Employee Participation in Decision Making in American University of Nigeria, Yola Adamawa State

OBOT, UDUAK GODWIN

(MBA/MT/011/0389)

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EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIAN, YOLA ADAMAWA STATE

BY

OBOT, UDUAK GODWIN

(MBA/MT/011/0389)

A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY MODIBBO ADAMA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, YOLA. IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER'S DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

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DECLARATION PAGE

I hereby declare that this project report was written by me and it is a record of my own research work. It has not been presented before in any previous application for a higher degree. All references cited have been duly acknowledged.

…………………………………………

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God Almighty the Alpha and Omega.

Approval

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to determine the state of employee participation in decision-making within the AUN in Yola Adamawa State. More particularly, it is aimed at mapping out the extent of employee participation in the decision- making process in this area, to identify whether employees desire to participate in decision-making. The main objective of the study included to identity the degree of employee participation in the decision -making process in AUN and to investigate whether there is a significant relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firm's performance. The study adopted descriptive survey design as its research decision The sample of this work research included two hundred and forty (240) respondents which were selected from the AUN which represented 30% of the entire population of the area of study. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The major findings of the study included that Employee involvement indecision making increases job satisfaction, workforce retention rates and increase the morale of the employees. The major recommendation of the study included the roles of the government and top management in promoting an effective involvement of employee in the decision-making process: should be made central in every organization.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Contemporary organizations operate in the external environment characterized by intense global competition and technological innovation and change (Williamson, 2008). This setting has stimulated a need for employees who can take initiative, embrace risk, stimulate innovation and cope with high uncertainty.

A modern forward-looking business does not keep its employees in the dark about vital decisions affecting them. It trusts them and involves them in decision making at all levels. "Command and control" is no longer an adequate model. A more open and collaborative framework will exploit the talents of all employees (Hewitt, 2002). Employees must be involved if they are to understand the need for creativity and if they are to be committed to changing their behaviour at work, in new and improved ways (MAN, 2006).

Employee involvement in decision making serves to create a sense of belonging among the workers as well as a congenial environment in which both the management and the workers voluntarily contribute to healthy industrial relations (Noah, 2008).

Participation is the mental and emotional involvement of people in group situations that encourages them to contribute to group goals and share responsibility for them. According to Newstrom & Davis, (2004), there are three important ideas regarding participation in decision making-involvement, contribution and responsibility. Firstly, participation means meaningful involvement - rather than mere muscular activity. A second concept in participation is that it motivates people to contribute. They are empowered to release their own resources and creativity to achieve the objectives of the organization. Participation especially improves motivation by helping employees understand their paths towards goals. Finally, participation encourages people to accept responsibility for their group activities. It is social processes by

which people become self involved in an organization and want to see it work successfully (Newstrom & Davis, 2004).

Participation can have statistically significant effects on performance and motivation (Wagner, 1994). Participate practices may provide power opportunities earlier to minority workers in an increasingly diverse workforce, since such workers need not wait until reaching higher organizational levels. It also helps to satisfy the awakening employee need for meaning and fulfillment at work. Participation typically brings higher output and a better quality of output. It tends to improve motivation because employees feel more accepted and involved in the situation. Turnover and absences may be reduced if the employees feel that they have a better place to work.

In order to increase the workers commitment and humanise the workplace with the intention of improving work performance and good citizenship behaviour, managers need to permit a high degree of employee involvement (Cohen et al., 1997). Thus, the involvement of workers in decision making is considered as a tool for inducing motivation in the workers leading to positive work attitude and high productivity (Noah, 2009). However, researchers may be skeptical about the value and relevance of employee involvement in decision making to firm performance.

However, employees' cooperation with the introduction of these changes is needed if the transaction is to occur smoothly and the full efficiency benefits of these considerable investments are to be appropriated. It is against this backdrop that this study tries to do a holistic assessment of impact employee participation on decision making in organization, using AUN as a study area.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Employee participation has an important influence in decision making for organizational effectiveness. If they have participation in this fact, the employees will feel that they are valued in the enterprise. They also provide necessary suggestions and guidelines to the organization for attaining its goal.

As a result, development and necessary changes occur fruitfully in setting goals, making decisions, solving problems and designing and implementing organizational changes (Gilbraith, et.el. 1993). Employees are committed to the desired goals of the organization if they are engaged in decision making and goal setting by exercising their self-directed and self-control activities. They always seek and accept responsibility to involve them in decision making process through intellectual, emotional and physical effort.

