

# INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING ON THEIR MORALE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABRAKA METROPOLIS OF DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*This research was designed to undertake the influence of teachers' participation in decision making on their morale in secondary schools in Abraka metropolis of Delta State, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised and related hypotheses were formulated to guide the aim of the study. The design of the study was a survey based on ex post facto design. The universe of the study comprised all the secondary schools in Abraka metropolis of Delta State, Nigeria. The Metropolis has a total of 7 secondary schools, with a teaching population of 700 teachers. For the purpose of accurate, effective and efficient, all the secondary schools in the metropolis were considered as sample. The data needed for the study were obtained using questionnaire. The analyses of data were done by tabulating the responses, comparing the state of decision making, the age groups, and experience groups. One-way ANOVA statistics was employed to analyze the data. The findings based on the analyses revealed among others that there is a relationship between morale and the state of decision making, the age group of teachers and the experience of teachers. Hence, it was recommended among other issues that principals should always delegate responsibilities to their staff and make sure that they involve such staff in decision making in the schools.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher, morale, Decision-making, Motivation, Secondary Schools, Abraka-metropolis, Nigeria.*

## INTRODUCTION

The place of decision making in school setting is uppermost to teachers and school administrators. This is because an understanding of knowledge, skills and attitude of teachers is necessary for providing insights into classroom management and supervisory problems in the school. As a result, teachers need to be well vested in basic knowledge areas teachers' morale and teaching process including participation in decision making process (Nakpodia, 2011). Also, educational progress depends upon the quality of teachers. Unfortunately most of the persons who enter teaching profession do not like their jobs at all (Devi & Mani, 2010).

According to Griffins (1972) the vital process of an organization is the making of decisions, not the giving of orders and advice. Experience shows that the Nigerian educational administrators take decisions single handed.. However, studies have shown that some of such decisions are taken ignorantly while others are taken deliberately. For instance, Roser (1974) revealed that "most administrators base decision upon either intuitive judgment or upon past experience". Whatever may be the reason, if decision making was to remain,

what it is and what it should be, that is a "selection of a course of action". According to Nakpodia (2006), it should be an exclusive duty of the school principal, because a good school is one where the staff is a team of individuals who work, argue and make decisions together. In practice, this is not the case. The level of morale experienced by organizational members has been of a consistent concern to educational researchers. Morale is the emotional and mental reaction of a person to a job. It may be high or low. A teacher may like his job and believe that he's working a fine group and a perfect school system. On the contrary, he may disrupt the administration, being unsatisfied with the amount of money he is receiving and recent his fellow workers. With morale, actual conditions do not count. What is important is the belief and feelings of the teacher. Although morale is intangible and cannot be seen or isolated, it is possible to determine the quality of morale by careful observation of the way people act. A teacher will do his/her best to promote effective learning if morale is high. With low morale however, teacher will not live up to their potential ability, and the school will operate at far less than its maximum efficiency.

High morale is built by making sure that a job provides the satisfaction an individual wants from life. There are many things which can bring down the morale of teachers such as inadequate salaries, poor living and teaching conditions, poor teaching ability, lack of inspiration, lack of public regard, conflict with other teachers, disciplinary problems, and restriction of outside activities. However, things known to build up morale of teachers include better preparation, confidence in the worthwhileness of teaching, and adequate salary schedule, school and community friendship and community support, working on cooperative projects, tenure protection and recognition of everyday efforts. The most significant is a type of democratic and considerate supervision that welds administrative officers, teaching staff, and school patrons in a common group with common interest and problems. If teachers' morale is to be high, official leaders in school must operate in ways that will enable staff members to obtain among others, participation in decision making, and opportunity to maintain self-respect, sense of belonging, fair treatment, sense of achievement and growth, and a feeling of importance.

Participation in decision making is very important to the building of teachers' morale. This is true since teachers want to feel that they have a part to play in controlling their destiny. A person who is given opportunity to take part in forming the policies that affect him has greater satisfaction from his job. Participation in decision making is a part of the basic drives for independence, freedom of action and the acquisition of a feeling of importance. An indication of high morale is for principals to encourage teachers to participate in policy making committees. The spirit of morale, which is demanded implied united effort in which compromise and even personal sacrifices are made because of the worth of the goal to which all members of the group are committed.

