement is limited, withdrawal through chronic absenteeism, stay on the job but withdraw psychologically, becoming indifferent, passive and apathetic and resist restructuring output, deception or sabotage would occur.

Indications mostly are that positive gains can be realised from students' participation in institutional decision-making by bringing to the fore, the possible concerns. Arikewuyo (1986), Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) and Sergiovanni (1989) are reviewed. Subordinate participation in organisational decision-making is a means to release their potential. Also, such subordinate participation in administration is seen as a motivational tool that increases employee satisfaction, commitment and confidence in the organisation.

Atakpa and Ankomah (1998) and Short and Greer (1997), share the view that the active involvement of all sectors of an organisation has positive implication for the achievement of its goals. In addition, when subordinates are party to decision-making, they gain citizenship skills, an understanding of organisational target and become more committed to the goals and objectives. Within the university setting, students gain training for future living as they learn to express their views on issues through the use of socially acceptable methods. Students' unrest becomes minimised, thereby promoting a conducive atmosphere for all sectors of the community to live in harmony.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the various procedures that were followed to obtain research data. This involves the research design, the population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, pre-testing of instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis plan.

Research Design

The design employed for the study was descriptive sample survey. The research was specifically conducted by using descriptive survey design to find out the characteristics and opinions of respondents on the current level of students participation in University decision-making. The descriptive research is concerned with the conditions or relationships that exist such as determining the nature of prevailing conditions, practices and attitudes, opinion that are held, processes that are going on, trends that are developed. This design was used for the study because it helps in discovering the real state of affairs or events as they are on the ground in the case of the study.

According to Gay (1987) descriptive survey involves a collection of data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the problem being handled. The design was employed because it provides useful information from a large sample of individuals (Frankel and Wallen, 1993). The design was considered appropriate because facts on the ground could be

discovered and conditions that exist at a particular point in time could be seen and commented upon. The advantage for this design is that it helps to find views as they are in their natural setting. The assessment of the situation was through serving questionnaire to students and administrators in the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

The design however has a few weaknesses of which the researcher must be aware and try to reduce its magnitude. Some of the questions which may not be understood by the respondents would let them give answers that may not be expected by the researcher. Another problem is the likelihood for respondents to state something which is convenient to them. Such expected problems were kept down by resorting to the following measures: The researcher had to undertake pre-testing of instrument to help come out with questions that might be well understood by the respondents and had them reworded. Secondly, the researcher had to check if some respondents stated something which they did not know or were not sure of by carrying out informal interviews or checking other groups' opinion.

Population

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993), a population is the group to which the result of the study is intended to apply. The population is a large group of people who exhibit characteristics that stimulate research work. The target population comprised all students and administrators at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). KNUST Basic Statistics (2006) indicates 18,000 students, 1150 academic staff and 1544 non-teaching staff.

The University is located in the South-Western part of Ashanti Region, surrounded by seven suburbs namely, Ayigya, Ahinsan, Bomso, Ayeduase, Gyinyase, Boadi and Kentinkrono of Kumasi metropolis. According to the Basic Statistics (2006), there are six colleges namely: College of Art and Social Sciences, College of Architecture and Planning, College of Engineering, College of Science, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and College of Health Sciences. In all, College of Art and Social Sciences had the largest enrolment and College of Agriculture and Natural Resources had the least.

The accessible population comprised the entire students in the colleges, academic staff and non-academic staff at KNUST. According to Ary (1985), the accessible population is the group from which the researcher takes the sample for the study (P.139). The accessible population includes students, deans, directors, heads of departments, hall masters and wardens and registrars.

Sample

According to Agyedu (1999), the process of sampling makes it possible to limit a study to a relatively small portion of the population. A sample is thus a subset of the population and consists of representative group of individuals, objects or events that form the population of the study. Since it was not possible to deal with the whole of the target population due to access, effort was made to sample a reasonable number of people, which gave a representation for the research. A sample size of 150 respondents, made up of 120 students and 30 administrators was chosen for the study.

Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling technique was adopted by using 20 students from each college with the application of a lottery method. In this method, 40 pieces of paper were put in a bowl, shook thoroughly after every handpicking and those students who picked from 1 to 20 formed the sample. This was applied to all the colleges and 120 students were chosen for the study. Simple random sampling was used to give everyone equal chance to have his or her view collected. Gay, (1987) says that sampling technique is used because it guarantees desired representation of the relevant sub-groups.

Purposive sampling was also used to select the 30 administrators because they had the needed information. According to Neuman (2000), in Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007), purposive sampling is a form of sampling often used when working with very small samples such as in case study research and wish to select cases that are particularly informative. In all, 150 respondents formed the sample for the study.

Instruments for Data Collection

Two sets of questionnaire were designed to collect data from students and administrators. Gay (1987), states that descriptive research is usually conducted by administering questionnaire. The questionnaires comprised four sections: Section A dealt with a set of items designed to elicit information on the views of students and administrators concerning the present status of student involvement in decision-making at KNUST. Section B covered items which enabled the researcher to assess the benefits of students' involvement in University decision-

making to the University management. Section C of the research instrument looked out for factors that impede student involvement in university decision-making. Section D sought to elicit information on factors that can enhance the current level of student involvement in University decision-making. See appendices BI and BII for a copy each of the Questionnaire.