Employee participation has positively affecting organizational activities. Though many organizational top management are still skeptical about the implementation of the policy, due to believed incompetence on the part of the employees in top decision making (Noah, 2008). Participation helps to resolve the organizational conflict and reduce differences between the employees and the management. How then can harmonious relationship devoid of dysfunctional conflicts be established between management and employees so that a conducive and harmonious work place environment that can stimulate the achievement of the goals of Nigerian organization be achieved? How have the Nigerian organizations who adopted this concept of employee participation in decision making faired? Have organization really appreciated the role of employee to their continued existence as regards to decision making participation? How truly happy is the employee participating in decision making?

It is against this backdrop that this study tries to do a holistic assessment of impact employee participation on decision making in organization, using AUN as a study area.

1.3   Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study was to assess the employee participation in decision making and organizational commitment. The specific objectives formulated for this study are:

1.   Identity the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process AUN.
2.   Investigate whether there is a significant relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance.
3.   Find out the form(s) of employees' participation being used in the organization under review.
4.   Determine obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making

1.4   Research Questions

1. What is the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process AUN?
2. Is there a significant relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance?
3. What are the form(s) of participation being used in the organization under review?
4. What are the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making?

1.5   Hypotheses

i. There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre employees on the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN.

ii. There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre on the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making.

iii. There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre on the employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance.

iv. There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre on the form(s) of employees' participation being used in the organization.

1.6   Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it could bring to light the current situation of employee participation in decision-making in this area. Therefore, it will clarify obstacles to the participative process in the public and private enterprises in Nigeria. By analyzing these problems, it may be possible to determine where they lie and how could they be solved to promote employee participation in decision-making in the organizations, and in the American University of Nigeria in particular.

Thus, it could give insight to policy makers about employee participation in decision-making as one of the central elements in the development of effective management of public and private enterprises.

Third, the recommendations of the work will also assist other businesses in Nigeria and indeed other African countries, as it will provide Useful information on employee participation in decision making.

Lastly, the study will promote further research interest to other researchers who may want to conduct investigations on issues of under review.

1.7   Scope of the Study

The study is focused on employee participation in decision making and organizational commitment, using AUN as a study area. A sample size of 240 employees will be selected. This sample includes both the senior staff and junior staff members. The questionnaire will be focused on the situation of employees' participation in decision-making in this domain. This study will cover the periods between 2008 and 2012.

All the information and issues analyzed were within this period stated above. Those outside these years will be used for reference purposes only

1.8   Limitations of the Study

The major limitation expected in this work include; that the respondents might not be willing to give out information that may be relevant to this work. Also, expected to affect the quality of this work will be that the respondents might not be sincere with the questionnaire when it is given to them. Some may decide to throw them away while some may decide to supply inconsistence answers. Despite these limitations stated above, the researcher will still do her best to make the work more reliable and worthy for academic purposes.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Employee Participation Concept

According to Guest and Fatchett (1974) in Rubyutsa (2004), worker participation in management is an old, persistent idea with many meanings. This means that it is not easy to give one definition, which covers all aspects of this concept. This is true because the variation in degree of participation and different ways in which different people, countries and enterprises perceive participation, show the diverse views of this term. Cotton *et al., (*1988); Strauss, (1982) cited by Galang (1999) argued that given that employee participatory schemes differ in the extent or mode of participation, with regards to area or content of participation and to level of participation. It is contended that no simple definition of participation is either appropriate or sufficient to enable us to understand the complexity of the concept.

Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed (2011) opined that Employee involvement in decision making, sometimes referred to as participative decision-making (PDM) is concerned with shared decision making in the work situation. They believed it is define it as 'joint decision making' between managers and subordinates**.** According to Noah (2008), it is a special form of delegation in which the subordinate gain greater control, greater freedom of choice with respect to bridging the communication gap between the management and the workers. It refers to the degree of employee's involvement in a firm's strategic planning activities. A firm can have a high or low degree of employee involvement.

A high degree of involvement (deep employee involvement in decision making) means that all categories of employees are involved in the planning process. Conversely, a low degree of involvement (shallow employee involvement in decision making) indicates a fairly exclusive planning process (Barringer &Bleudorn, 1999) which involves the top management only. A deep employee involvement in decision making allows the influence of the frontline employees in the planning process. These are the people who are closest to the customer and who can facilitate new product and service recognition, a central element in the entrepreneurial

process (Li et al.,2006).This means that employee participation in the planning process surrounding the potential innovations may facilitate opportunity recognition throughout the organization (Kemelgor, 2002).