In building up teachers' morale, teachers should have significant confidence in integrity and loyalty of co-workers and superior officers to contribute to effective teamwork in the prosecution of the common goal. Also, for teachers to have rights and opportunities to contribute their ideas to the improvement of the system as far as they are able and willing to do so. On the other hand, teachers should know what their responsibilities

are and to have faith in the intrinsic importance of the work they are doing. Teachers should be consulted before decisions which affect the conditions under which they work are made. The level of morale experienced by organizational members has been a persistent concern of educational researchers. The generally perceived situation in Delta State secondary schools is that only the principals have rights to decision making. Moreover, the issue of teachers' morale is not seen as significant to learning and teaching. During staff meetings, all that the principals do is to impose information on teachers. Most heads of schools do not see any relationship between decision making of their teachers and morale. It is the general belief in the Delta State that only money leads to satisfaction. This study is important not only because of its empirical evidence, but also because it will aid school heads in improving the morale of their teachers by involving them in decisions that their morale in particular and affect the school system in general. In a bid to address this issue, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between the state of decisional participation and the level of teachers' morale?
2. Is there any significant difference between the levels of morale and age of the teachers in decision making?
3. Is there any significant difference between the levels of morale and experience of teachers in decision making?

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

***Ho<sub>1</sub>***: There is no significant relationship between the state of decisional participation and the levels of teachers' morale.

***Ho<sub>2</sub>***: There is no significant difference between the levels of morale and teachers' age.

***Ho<sub>3</sub>***: There is no significance difference between the levels of morale and teachers' teaching experience.

## **DECISION MAKING AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE**

Human performance in decision terms has been the subject of active research from several perspectives. From a psychological perspective, it is necessary to examine individual decisions in the context of a set of needs, preferences an individual has and values they seek. From a cognitive perspective, the decision making process must be regarded as a continuous process integrated in the interaction with the environment. From a normative perspective, the analysis of individual decisions is concerned with the logic of decision making and rationality and the invariant choice it leads to. Yet, at another level, it might be regarded as a problem solving activity which is terminated when a satisfactory solution is reached.

Therefore, decision making is a reasoning or emotional process which can be rational or irrational, can be based on explicit assumptions or tacit assumptions. One must keep in mind that most decisions are made unconsciously. One simply decides without thinking much about the decision process. In a controlled environment, such as a classroom, instructors encourage students to weigh pros and cons before making a decision. However in the real world, most decisions are made unconsciously in the mind because frankly, it

would take too much time to sit down and list the pros and cons of each decision we must make on a daily basis. Logical decision making is an important part of all science-based professions, where specialists apply their knowledge in a given area to making informed decisions. For example, medical decision making often involves making a diagnosis and selecting an appropriate treatment. Some research using naturalistic methods shows, however, that situations with higher time pressure, higher stakes, or increased ambiguities, experts use intuitive decision making rather than structured approaches, following a recognition primed decision approach to fit a set of indicators into the expert's experience and immediately arrive at a satisfactory course of action without weighing alternatives. Recent robust decision efforts have formally integrated uncertainty into the decision making process. However, decision analysis, recognized and included uncertainties with a structured and rationally justifiable method of decision making since its conception.

A major part of decision making involves the analysis of a finite set of alternatives described in terms of some evaluative criteria. These criteria may be benefit or cost in nature. Then the problem might be to rank these alternatives in terms of how attractive they are to the decision maker(s) when all the criteria are considered simultaneously. Another goal might be to just find the best alternative or to determine the relative total priority of each alternative (for instance, if alternatives represent projects competing for funds) when all the criteria are considered simultaneously. Solving such problems is the focus of multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) also known as multi-criteria decision making (MCDM). This area of decision making, although it is very old and has attracted the interest of many researchers and practitioners, is still highly debated as there are many MCDA/MCDM methods which may yield very different results when they are applied on exactly the same data. This leads to the formulation of a decision making paradox.