Pre-Testing of the Instrument

According to Agyedu (1999) "prior to using any instrument, its validity and reliability need to be assessed to determine its accuracy and consistency" (p.66). To enable the researcher test the usability of the questionnaires, pre-testing of the instrument was conducted. Twenty copies of the questionnaires were pre-tested, using staff of the Registrar's Department, some postgraduate and undergraduate students of KNUST. The results obtained made the researcher modify some of the items on the questionnaire which were ambiguous and also deleted the repetitions. For example, with reference from the questionnaire number 1(a), level of student involvement in the 'university policy formulation' was identified to be too global. Researcher was however made to modify it to the level of student involvement in the 'university policy formulation at the administrative level'. This enabled the researcher come out with the final instrument for easy response.

Data Collection Procedure

Copies of the questionnaire were personally hand delivered to respondents who were given two weeks to respond. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, an introductory letter had been collected from the Director of

IEPA, University of Cape Coast, to the Registrar, KNUST who then gave permission for the exercise to be carried out.

Table 2 gives the details of the number of questionnaires sent out and retrieved.

Table 2

Distribution of Questionnaires Sent Out and Returned

Respondents	Questionnaires	Questionnaires	Percentage
	Sent out	Retrieved	Returned
Students	120	108	90.0%
Administrators	30	28	93.3%
Total	150	136	91%

As shown in Table 2, 120 copies of questionnaire administered to students had 108 returned indicating 90% of the retrieval rate. On the part of the administrators, 30 questionnaires were issued out and 28 retrieved, indicating 93% of the return rate. In sum, out of the 150 questionnaires administered, 136 were retrieved indicating roughly 91% of the returned rate.

Collection of data from students and the non-teaching personnel in administration was fairly easy. Academic personnel in administration however, had to be contacted several times extending the collection period for the data beyond the originally planned time. In sum, the percentage retrieval was about 91%.

This procedure involves a lot of movement from one place to another by the researcher. The researcher had to explain the questions to the respondents thoroughly after copies of the questionnaire had been given to the selected students and administrators. The purpose of this was to help the respondents to understand the content of the questionnaire, do away with ambiguities, suspicions, partialities and so be able to provide their independent opinions on the questionnaire items given them. Rapport was established between researcher and the respondents throughout the distribution and collection periods.

Data Analysis Plan

The collected data were statistically analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS). Representations like tables were used to ensure easy and quick interpretation. Data from the completed questionnaire were checked for consistency. The open-ended items were grouped based on the responses given by the respondents. The items were coded using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics indicating frequencies and percentages were used to present the results in tabular form.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis and discussion of the survey research on decision-making. Questionnaire was used to gather information from 136 respondents, made up of 108 students and 28 administrators at KNUST, Kumasi. Frequencies and percentages were used to interpret data. The aim of the study was to determine the level of student involvement in the decision-making at KNUST. This chapter is discussed under four sections based on the research questions.

They are:

1. Level of Involvement in Decision-Making
2. Benefits of Decision-Making
3. Factors That Impede Student Involvement in Decision-Making
4. Factors That Can Enhance Decision-Making
- 5.

Level of involvement in Decision-Making at KNUST

In this section, the researcher tried to analyse the level of student participation in decision-making processes at KNUST. This is an effort to answer Research Question one which states: 'what are the present levels of student involvement in university decision-making'?

Areas of student involvement in decision-making include:

- (a) Financial Management Area
- (b) Academic Affairs
- (c) Managerial Affairs

Student Involvement in University Financial Management

According to (Okumbe, 1998), financial management in education concerns the cost of education, sources of income to meet educational cost and the spending of the income in a judicious manner in order to achieve educational objective. The researcher found it explicit to investigate students' increasing agitation to be involved in financial decision-making. Tables 3(a) and (b) indicate the perceptions of the respondents on the current status of student involvement in University financial decision-making. Questionnaire 1 items (i) and (j) was used to obtain the information needed.

Table 3(a)

Present Level of Student Involvement in University Financial Management

Financial Management Area	High S N %	Low S N %	No Involvement S N %	Total N %
Academic				
User fees	9(8.3)	55(51.0)	44(40.7)	108(100)
Residential				
user fees	8(7.4)	58(53.7)	42(38.9)	108 (100)

Key

N - Frequency

S - Students

% - Percentages in parenthesis

Table 3(b)

Present Level of Student Involvement in University Financial Management

Financial Management Area	High A N %	Low A N %	No Involvement A N %	Total N %
Academic				
User fees	7(25.0)	19(67.9)	2(7.1)	28(100)
Residential				
user fees	10(35.7)	16(57.2)	2(7.1)	28 (100)

Key

N - Frequency

% - Percentages in parenthesis A - Administrators

Tables 3(a) and (b) show that respondents accept generally those students at KNUST have little or no involvement in financial management. Majority of the students indicated that they had low involvement in the financial management with an average indication of 55 or 51.0% as against 19 or 67.9% administrators in Academic User Fees. Furthermore, 58 or 53.7% of students indicated that they had low involvement while 16 or 57.1% showed low involvement in decision on Residential User Fees. The attitude of University authorities failing to involve students in policy formulation and review, particularly policies in line with finance has often led to "campus unrest."