Employee participation is in part a response to the quality movement within organisations. Individual employees are encouraged to take responsibility for quality in terms of carrying out activities, which meet the requirements of their customers. The internal customer is someone within the organisation that receives the 'product of service' provided by their supplier within the organisation. External customers are buyers and users outside of the organisation. Employee participation is also part of the move towards human resource development in modern organisations. Employees are trusted to make decisions for themselves and the organisation. This is a key motivational tool. Empowerment involves decentralising power within the organisation to individual decision makers further down the line. Team working is a key part of the empowerment process. Team members are encouraged to make decisions for themselves in line with guidelines and frameworks established in self managing teams.

Participative management (PM) is known by many names including shared leadership, employee empowerment, employee involvement, participative decision-making, dispersed leadership, open-book management, or industrial democracy (Steinheider, et al, 2006).

Participation of workers in decision-making process has resulted in successful value creation in many organizations. Though the extent to which employees should participate in organizational decision making is still a matter of debate. Some say that workers' union should participate with management as equal partners while some believe in restricted or bounded participation, that is, participation of employees or workers to a limited extent. However, there are a number of ways through which employees can participate in decision-making process of any organization (Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed, 2011).

Participation at the Board Level: Representation of employees at the board level is known as industrial democracy. This can play an important role in protecting the interests of employees. The representative can put all the problems and issues of the employees in front of management and guide the board members to invest in employee benefit schemes.

Participation through Ownership: The other way of ensuring workers' participation in organizational decision making is making them shareholders of the company. Inducing them to buy equity shares, advancing loans, giving financial assistance to enable them to buy equity shares are some of the ways to keep them involved in decision-making (Steinheider, et al, 2006).

Participation through Collective Bargaining: This refers to the participation of workers through collective agreements and by deciding and following certain rules and regulations. This is considered as an ideal way to ensure employee participation in managerial processes. It should be well controlled otherwise each party tries to take an advantage of the other. Participation through Suggestion Schemes: Encouraging your employees to come up with unique ideas can work wonders especially on matters such as cost cutting, waste management, safety measures, reward system, etc. Developing a full-fledged procedure can add value to the organizational functions and create a healthy environment and work culture. For instance, Satyam is known to have introduced an amazing country-wide suggestion scheme, the Idea Junction. It receives over 5,000 ideas per year from its employees and company accepts almost one-fifth of them (Steinheider, et al, 2006).

Participation through Complete Control: This is called the system of self management where workers union acts as management. Through elected boards, they acquire full control of the management. In this style, workers directly deal with all aspects of management or industrial issues through their representatives. However, one cannot write meaningfully about employee involvement in decision making or PDM without embedding it within a national cultural context. Thus, Sagie and Aycan,(2003)propose a framework that links various types of PDM to the cultural context. This framework was based on two dimensions of Hofstede: power distance and individualism-collectivism (I/C), as their link with PDM is strongest compared to other cultural dimensions.

Power distance signifies how individuals regard power differentials within the society or firms (Menzel et al.,2006).It influences the degree to which participation is practiced. In high power distance culture, decision-making is perceived as a privilege of management, and participation is considered as an infringement to management prerogative. Hence, employees are not involved in decision-making. In contrast, in low power distance culture, everyone is

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perceived to have the potential to contribute to the decision-making process; in fact, everyone is assumed to have equal rights. As such, employees consider it their right to participate in decisions that concern them (Sagie &Aycan,2003).

2.2   Types of Employee Participation

Rubyutsa (2004) stated that at least four major forms of employee participation are now common all over the world: shopfloor participation, works councils, collective bargaining and representation on company boards at least in the public sector. Other forms have been developed to deal with specialist areas including health and safety, productivity and pension funds and aspects of restructuring and others related to this.

2.2.1. Collective Bargaining

Among the various forms of worker participation, collective bargaining clearly stands out as the most widespread, the most vigorous and the most generally acceptable in both industrialised and developing countries. Since it has the primary purpose of fixing terms and conditions of employment, it involves a series of periodic activities of direct interest to all workers in the undertaking. Collective bargaining is the chief form of workers' participation in many countries. It has a double role: on the one hand, it is an instrument for introducing worker participation, and on the other hand, its role consists of the actual process of negotiating the collective agreement, particularly at the enterprise or plant level. This is itself a form of worker participation because what used to be a unilateral decision on the part of management becomes an agreed compromise between labour and management. Rubyutsa (2004) believes that Collective bargaining is usually carried out by representatives. It may be carried out under different circumstances and by different means, and even under certain restrictions, but it remains one of the few forms of worker participation which cuts across ideological and national boundaries and can be found almost everywhere in the world.

2.2.2. Works Councils

Works councils are the bodies elected by all employees at the workplace with the aim of meeting regularly with the management Rubyutsa (2004). Works councils are defined as

institutionalized bodies for representative communication between management and the employees of a single plan or enterprise

Rubyutsa (2004) has indicated that the shortcoming of collective bargaining as well as the limitations on worker participation that industry-wide negotiations imply, account in part for the appearance of other institutions. One of the oldest of these is the works council.