On the other hand, *Morale* is defined as a composite of feelings, attitudes, and sentiments that contribute to general feelings of satisfaction. In this connection morale is understood as one's attitude towards accomplishing his work rather than emotions he displays during work, which in turn affects organizational and individual objectives. Opposing the above, morale is emotions in display. This is so because a happy mind makes a happy person and a happy person in turn often does positive things. The reverse applies for a sad person. It is a display of the innermost substance of the mind on the outermost part of a human daily living through which others could observe and give judgement. Corroborating this view, Mendel 1987 submits that *Morale* is a feeling, a state of mind, a mental attitude, and an emotional attitude. *Morale* is a fundamental psychological concept. It is the sum of several psychic qualities that include courage, fortitude, resolution, and above all, confidence. *Morale* is a multidimensional concept because it recognises the influence of job situation on attitudes of individuals and also includes the role of human needs as motivational forces. It is a complex mixture of several elements.

*Morale* is a group phenomenon consisting of pattern of attitudes of the members of the group. It refers to the spirit of the organization and the managerial climate. *Morale* is mostly regarded as a long-term condition. As morale represents the state of balance and health within an organization, it must be viewed from long-term point. Rising morale to a

high level and maintaining it is a long-run and continuous process which cannot be achieved through short-run devices such as contests, pep talks, gimmicks, or one shot actions. Morale is contagious. Both favourable attitudes and unfavourable attitudes can spread among people. It can deteriorate rapidly when seriously unfavourable events occur.

### **TEACHERS' MORALE**

Morale is equally as important to education as teachers are. It becomes the key to a good school system. Morale makes the difference between viewing teaching as a "job" and viewing it as a "profession". It interpretes the attitude of the mind, it is an esprit de corps, euphoria and an emotional force that gives willingness to work and to cooperate in the best interest of the enterprise and in turn of the individuals themselves. It can affects output, quality, costs, co-operation, discipline, enthusiasm, initiative and other aspects of success. The minds, attitudes and emotions of individuals are showcased in their group reactions. It is capable of deterring or enhancing communication relationship between employees and executives as well as customers and the host community.

Morale has two educational implications. First, it improves school services and makes them worthy of public respect. Secondly, enthusiastic teachers communicate their satisfaction and approval not only to pupils, but also to parents and the general public. Good teachers are a valuable asset to any school system. Poor teachers are a deterrent. The latter are expensive in that they require excessive amounts of supervision and administration, frequently undo the work of good teachers, are difficult to eliminate, and often disrupt the equilibrium and morale of the whole teaching corps (Devi and Mani, 2010). The efficiency of an educational system depends largely on the efficiency of its teachers. The quality of education imparted to children depends to a large extent on the quality of teachers in the schools and colleges. Buildings, equipment, curricula, books and teaching methods are no doubt important. But no other aspect of education is so vital and significant as the men and women who actually teach in the educational institutions. It is they who can make proper use of the buildings and equipment, who can give life and meaning to the curriculum, who can make the books interesting or dull who can make teaching methods inspiring or soul-killing. They are in fact an indispensable tool in education.

Premises and equipment are needed in the education enterprise but persons are vital to them and a teacher is the supreme factor. It is no exaggeration to state that a spacious building, costly equipment and sound syllabus will serve some useful purpose only when there are teachers who are fully alive to the nobility of the profession and its accompanying responsibilities, attitudes, habits, manners above all, the character and personality of the students. According to Nakpodia (2006), some teachers carry around a morale thermometer that measures teacher morale at their building whether it is high or low. Not all teachers have this thermometer, so they have to be told that morale in their building is low.

Miller (1981) notes that teacher's morale can have positive effects on pupils' attitudes and learning. Raising teacher morale level is not only making teaching more pleasant for teachers, but also learning more pleasant for the students. This creates an environment

that is more conducive to learning. According to him, morale and achievement are related. He found that where morale was high, schools showed an increase in student achievement. Low levels of satisfaction and morale can lead to decreased teacher productivity and burnout, which is associated with 'a loss of concern for and detachment from the people with whom one works, decreased quality of teaching, depression, greater use of sick leave, efforts to leave the profession, and a cynical and dehumanized perception of students" (Mendel, 1987).