Antwi (1992), reports of various instances where students in Ghanaian universities have clashed with some police over financial issues. The year 1999 witnessed several rampant confrontations between students on one hand and university authorities and the government on the other. A case in point was the agitation dubbed, the "Moborowa Struggle" (Needy Students Struggle) by Ghanaian university students, where there was the usual struggle over attempt by the university authorities to increase student contribution in the cost sharing of Ghana university provision. These acts of incidence are indicators that it is about time university authorities and students alike found more constructive ways of coming into compromise as to how to effectively mobilise students in their participation for effective university financial management.

Academic Affairs Management Decisions

The researcher delved into the level of student participation in academic affairs management area. In question 1 of the questionnaire items e, f, g and h were used to obtain the information needed. The detailed information is portrayed in Tables 4(a) and (b).

Table 4(a)

**Respondents' (Students) Views on the Present Level of Student Involvement
in Academic Management Decisions**

Academic Management Area	High S N %	Low S N %	No involvement S N %	Total N %
Development of Curriculum	9(8.4)	46(42.6)	53(49.0)	108 (100)
Assessment of Personnel	25(23.2)	52(48.1)	31(28.7)	108 (100)
Teaching learning Materials	10(9.3)	68(62.9)	30(27.8)	108 (100)
Grading and Certification	0 (0)	2(1.8)	106(98.2)	108 (100)

Key

N - Frequency

% - Percentages in parenthesis

A - Administrators

Table 4(b)**Respondents' (Administrators) Views on the Present Level of Student Involvement in Academic Management Decisions**

Academic Management Area	High A N %	Low A N %	No involvement A N %	Total N %
Development of Curriculum	0(0)	15(53.6)	13(46.4)	28 (100)
Assessment of Personnel	17(60.7)	8(28.6)	3(10.7)	28(100)
Teaching learning Materials	8(28.7)	15(53.7)	5(17.6)	28(100)
Grading and Certification	1(3.6)	7(25.0)	20(71.4)	28 (100)

Key

N - Frequency

% - Percentages in parenthesis A - Administrators

On the question of curricular issues, students showed 46 or 42.6% and 53 or 49.0% indicating low and no involvement in decision-making respectively, while administrators showed 15 or 53.6 and 13 or 46.4% of student involvement in decision-making in curriculum development respectively. This supports Adesina's (1980) postulate that, "the task of curriculum is one of the basic

responsibilities of those who manage the educational enterprise” (p.158). It means that students per se do not have much hand in the development of curriculum.

On the issue of assessment of personnel, the Planning Unit, KNUST has instituted a policy of quality control where students are made to assess the performance of the university staff. In all, 30% indicated high involvement which shows that there is much to be done about that issue. Rebore (1982) submits that staff development is very essential in any institution. Okumbe (1990) also points out that there is the need for upgrading and this is done through assessment.

Regarding teaching-learning materials, respondents showed low involvement in decision-making. Gaidzenwa (1994) states: “It is essential for constituents of the University campus to understand and accept that good governance is better championed through consultation and negotiation rather than coercion. Students and University authorities need to restructure their strategies for problem solving, encouraging all parties to participate in sustained debates and discussions where possible” (P.42).

After the pursuit of a programme, one is awarded with a deserved certificate. Table 4 shows how respondents expressed their views on the issue of grading and certification with regard to 98.2% and 71.4% of students and administrators respectively, indicating no involvement. Students who are offering courses cannot in any way award themselves certificates. This aspect of decision-making is the prerogative of the university administration.

Administrative/Managerial Affairs Decisions

The researcher delved into the level of student participation in managerial area of KNUST. Questionnaire items a, b, c and d in section A of the students' questions 1 were used to obtain the required data. This is an aspect which is in line with the controlling, directing and conducting of the institution in an orderly set up for the attainment of their goals (Chapman, 1990). Tables 5(a) and (b) presents respondents' views.