Works council" refers to all the various bodies whose members are elected by all the workers in the enterprise, whether union members or not. These bodies are not supposed to interfere with the collective bargaining rights of the trade unions and are, at least in most countries, mainly advisory. It takes into account works committees and similar bodies whatever their name in many countries in different parts of the world. He specifies that in many countries works councils have only limited consultative functions and consequently lack any effective power. Works councils in some countries deal with purely peripheral matters, such as canteens, nurseries, recreation and other Welfare facilities.

A similar view has been underlined by Knudsen (1995) who argues that there is a broad consensus in many countries that work councils have not lived up to the expectations that were held when they were first initiated. One of the reasons for this seems to be the lack of real decision-making powers possessed by most councils. Therefore, in many countries the number of workers councils has remained relatively small and their practical role is insignificant. It is necessary to clarify here that; this sort of works councils is what some authors, such as for instance, Knudsen (1995) calls joint committees.

2.2.3. Workers' Representation on Company Boards

The principle of co-decision-making by employees on supervisory boards or boards of directors is common practice in a number of countries, especially in Western European countries. The policy allows for employee directors, elected by employees (or trade unions), to be appointed to supervisory boards or boards of directors. These boards decide on general policy for the enterprise and its management, but usually do not function in an executive capacity, that is, they are not involved in the actual day-to-day running of the enterprise.

Rubyutsa (2004) has argued that employee representation on a board of directors enhances the status and prestige of the workers and furthermore the presence of employee representatives on the board serves as a constant reminder to management that worker interests are to be taken into account along with those of shareholders. From a utilitarian point of view, worker participation on the boards offers labour an opportunity to influence fundamental policy decision.

Degree of workers' influence on management decisions depends not only on the number of their representatives on the board but also on the role and functions discharged by the board within the company's power structure. For instance, the supervisory board of a Federal German company is not the same as the governing body of a French company or the board of a British company. Further, he points out that with regard to public enterprises, there does not seem to be any major disagreement about workers' representation in the public sector. The presence of workers' representatives on the boards of public sector enterprises shows that this form of workers' participation has been a long-standing practice in many countries (Rubyutsa, 2004).

2.2.4. Shop-floor Participation

According to Rubyutsa, (2004), the role of collective bargaining, of works councils or similar institutions, and whatever arrangements may be made for board representation, it is clear that these forms of employee participation are not in themselves a guarantee of complete participation within the enterprise. Whatever steps are taken to involve worker representatives in the decision-making process at higher management level, they must be supplemented by arrangements for associating rank-and-file workers with decisions that are taken at shop-floor level and that will affect them directly.

By taking into account of the definition of those two types of participation, it appears that the three prior forms, that is, collective bargaining, works councils and worker representation on company boards are typically institutions of the indirect participation, while the latter is a direct form of participation (Rubyutsa, 2004).

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (1992) stated that employee participation is also referred to as employee involvement (EI)Examples of employee participation include:

i. Project teams or quality circles in which employees work on projects or tasks with considerable responsibility being delegated to the team.

ii. Suggestion schemes - where employees are given channels whereby they can suggest new ideas to managers within the organisation. Often they will receive rewards for making appropriate suggestions.

iii. Consultation exercises and meetings whereby employees are encouraged to share ideas.

iv. Delegation of responsibility within the organisation. In modern organisations ground level employees have to be given considerable responsibility because they are dealing with customers on a day-to-day basis often in novel situations. Such employees need to be trusted to make decisions for themselves.

v. Multi-channel decision making processes. In such situations decisions are not only made in a downward direction, they also result from communications upwards, sideways, and in many other directions within the organization (Rubyutsa, 2004).

2.3 Decision-Making Concept

For Harrison, (1987) cited in (Rubyutsa, 2004), a decision is defined as a moment in an ongoing process of evaluating alternatives for meeting an objective, at which expectations about a particular course of action most impel the decision maker to select that course of action most likely to result in attaining the objective. He described that perhaps the most common use of the term is this: "to make a decision means to make a judgment regarding what one ought to do in a certain situation after having deliberated on some alternative courses of action". Decision-making can be defined as the process of selecting an alternative course that will solve a problem (Vrba and Brevis, 2002).