Sometimes teachers' morale drops and they may themselves not be aware of the decline. If they are to be encouraged, they must first recognize their diminished status that they are 'discouraged' and take action to become 'encouraged' again (Bolin 1987). Reassessment, when coupled with renewal, can often lead to encouragement. Reassessment involves reexamining something in order to value it again. Teachers' morale is determined by physical, emotional and attitudinal factors. Emotional and physical illness leads to reduced teachers' morale, absenteeism, mental and physical withdrawal and detachment, increased inter and intra individual conflict and a general reduction in individual and ultimately college performance. The lists of factors devised by Mendel Herzberg according to Mendel (1987) which can give satisfaction and raise morale include:

**Achievement:** Teachers often speak of their pleasure at seeing the progress a particular pupil makes as a way in which their morale is raised.

**Recognition:** This might be from society at large, from the government recognizing the school, as with making it a Beacon School, or from one's superiors or the parents.

**Responsibility:** This can raise morale especially where the teacher feels that he or she is above to use that responsibility in order to make improvements in the teaching and learning in the school.

**Promotion:** This is a particularly interesting thought, since it seems that it is not the pay rise of promotion that increases morale, but the recognition granted in offering the promotion itself that is the biggest boost to morale.

When a healthy school environment exists and teachers' morale is high, teachers feel good about each other and, at the same time, feel a sense of accomplishment from their jobs' (Hoy and Miskel 1987). According to them, morale is the extent to which an individual needs are satisfied and the extent to which the individual person perceives that satisfaction is stemming from his total job satisfaction'. They also state that morale is a concern in the industrial world where salaries, working conditions, employee input, and management-labor relationships are areas of concern due to their impact on productivity and attitude. They go on to quote Schulz and Schulz's statement that unhappiness at work carries over into other aspects of life, can disrupt relationships with family and friends, and can influence physical and mental health.

Stress occurs among all groups in a school community and can affect morale, performance, and leadership ability. When schools function under high levels of stress, especially unmanaged stress, the school atmosphere becomes unhealthy and dysfunctional. If the stress levels of the leaders in a school change, then the school culture changes and people are more open to criticisms. The teachers and principals in the colleges become

more willing to listen to the needs of their students, and the school has a better sense of well-being and efficacy. Stress - Adaptation Theory says, "stress depletes the reserve capacity of individuals, thereby increasing the vulnerability to health problems".

### WAYS OF BOOSTING TEACHERS' MORALE

**Opening the lines of communication:** Each administrator needs to let the rank-and-file faculty members know the issues facing the campus. It will be surprising that faculties often have a reasonable solution to many of the problems facing a campus if they are just given the opportunity to comment. Try soliciting inputs or feedbacks to your suggestions from the faculty.

**Stay visible:** Look for opportunities to be seen on your campus as much as possible. This can enhance morale, especially if you cheerfully greet those faculty members you encounter and pause to chat with them as one human being to another.

**Develop and clearly define a sound faculty reward system:** Look for ways to develop a sound faculty pay schedule that is not overly influenced by market conditions at the expense of equality. Also look for 'non-traditional faculty rewards such as providing extra clerical support, granting travel or faculty development allowance.

**Thank everyone for every good work:** Let your faculty members and others within the college know you appreciate the work the faculty is doing. Send personal thank you notes. Finally, during times of financial difficulty let the faculty know that you think they are productive and thank them for helping you identify ways to address budget concerns.

**Treatment of new faculty member:** Whenever you hire a new faculty member, always remember to pay as much attention to the new faculty member's colleagues as you do to the new faculty member.

**Develop consistent procedures:** Whenever you have a major budget or curriculum decision to be made, be sure to seek faculty input. Nothing will affect morale more, than if the faculty hears that you are considering a change in evaluation processes, reducing faculty health care benefits, or increasing the teaching load without consulting with them. While most faculty dread serving on committees, most want to provide accurate feedback when the issues hit close to home.