Table 5(a)

Level of Involvement in the Administrative Decision				
Level of Participation	High S N %	Low S N %	No Involvement S N %	Total N %
Policy formulation at the Administrative level	10(9.3)	34(31.4)	64(59.3)	108(100)
Student Discipline	25(23.1)	57(52.8)	26(24.1)	108(100)
Student Welfare	22(20.3)	65(60.2)	21(19.5)	108(100)
Hall Administration	21(19.4)	54(50.0)	33(30.6)	108(100)

Key

N - Frequency

% - Percentages in parenthesis

S - Students

Table 5(b)

Level of Involvement in the Administrative Decision				
Level of Participation	High A N %	Low A N %	No Involvement A N %	Total N %
Policy formulation at the Administrative level	7(25.0)	18(64.3)	3(10.7)	28(100)
Student Discipline	12(42.9)	15(53.5)	1(3.6)	28(100)
Student Welfare	22(78.6)	5(17.8)	1(3.6)	28(100)
Hall Administration	20(71.5)	6(21.4)	2(7.1)	28(100)

Key

N - Frequency

% - Percentages in parenthesis A - Administrators

Tables 5(a) and (b) show the ill – feeling that students have about the present involvement in managerial decision-making. More than half of the respondents, students and administrators 57 or 52.8% and 15 or 58% respectively, indicated low involvement in decision-making on the areas of student discipline, student welfare and hall administration provided. A surprising observation that comes is respondents' indication for student low involvement for student discipline and student welfare. Students however have their democratic right to take decisions on matters that affect them. Such matters relate to their welfare and discipline. According to Mazrui (1978), academic decision-making is synonymous with

academic democracy, which is the right to participate. This observation suggests that the general student body feels alienated from their student leaders and administrators. Under the hall administration and policy formulation at the administrative level, majority 65 or 60.2% of the students indicated low but administrators surprisingly indicated high involvement. The observation made in the analysis of section A provides an answer to research question one.

Benefits of Student Participation in University Decision-Making to General Management

In this section, aspects such as opportunity for training students in parliamentary behaviour, improvement of student commitment, healthy relationship between student and other sectors of the university, elimination of student unrest and facilitation of smooth management activities are analysed and discussed. The objective here is to try and answer research question 2 which states: 'what benefit does student participation in decision-making at the university have on general university management?'

Researches have shown that positive relationship exists between active involvement of students in decision-making and effective organisational management. Those studies confirm that student involvement in decision-making can reduce unrests, improve quality of institutional decision-making and build participants commitment for implementation of decisions (Sergiovanni; Asiedu-Akrofi 1978). Results of respondents' view on the influence of student participation in decision-making on general university management are presented in Tables 6(a) and (b).

Table 6(a)**Respondents' Views on the Benefits of Student Participation in Academic Board (and its committees) Decision-Making to General University Management**

Student Involvement in Decision-making factor	Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total	
	S		S		S		S	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Promotes opportunity for training students in parliamentary behaviour	71	(65.8)	18	(16.6)	19	(17.6)	108	(100)
Improves student's commitment to the programmes of the institution	70	(64.8)	22	(20.4)	16	(14.8)	108	(100)
Promotes healthy relationship between students and other sectors of the University	81	(75.0)	11	(10.2)	16	(14.8)	108	(100)
Enhances quality of decisions inputs that are collated from all sectors of the University	66	(61.1)	24	(22.2)	18	(16.7)	108	(100)
Minimises/eliminates student unrest	65	(62.2)	25	(23.1)	18	(16.7)	108	(100)
Facilitates smooth management activities	65	(60.2)	25	(23.1)	18	(16.7)	108	(100)

Table 6(b)

Respondents' Views on the Benefits of Student Participation in Academic Board (and its committees) Decision-Making to General University Management

Student Involvement in Decision-making factor	Agree A N %	Undecided A N %	Disagree A N %	Total A N %
Promotes opportunity for training students in parliamentary behaviour	13(46.4)	5(17.9)	10(35.7)	28(100)
Improves student's commitment to the programmes of the institution	16(57.1)	9 (32.1)	3(10.8)	28(100)
Promotes healthy relationship between student and other sectors of the University	16 (57.1)	5(17.9)	7(25.0)	28(100)
Enhances quality of decisions inputs that are collated from all sectors of the University	20 (71.4)	4(14.3)	4(14.3)	28(100)
Minimises/eliminates student unrest	22 (78.6)	2 (7.1)	4(14.3)	28(100)
Facilitates smooth management activities	17 (60.7)	7 (25.0)	4(14.3)	28(100)

Tables 6(a) and (b) shows that students demonstrated with an average of 65% and above in all the six suggested items regarding the need for student participation in decision-making at the Academic Board level. Administrators also agree in the majority 17 out of 28 or 60.7 on the average that student participation will improve their commitment to the programmes of the institution and (20%) averagely disagreed. Students on their part agreed that (70%) of the student participation will improve their commitment to the programmes of the institution and (22%) disagreed. This may support the idea of the University democratisation of its administration as proposed by the University Rationalisation Committee (URC) of 1998. According to Greeve (2003), an important feature of organisations is that decisions are often discussed and made by groups rather than individuals. Even when managers make decisions on their own, they are influenced by information and advice from other members of the organisation. Invancevich et al (1994) submit that in most organisations today, a great deal of decision-making is achieved through groups with such names as committees, teams, task forces, and quality circles. This tendency toward group decision-making is due in part to organisations' increased complexity and to the large amount of information needed to make sound decisions.

The promotion of healthy relationship between students and other sectors of the university had a higher number of respondents 81(75.0%) and 16 (57.0%) from students and administrators respectively, indicating a benefit to a large

extent. This is in line with Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) assertion that student participation in decision-making creates good relationship between teachers and students. The responses from the administrators clearly indicate that there is the need to involve students in University administration and that their representation on the University committees is in order. It is quite interesting to note that both groups of respondents showed very low responses for no involvement. The observation made in the analysis of section B provides an answer to research question two.

Factors that Impede Student Participation in University

Decision-Making

The involvement of students in decision-making is indispensable especially in tertiary institutions. Students are therefore represented on certain committees of the institution. In this section however, aspects such as students have fears of intimidation, student busy academic schedules, students lack the knowledge base experiences and students do not have the legal basis for getting involved are analysed and discussed. The objective here is to try and answer the research question 3 which states 'what factors impedes student involvement in decision-making'. Also, the questionnaire relating to the Table 7 below was mainly meant for the students to respond.

Table 7**Factors that impede student participation:**

Impediment	Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Students have fears of intimidation	84	(77.8)	8	(7.4)	16	(14.8)	108	(100)
Students' busy academic schedules do not permit	52	(48.2)	8	(7.4)	48	(44.4)	108	(100)
Students lack the knowledge base experiences	14	(13.0)	10	(9.3)	84	(77.7)	108	(100)
Students do not have any legal basis for getting involved	25	(23.1)	12	(11.1)	71	(65.8)	108	(100)

From the Table 7 above, 84 out of 108 or 77.8% of students who responded indicated that the fear of intimidation and victimisation influence them negatively in their participation in decision-making. Lansdown (2001) is of the view that adults and for that matter administrators have the view that students are not matured enough to contribute meaningfully to discussions. Lansdown says students who are embarrassed in such ways find it very difficult to participate in any discussion and in this way, they are expected to obey rather than to challenge authority; so the youth need to be given a voice. Asiedu-Akrofi (1978) attests to this opinion when he said, "the cultural life of Africa and the introduction of Christian religion upholds the view that children must be seen but not heard" (p.150).

Regarding the second factor, 52 or 48% of the students agreed that students' busy academic schedule do not permit them to participate fully. Interestingly, 48 or 44.4% was on the contrary. On the aspect concerning students lack knowledge base and experiences, students vehemently disagreed through their responses which indicate 84 or 77.7%. However, Zuo and Ratsoy (1999) revealed that some of the factors that impede students' participation in decision-making among others are limited knowledge and experience, immaturity and student apathy. Kaba and Barker (2001) in addition, found that the ability to speak well was being equated to intelligence and thus students who spoke well were taken seriously.

Regarding the issue that students don't have any legal basis to get involved, 71 or 65.8% of the students disagreed. According to Mazrui (1973), the

contradiction is the perpetual tension between academic freedom on one hand and academic democracy on the other. Mazrui (1978) further elaborates both academic freedom and democracy below:

Academic freedom deals with issues such as:

- a) The right to hold and express opinion
- b) The right to teach and be taught without external interference
- c) The right access to academic knowledge

Academic democracy on the other hand centres itself on such issues detailed as:

- d) How widely distributed is the right of participation in decision-making?
- e) How effectively are different interests within the institution represented within the power structure?
- f) How powerful are heads of departments, vice chancellors and administrative executives within the institution?
- g) What influence do students exercise on decision-making?

In sum, academic freedom is seen as a matter of freedom from interference whilst academic democracy rests on the right to participate.

The following however are the general comments from both administrators and students regarding what they consider as impediments to students' participation in decision-making:

Students' Views

Administrators were not willing to welcome students' views during decision-making sessions for various reasons such as:

1. Students sometimes express naïve sentiments during decision-making sessions.
2. Students do not exhibit coherency and preciseness in coming out with thoughts during decision-making sessions;
3. Students' busy academic schedules do not permit active involvement in University decision-making.
4. The fear of intimidation and victimisation from administration during decision-making were expressed sessions by students.

Upon general comments from administrators on what they considered as impediment to students' participation in decision-making at KNUST, through an open ended questionnaire, the following factors were given:

- a) Inferiority complex.
- b) Short sightedness and lack of ideas.
- c) Age group between students and administrators.
- d) Misconception of what student leadership is about, since some think it is a time to squander funds.
- e) Improper co-ordination of student view for presentation at a meeting.
- f) Students in ability to reason with the adult administrators.

The views expressed by the two sets of respondents give pictorial evidence underlying the two views which influence student participation in decision-making as elaborated by Africans students in the literature reviewed for this work (CAFA, 1992).

The findings here that both groups of respondents agree that student involvement in decision-making have some impediments, answer the research question 3.

Factors that Can Enhance Student Participation in University

Administration

Student participation in decision-making is very essential in any educational organisation. The above topic, factors that can enhance student participation in university administration is discussed below.

The distribution of respondents' opinion as factors, which can enhance student participation in University decision-making, gives a pictorial evidence of the differences that exist between student view and University administrators' views on student involvement in University management or administration. In this section, the researcher plans to treat the research question 4: What factors can enhance student participation in decision- making?