### METHODOLOGY

The study is a descriptive survey based on ex post facto design. The universe of the study comprised of all the secondary schools in Abraka metropolis of Delta State, Nigeria. The Metropolis has a total of 7 secondary schools, with a teaching population of 700 teachers. For purpose of accurate and effective sampling method, the researcher obtained a comprehensive data secondary schools in Abraka metropolis of Delta State, Nigeria. Since the number of the secondary schools in the area are few, the researcher decided to use all the secondary schools in the metropolis.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection is the questionnaire designated as "The Influence of Teachers' Participation in Decision Making on their Morale Questionnaire" (ITDMQ). The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher and dealt with questions on demographic information such as decisional situation, age and experience. It was made up of 20 items relating to teachers' morale. The response to each of the statements was weighted on a 4-point scoring scale which indicate as follows: 4 often; 3 very often; 2 seldom and ;1 never. The questionnaire was validated in its content and face values. Some scholars in the discipline were consulted to review the questionnaire more especially the terminologies employed. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, 15 students were used for the pilot study. Test re-test method was used and the coefficient of the reliability was established at 0.85.

In the administration of the instrument, the researcher made two trips to the schools. The first trip was made for the distribution of the questionnaire, while the second was for collection. During the first trip, the researcher also used the opportunity to explaining the content of questionnaire to the respondents. It took real persuasion to get those that listened to respond to the questionnaire. The completed questionnaire were collected on the second trip. In analyzing the data, the scores from the questionnaire was scored and their means computed. The one way analysis of variance was used for the hypotheses formulated to guide the study since the subjects were grouped into three groups each. The 0.05 level of significance was also used for either the rejection or the retention of the hypotheses.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data is sub-divided into two main sections. Section A consists of the analyses of responses of demographic variables as shown on table 1. While section B consists of the analyses of the hypotheses.

**Research Question 1:** Is there any relationship between the state of decisional participation and the level of teachers' morale?

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents based on Decisional Situations

<b>Level of Decision-Making</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Total in %</b>
Decisionally Saturated (DS)	59	61.5
Decisionally Equilibrium (DE)	6	6.3
Decisionally Deprived (DD)	31	33.3
Total	96	100

The data obtained show that there are few teachers who had the equal number of decisions to make as they required. That is, those teachers at equilibrium had the least number of people. Teachers who are saturated with decisions are almost twice the number of those that are deprived, these made those teachers saturated, the most of the three groups.



**Research Question 2:** Is there any difference between the levels of morale and age of the teachers in decision making?

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents based on Age

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Total in %
20 - 29	13	13.5
30 - 39	54	56.3
Above 39	29	30.2
Total	96	100

It could be concluded from this table that the least number of teachers in the secondary schools are within the age group of 20 - 29 years of age. The reason could be because more teachers are not being employed or this modern generation adults are not interested in the teaching profession. Teachers within the ages of 30 - 39 have the highest number of teachers, followed by ages of 40 and above.

**Research question 3:** Is there any difference between the levels of morale and experience of teachers in decision making?

**Table 3:** Distribution of Respondents based on Teaching Experience

Experience (years)	No. of Respondents	% of Total
0 - 9	51	53.1
10 - 19	34	35.4
Above 19	11	11.5
Total	96	100

From the data presented on table 3, majority of teachers have 0 - 9 years of experience. The teachers that have over 20 years experience are just 22. This could be as a result of this retirement age of teachers which is based on the actual age of teachers and their teaching experience. Retirement age of teachers is 60 years of age, while retirement based on experience is 35 years. This could explain why those teachers with over 20 years experience are 11.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the state of decisional participation and the levels of teachers' morale.

**Table 4:** Mean Comparison of Level of Decision-Making and Morale of Teachers

Level of Decision-Making	No. of Respondents	Total in %
Decisionally Saturated (DS)	59	61.5
Decisionally Equilibrium (DE)	6	6.3
Decisionally Deprived (DD)	31	33.3
Total	96	100

The result on table 4 indicates some differences in the mean score of the three groups. From the result, it may be deduced that the teachers that are Decisionally Saturated (DS) scored significantly higher than the other 2 groups in terms of morale. On the other hand, the respondents that are at decisional equilibrium also scored higher than those who are Decisionally Deprived (DD). To clarify this, the data was subjected to a more rigorous test, using the summary of score of the respondents as shown on table 5.

**Table 5:** ANOVA on Level of Decision Making and Morale

Source of Variation	DF	SS	MS	F
Between Groups	2	2456	1228	8.49
Within Groups	93	13447	144.6	
Total	96	15903	100%	

The data presented on table 2 seeks to find out if there is no significant relationship between the state of decision-making and the level of teachers' morale. The critical value required to reject such assumption was 3.09. However, the ANOVA test reveals that the calculated F-ratio is 8.49, meaning that the null hypothesis is rejected. Based on the calculated value therefore with F-ratio, the hypothesis could not be retained, therefore there are significant differences between the means of the 3 groups. Since the table 2 indicates a significant difference between the morale levels of the three groups, the hypothesis was rejected, showing that morale varies with the levels of decision-making. There is therefore a relationship between the states of decision-making and the levels of morale of teachers. However, in order to determine the source of difference and specify in particular, the states of decision-making that had caused the significant difference, the scheffe test for all possible comparison was applied. The results are as shown in the table below.

**Table 6:** Pairwise Comparison of Mean Morale for the States of Decision-Making

Group	F-Ration	Decision
DS vs DE	0.42	Retain
DS vs DD	8.50	Reject
DE vs DD	0.69	Retain

F-Ratio = 3.09 at 0.05 level with;  $df = 2/93$  (100).

The findings on table 3 has further confirmed the rejection decision already made based on table 2, but this time with the addition that the source of variation was as a result of the morale of those teachers who were Decisionally Saturated (DS) and those who were Decisionally Deprived (DD). The findings did not support the study's hypothesis. In other words, teachers' level of morale varies with the state of their decision-making. That is, there is a relationship between teachers' level of morale and their state of decision-making.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the levels of morale and teachers' age.

**Table 7:** Mean Comparison of Age and Level of Morale in the One-Way ANOVA

Age	No. of Respondents	Mean Morale Score
20 - 29	13	13.5%
30 - 39	54	56.3%
Above 39	29	30.2%
Total	96	100%

The result above indicated some difference in the mean score of the 3 groups. From the result, it may be concluded that the youngest group of teachers (age 2-29), scored significantly higher than the other 2 groups in their levels of morale. On the other hand, the teachers in the second group (age 30-39) also scored higher than those who are above 40 years of age.

To clarify this, that data was subjected to a more rigorous test, using the summary of score of the respondents as shown on table 8. This is an indication that levels of morale are not the same throughout the school population. Rather, the teachers with higher mean fall within ages 20-29, while those between 30-39 have 32 as against 28.79 for ages 40 and above.

**Table 8:** ANOVA on Age and Morale of Teachers

Source of Variation	DF	SS	MS	F
Between Groups	2	323.93	161.97	3.78
Within Groups	93	3986.27	42.86	
Total	96	4310.2		

Since the F-calculated is higher than the f-tabulated, the hypothesis 2 was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the levels of morale and age. From the table, there is significant difference between the means of the 3 groups. This shows there is a significant difference between the different age groups and morale. Based on the calculated value therefore, with f-table, the hypothesis could not be retained. Hence, there is a significant difference between the means of the 3 groups. This shows that there is significant difference between the different age groups as regards morale. The level of teachers' morale varies with age groups. However, in order to differentiate the source of difference and specify the age group that makes for the difference, the scheffe test for all possible comparison was applied. The results are as shown in the table 9.

**Table 9:** Pairwise Comparison of Mean Morale for Age-Group

Group	F-Ratio	Decision
20-29, 30-39	0.4	Retain
20-29, 40 and above	2.06	Retain
30-39, 40 and above	2.45	Retain

F-Ratio = 3.09 at 0.05 level with; df = 2/93 (100).

The findings on table 9 rejected the decision already made on table 8. The findings support the study's hypothesis. In other words, teachers' level of morale does not vary with their age groups.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the levels of morale and teachers' teaching experience.