Table 8 gives the distribution of respondents' opinions on ways to enhance the current level of students involvement in University decision – making. Data in Tables 8(a) and (b) provide information on enhancement of student involvement in decision-making. The Tables present the results.

Table 8(a)

Enhancement of Student Participation in Decision-Making

Items	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
	S	S	S	S
	N %	N %	N %	N %
Students should be represented on all decision-making bodies	65(60.2)	25(23.1)	18(16.7)	108(100)
Student-administrators ratio on decision making bodies should be increased	99(91.6)	6(5.6)	3(2.8)	108(100)
Students should be represented on committees which deals with issues relating to students only	71 (65.7)	7(6.5)	30(27.8)	108(100)
Administrators should be more cooperative and willing to accept students contributions during decision making session	71 (65.7)	7(6.5)	30 (27.8)	108(100)

Table 8(b)

Enhancement of Student Participation in Decision-Making

Items	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Total
	A	A	A	A
	N %	N %	N %	N %
Students should be represented on all decision-making bodies	15(53.6)	9(32.1)	4 (14.3)	28(100)
Student-administrators ratio on decision making bodies should be increased	15(53.6)	2(7.1)	11(39.3)	28(100)
Students should be represented on committees which deals with issues relating to students only	21(75.0)	1(3.6)	6(21.4)	28(100)
Administrators should be more cooperative and willing to accept students contributions during decision making session	25 (89.3)	1(3.6)	2(7.1)	28(100)

Students in their majority indicated their agreement with the indicators measuring how student involvement in University decision-making can be enhanced. With percentages as high as 60.2% and 53.6% response from students and administrators respectively, indicate the need to increase numerical representation in the decision-making of the institution.

Under the student-administrators ratio increment on decision-making bodies, 99 or 91.6% of the students agreed while that 15 or 53% of the administrators also agreed for the increment. Students are always the minority on every committee, which is to their disadvantage. When the number is increased, it will motivate them to participate because when they are arguing a point, which is not in their interest, they will win support from their colleague. These findings are in line with the study conducted by Zuo and Ratsoy (1999) who found that administrators could facilitate students' involvement in decision-making processes by increasing the representation of students on certain committees.

With 21 or 75.0%, administrators indicated that students should be involved only on those committees like chaplaincy board, academic board, residence committee that directly deal with students issues.

Regarding the suggestion that administrators should accept more student contribution during decision-making sessions, their (administrators) opinion is simply in contrast to those of students with more than 80% (23 out of 28) indicating that the administrators disagreed with the suggestion. The observation made in the analysis of section D provides an answer to research question 4.

Summary

The analysis firstly looked at the respondents' response towards student present level of involvement in University decision-making at KNUST. The results revealed that both students and administrators agreed that students have very little or no influence in the areas indicated. The second section dealt with the benefits the university administration derives from student involvement in decision-making. The results reveal that when students are involved in decision-making, it facilitates the achievements of goals of the institution.

The third research question looked at factors that impede student participation in decision-making. Respondents indicated various factors that do not promote student participation in decision making. The dominant ones were intimidation and victimisation, low level of knowledge and immaturity of students and low or no representation of students on certain committees.

The fourth aspect of the research question looked at factors that can enhance student participation in decision-making. Respondents from both groups agreed that information dissemination is of immense importance and it must be treated as such.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the overview of the study, summary of the findings of the study, conclusions, recommendations and lastly suggestion for future research.

Overview of the Study

The research is a study of student participation in decision-making process at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. The research also attempted to solicit the views of students and administrators on the student involvement in the decision-making process at KNUST. The research design employed was descriptive sample survey. The main research instrument used was self-developed questionnaire. The researcher administered the questionnaires personally.

The findings of the study are expected to provide an alternative means of increasing student participation, so as to get students committed to the programmes of the institutions in order to achieve the set objectives of their institutions. The subjects (research sample) for the study were 136, comprising 108 students and 28 administrators drawn from KNUST. This ensured that all diverse views of students and administrative staff were represented. The data

gathering instrument used for the study was a questionnaire (Appendix BI and BII.) each comprising four sections.

Summary of Findings

The results of the study have been discussed in connection with the research questions designed for the study.

1. Students have the opinion that their present involvement in University managerial decision-making is minimal, insignificant with exception of the assessment of teaching staff.
3. Administrators also came out with the same view except in the area of hall administration where their indications revealed that students were actively involved.
4. Respondents agreed that students' involvement in financial management was very low.
5. Respondents indicated students are not actively involved in academic decision-making in general within the University campus, despite the student representation on the University council.
6. Students agreed to the suggestion, status of students involvement in decision-making could be enhanced through increase in the physical participation.
7. Administrators expressed ill-feelings as to how this enhancement could be effected. Even though majority agreed that present number of students on the decision-making committees was adequate, a sizeable number still indicated the need for students to be represented on all decision-making bodies of the University.