**Table 10:** Mean Comparison of Teaching Experience of Teachers in the One-Way Analysis of Variance

Experience Group	No. of Respondents	Mean Morale Score
0 - 9	51	45.82%
10 - 19	11	49.18%
20 and above	34	53.82%
Total	96	100%

The result on table 10 indicates some differences in the mean score of the three groups. From the result, it may be concluded that the teachers with teaching experience of 0 - 9 years scored significantly lower than the other 2 groups in morale. Moreover, the respondents within group 10 - 19 years scored lower than those over 20 years of

experience. To clarify this, the data was subjected to a more rigorous test, using the summary of scores of the respondents as shown on table 11.

**Table 11:** ANOVA on Levels of Teaching Experience

Source of Variation	DF	SS	MS	F
Between Groups	2	971.2	485.5	5.76
Within Groups	93	7836	84.3	
TOTAL	96	3807	Xxx	

The data presented in table 11 seeks to find out if there is no significant difference between the levels of morale of the different groups of teaching experience. The critical value required to reject such an assumption is 3.09. However, the ANOVA test reveals that the calculated f-ratio is 5.76, meaning that the assumption is rejected. Based on the calculated value therefore with f-ratio, the hypothesis could not be retained, therefore the hypothesis was rejected. There are significant differences between the means of the 3 groups. This shows that there is a significant difference between the different groups of teaching experience as regards their morale. Since the table 11 indicates a significant difference between the morale levels of the 3 groups, the hypothesis was therefore rejected, showing that morale varies with the level of teaching experience. Therefore, there is significant difference between experienced groups as regards morale. However, in order to determine the source of difference and specify in particular the experience groups that have caused the significant difference, the scheffe test for all possible comparison was applied.

**Table 12:** Pairwise Comparison of Mean Morale for different Experience Groups

Experience Group	F-Ratio	Decision
0 - 9, 10 - 19	0.60	Retain
0 - 9, over 20	7.76	Reject
10-19, over 20	1.06	Retain

F-Ratio = 3.09 at 0.05 level with; df = 2/93 (100).

The findings on table 12 has confirmed the rejection decision already made in table 11, but this time with addition that the source of variation was as a result of the response of those teachers whose experience fall between group 0 - 9 and over 20 years. Therefore, the findings do not support the study's hypothesis. In other words, teachers' levels of morale vary with their teaching experience.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focused on teachers' participation in decision-making and its influence on their morale in secondary schools in Abraka metropolis of Delta State, Nigeria. The findings of these study agree with the discovery of a similar but identical finding by Belasco and Alutto (1970) in London. These writers discovered that the levels of satisfaction experienced by organizational members is closely related to their status of decision-making. Their findings indicate that there are significant systematic relationship between individual member satisfaction levels and the state of decisional participation. They also found out that satisfaction levels are not uniform throughout the school population.

From the findings of this study, it was discovered that there is a relationship between the states of decision-making and the levels of teachers' morale. This shows that the more the opportunity given to a teacher to make decisions that affects him/her, the higher such a teacher's morale. From table 1, it was found out that teachers who were Decisionally Saturated (DS) had a mean of 52.7 while those who were at equilibrium had a mean of 48.0 and those Decisionally Deprived (DD) had a mean of 41.7. This shows the importance of teachers' decisional participation on their morale; teachers want to feel that they have a part in controlling their destiny. This support the great demand teachers have for participation in policy formation. Teachers want to feel very important in their school environment, so by allowing them a say in things that affect the school, they will have the assurance that they are needed, and therefore their morale will be high.

From the study, most teachers prefer to be saturated in decision-making. This is because those teachers that have more decisions than they require have a mean of 52.7 as against those who have just enough decisions to make as they can cope with (DE). They have a mean of 48.0. This explains some of Maslow's (1943) category of needs - self-esteem and actualization. The greater the number of decisions the teacher engages in, the more important he sees himself, and the higher his morale will be. This is why those who are Decisionally Deprived (DD) scored the least mean of 41.7. These Decisionally Deprived (DD) teachers have the least morale mean because they feel they are not recognized, and so they feel deprived of their self-esteem and actualization. They do not see themselves as part of the school system.

In a nutshell, they see themselves as deprived and oppressed. The first finding goes to show that most people, teachers inclusive, have a need for a stable, firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect. If the satisfaction of these needs are deprived, there is a feeling of inferiority, weakness, helplessness, which leads to very low morale. This can be seen from the means of the three decisional groups of this study. The study also showed that morale was not uniformly distributed throughout the teaching population used. From the data already given, the teachers with high morale are those younger ones within the age of 20-29, with morale mean of 33.23. This group was followed by those teachers who were within 30 - 39 years, their mean being 32.16 against those above 40 years. The above findings could be because those teachers within 20-29 years are the most Decisionally Saturated (DS). This is based on the first explanation already given - that the teachers who have more decisions that they require are those with higher morale. Moreover, it could also be because this is mostly the age when people are mostly recruited into the teaching field. These teachers who are freshly recruited might be happy with what ever decision they are given opportunity to take, the mere fact that they are employed alone is enough to boost their morale, especially these days that jobs are not easy to come by.

Those teachers within 30-39 years of age have scored higher than those that are 40 years and above. This could be because, at this age, most of the teachers have obtained the position of supervisors and vice principals. These positions attract administrative decision, such as the planning of duty rooster, assembly schedule, allocation of teachers to

different classes, etc. On the other hand, those teachers above 40 years and above are less in morale because the older teachers have worked for a long period of time and are no longer keen on the job anymore. These are the teachers that are the oldest in the teaching profession. Such teachers do not wish any longer to participate in too many decisions. They now feel that responsibilities should be given to the younger ones. At this age, most of them now want to have more time to themselves, while waiting their retirement.

In the light of these discoveries therefore, it is concluded that there is significant difference between the levels of morale and teachers' age. This also applies to level of morale in secondary schools, which are not uniformly distributed in the areas of experience and the state of decision making, since the analyses showed that the variables on age and experience were rejected. Consequently, the following findings were made in the study:

1. That there is a significant relationship between the state of decisional participation and the levels of teachers' moral. From this finding, it was discovered that there was relationship between the states of decisional making and the levels of morale.
2. That there is a significant difference between the levels of moral and teachers' age.
3. That there is a significance difference between the levels of morale and teachers' teaching experience. This finding is on the light that those teachers above 20 years of experience have more decisions to tackle than they require. On the other hand, teachers who have 0-9 years of experience feel that they are not recognized in the system and therefore not motivated at work.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In conclusion, the decisional climate seems to be a major factor, influencing teachers' morale levels, which was neither dependent on age nor experience. Therefore, since decision making had a main part to play in the morale level of teachers, it is safe to conclude that those specific areas in which morale had been discovered to be uneven could also have their base on the decision making states of the various groups. In other words, those various groups in decisional participation, levels of experience and age, that had higher morale than other groups was because those higher morale groups were also those that have more decisions than they required. They were the groups that were Decisionally Saturated (DS). Those lower morale groups were those at equilibrium in their decisional participation, while those with the lowest morale mean were those Decisionally Deprived (DD). This study therefore has emphasized the importance of recognition of the teaching staff in secondary schools as a major criteria of boosting morale of teachers. Hence, the following recommendations were made:

1. Head of schools should always delegate responsibilities to their staff and make sure that they involve such staff in decision making in the schools.
2. Principals of secondary schools should be willing and unselfish in devoting time and energy in meeting problems and rendering services to teachers from time to time.

3. The heads of secondary schools should have a leadership and administrative structure that is accommodating, responsive and empathic and at the same time, firm, objective and impartial.
4. Since the teachers occupy a position of much importance in the schools, every effort should be made in finding out how best to motivate them to stay in the job and put in their best.
5. Lastly, school principals should try as much as possible to be less authoritative. It has been discovered that this affects morale adversely. Since the importance of morale in any work environment, more especially in the teaching environment cannot be overemphasized, the heads of schools should make it their duty to build and improve on morale. Morale can only be built and improved upon by making teachers have a sense of belonging, fair treatment, a sense of achievement and a feeling of importance. Teachers want to have a part in decision making so as to know that the head has confidence and respect for them and their opinions.

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