8. Respondents in their sizeable number revealed that student involvement in University decision-making has benefits for the University management in general.
9. The benefits could also be reflected at the level of faculty board and other committees.
10. Students and administrators expressed varied reasons, which hinder students' involvement in University decision-making. Even though there were some similarities in their opinions at certain points. Some of the responses comprise:

Students' views:

Administrators were not willing to welcome students' views during decision-making sessions with reasons like:

- (a) Students are naive in expressing their views.
- (b) Students' improper co-ordination regarding their presentation at a meeting.
- (c) Students do not have any legal basis for getting involved in some university decision-making sessions.
- (d) Students' busy academic schedules do not permit their active involvement in University decision-making.
- (e) Students' fear of intimidation and victimisation should they express their views during decision-making sessions.

Administrators' views:

- (i) Students lack knowledge-base and experiences in life that can inform their views during decision-making session;
- (ii) Students lack the ability to express their view in a coherent and concise manner.
- (iii) Students do not have any justification to be involved in some decision-making sessions.

Conclusions

Respondents were of the view that present status of student involvement in University decision-making was either low or not working at all at the various levels. For instance, whilst a large number of administrators revealed that students are actively involved in hall administration, only a few members of students accepted the same response. The observation was that administrators were consistent with regard to their views but students were somehow inconsistent. This however brings the assumption that students are either not aware of the means in which they are to participate in University governance or they are not interested in committing themselves in decision-making.

To some extent, administrators agree that students should have more influence in University governance. Administrators believe that the introduction of user fees scheme should clearly encourage student access to University decision-making. The current status of students in University governance confirms the findings of URC (1988) that students and Junior Staff participation

in institutional decision-making are limited in scope. There is therefore the need for the university authorities to promote student participation as Sergiovanni (1989) points out that subordinates participation in administration is seen as a motivational tool that increases employee satisfaction, commitment and confidence in organisation, since it will yield positive results.

There is some belief that students are currently experiencing some ignorance especially regarding their student leaders when it comes to student welfare and student discipline. This clearly indicates that some student populace do not feel part of the institutional management. Student participation in University decision-making is laudable since it has benefits for general university management: students are given training for future governance, conducive atmosphere is ciliated for academic work, student agitations are tremendously minimised.

Recommendations for Practice

- (1) The study has revealed that administrators have the perception that students lack knowledge base and experience in life that can enrich their views during decision-making. However, many university students are matured enough therefore their participation will be of beneficial to the university. Administrators and student leaders should humbly meet and deliberate on how university decision-making could be assessed. This will promote the aspirations for the two parties to discover an appreciable level where students' contribution to university governance could be attained.

- (2) From the findings, administrators are of the view that students do not have any legal basis for getting involved in some university decision-making sessions. A thorough assessment of the SRC functions and roles within governance structure needs to be done and compared with current trend in the world. This paves way for their present interaction with students on one hand and the administrators on the other thereby strengthening their effectiveness at KNUST.
- (3) University authorities and the SRC executive members need to consistently upgrade the level of students and administrators awareness for university governance and the position of students within the structure. This could be done through bulletins and the radio.
- (4) Although it has come out of the study that administrators have the perception that students have no justification to be involved in decision-making sessions, involving students on academic board and other committees by the university authorities could ensure democratic governance in the tertiary institutions in Ghana.
- (5) It was shown in the study that students did not feel free to express themselves. Democracy should however be promoted by creating enough room for students to put their views across.

Suggestions for Future Research

In line with the findings of this study, the conclusions and the recommendations made, it is suggested that:

1. Similar research could be conducted on the campuses of the other sister

universities to find out about student participation in the University decision-making.

2. Whiles some respondents were observed to have found it cumbersome to respond to the questionnaires, others apparently did not want to commit themselves in writing. It is therefore suggested that any other method could be added to the questionnaire to duplicate the study.
3. It is suggested that other researchers look at the extent to which students could be involved in institution-based decision-making.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for University Students on Student Participation in University Decision-Making Process

This research focuses on students' participation in decision-making at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. It would be appreciated if you would help by sparing some of your time to respond to this questionnaire.

Please, be assured that all information volunteered for the exercise will be treated as confidential and utilized only for research purposes.

Section A

Level of Student Involvement in Decision-Making

The following statements relate to factors, which might play a role in affecting the effectiveness of student participation in decision-making in universities. For each factor listed below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a tick () in the appropriate box.

Scale notation is: 1 = No Involvement 2 = Low 3 = Moderate 4 = High
5 = Very High

Please select only one response for each statement.

Present Level of Student Involvement in University Decision-making Process

1. Considering the areas listed below, what are the present levels of student involvement in university decision-making? (Please mark each area according to the scale provided.)

Level of Participation	5	4	3	2	1
Administrative Area					
(a) University policy formulation at the Administrative level					
(b) Student discipline					
(c) Hall Administration					
(d) Student welfare					
Academic Affairs Management Area					
(e) Development of Curriculum					
(f) Assessment of Personnel					
(g) Teaching- Learning Materials					
(h) Grading and Certification					
Financial Management Area					
(i) Academic User fees					
(j) Residential User fees					

Section B

Benefits of Student Participation in Decision-Making

Benefits of Students Participation in University Administration to General University Management

2. What level of benefits will the following student participation in university decision-making factors at the Academic Board and its Committees have on general university management?

Student Participation In Decision-Making Factor	Academic Board and its committees				
	5	4	3	2	1
(a) promotes opportunity for training students in parliamentary behaviour.					
(b) improves students' commitment to the programmes of the institution.					
(c) promotes a healthy relationship between students and all other sectors of the university community.					
(d) enhances quality of institutional decisions as inputs are collated from all sectors of the university community.					
(e) minimises or eliminates student unrest.					
(f) facilitates smooth management activities					
(g) Others (please specify)					

Section C

Factors that can Impede Student Participation in Decision-Making

Whether Certain Factors Can Impede Student Participation in Decision-Making at KNUST.

3. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree whether the following factors can impede participation in University decision-making.

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, U-Undecided, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

FACTOR	SA	A	UD	D	SD
a) students have fears of intimidation and victimisation from administrators if they should disclose their thoughts during decision-making session					
b) students' busy academic schedules do not permit their active involvement in university decision-making					
c) students lack the knowledge base and experience in life that can inform their views during decision-making sessions					
d) students do not have any legal basis for getting involved in some university decision-making sessions					
e) Any other (specify)					

4. Please write brief statements below, giving your opinion of the most significant factors which you feel impedes students' participation in university decision-making.

i)

ii).....

Section D

Factors that can Enhance Student Participation in Decision-Making

Whether certain Factors can enhance Student Participation in University Administration.

5. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree whether the following factors can enhance participation of students in University administrative decision-making.

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, U- Undecided, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

FACTOR	SA	A	UD	D	SD
a) Number of students on decision-making bodies should be increased to improve representation of student numbers and composition.					
b) Students should be represented on all committees dealing with issues relating to students only.					
c) Administrators should be more willing to accept student contributions during decision – making sessions					
d) Provision of suggestion boxes to tap ideas from other students.					
e) Administrators should not just accept suggestions from students but rather implement them as well.					
f) Any other (please specify)					

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS ON STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

This research focuses on students' participation in decision-making at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. It would be appreciated if you would help by sparing some of your time to respond to this questionnaire.

Please, be assured that all information volunteered for the exercise will be treated as confidential and utilised only for research purposes.

Section A

Level of Student Involvement in Decision-Making

The following statements relate to factors, which might play a role in affecting the effectiveness of student participation in decision-making in universities.

For each factor listed below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a tick () in the appropriate box.

Scale notation is: 1 = No Involvement 2 = Low 3 = Moderate 4 = High 5 = Very High

Please select only one response for each statement.

Present Level of Student Involvement in University Decision-making Process

1. Considering the areas listed below, what are the present levels of student involvement in university decision-making? (Please mark each area according to the scale provided.)

Level of Participation	5	4	3	2	1
Administrative Area					
(a) University policy formulation at the Administrative level					
(b) Student discipline					
(c) Hall Administration					
(d) Student welfare					
Academic Affairs Management Area					
(e) Development of Curriculum					
(f) Assessment of Personnel					
(g) Teaching- Learning Materials					
(h) Grading and Certification					
Financial Management Area					
(i) Academic User fees					
(k) Residential User fees					

Section B

Benefits of student participation in Decision-Making

Benefits of Students Participation in University Administration to General University Management

2. What level of benefits will the following student participation in university decision-making factors at the Academic Board and its Committees have on general university management?

Student Participation In Decision-Making Factor	Academic Board and its committees				
	5	4	3	2	1
(a) promotes opportunity for training students in parliamentary behaviour.					
(b) improves students' commitment to the programmes of the institution					
(c) promotes a healthy relationship between students and all other sectors of the university community.					
(d) enhances quality of institutional decisions as inputs are collated from all sectors of the university community.					
(e) minimises or eliminates student unrest.					
(f) facilitates smooth management activities.					
(g) Others (please specify).					

Section C

Factors that can impede student participation in Decision-Making

Whether Certain Factors Can Impede Student Participation in Decision-Making at KNUST.

3. Please write brief statements below, giving your opinion of the most significant factors which you feel impedes students' participation in university decision-making.

- i)
- ii).....
- iii).....
- iv).....

Section D

Factors that can enhance student participation in Decision-Making

Whether certain Factors can enhance Student Participation in University Administration.

4. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree whether the following factors can enhance participation of students in University administrative decision-making.

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, U- Undecided, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

FACTOR	SA	A	UD	D	SD
a) Number of students on decision-making bodies should be increased to improve representation of student numbers and composition.					
b) Students should be represented on all committees dealing with issues relating to students only.					
c) Administrators should be more willing to accept student contributions during decision – making sessions.					
d) Provision of suggestion boxes to tap ideas from other students.					
e) Administrators should not just accept suggestions from students but rather implement them as well.					
f) Any other (please specify)					