Traditionally, in the enterprise area, the investors and the managers had the prerogative to make decisions, while others employees in general had the task of executing what was decided. But it seems that this practice was among the major barriers to the commitment of the employees. It is now recognized that the involvement of various people in decisions can have

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a positive impact both on the quality of the decision and on the commitment that people feel towards the decision. Research has pointed out that if people have a say in the decision, they are more likely to feel a sense of commitment to the decision. Secondly, involving those with some expertise in the area or interest in the decision can improve the quality and the support for the decision (www.wcer.wisc.edu/ccvi/zz-pub).

From the definition of the term 'decision', it becomes clear that in general, a decision-making activity is not achieved by the isolated action of the decision maker. By contrast, it is a coherent whole or organized process composed of different phases or steps. (Vrba and Brevis, 2002) has noted that decision-making in its formal aspect takes place as an interrelated and dynamic process. Moreover, he asserts that the definition of decision-making as a process consisting of several functions is advantageous for several reasons: it indicates the dynamic nature of decision-making, it depicts decision-making activities as occurring over varying spans of time; it implies that the decision-making process is continuous and, thus, that it is an ever present reality of organisational life; and it suggests that, at least to some extent, managerial decision-making can direct and control the nature, degree, and pace of change within the organisation.

In general, the literature on decision-making distinguishes two models of decision-making. It has been stated that there are two primary decision-making models, the rational and bounded rationality models (Vrba and Brevis, 2002). When using the rational model, the decision-maker makes consistent value-maximizing choices within specified constraints (Simon, 1986), (cited in Robbins, 2001). The decision-maker normally selects the best possible solution. Therefore, this is known as optimising (Vrba and Brevis, 2002).

In the case of the bounded rationality model, the decision maker uses the satisfying technique by selecting the first alternative that meets the minimal criteria. It has been highlighted that the rational model is appropriate when the manager is managing non-programmed decisions, while the bounded rationality model is appropriate when managers are making programmed low-risk decisions (Vrba and Brevis, 2002). These sorts of decisions will be discussed and analysed in the following sections. In the rational model, the choices are made following up of the six steps of rational decision-making model (Robbins, 2001).

2.3.1 Steps of the Decision-Making Process

1st Step: Define the Problem. A problem exists when there is discrepancy between an existing and a desired state of affairs (Mitroff, 1998), (cited in Robbins, 2001). In this step, it is important to distinguish between the symptoms and the cause of a problem. The cause of the problem should be eliminated, and this will eventually result in the disappearance of the symptoms (Vrba and Brevis, 2002).

2nd Step: Identify the Decision Criteria. Once a decision maker has defined the problem, he or she needs to identify the decision criteria that will be important in solving the problem. In this phase, the decision maker determines what is relevant in making the decision. This step brings the decision maker's interests, values, and similar personal preferences into the process

(Robbins, 2001:132). According to Vrba and Brevis, (2002) criteria are standards that an alternative should meet to be selected as the decision that will accomplish the objective. Identifying criteria is important because what one person thinks is relevant another person may not (Robbins, 2001).

3rd Step: Allocate Weights to the Criteria. The criteria identified in previous step are rarely all equal in importance. This third step requires the decision maker to weight the previously identified criteria in order to give them the correct priority in the decision.

4th Step: Develop the Alternatives. This step requires the decision maker to generate possible alternatives that could succeed in resolving the problem. The decision maker, either an individual or a group can use various techniques to generate creative alternatives. One such technique is using group participation to generate alternatives, however, no attempt is made to appraise these alternatives, only to list them (Vrba and Brevis, 2002).

5th Step: Evaluate the Alternatives. Once the alternatives have been generated, the decision maker must critically analyse and evaluate each one. This is done by rating each alternative on each criterion. The strengths and weaknesses of each alternative will become evident as they are compared with the criteria and weights established in the second and third steps (Vrba, and Brevis, 2002).

6th Step: Select the Best Alternative. At this step, this model requires computing the optimal decision. This is done by evaluating each alternative against the weighted criteria and selecting the alternative with the highest total score.

2.4   Types of Decisions

Although multiple decisions are taken in the enterprise, it is absolutely essential to underline that those decisions do not have the same nature. Indeed, the decisions that are frequently made in the organization may be gathered in different types. At this level Knudsen's (1995) classification and Vrba and Brevis's (2002) classification will be described.

Knudsen (1995) has proposed a distinction between four different types of management decisions:

2.4.1 Strategic decisions

Strategic decisions include overall decisions determining the company's goals, its structure and main types of activities, major product-related investment decisions, mergers and so on. According to Hambric and Snow cited in, Harrison (1987:20), broadly speaking, strategic decisions are those, which are "important" to the organization either through the scope of their impact and/or through their long-term implications.

2.4.2 Tactical decisions

These include overall decisions defining the means to realize the goal of company, central decisions at company or workplace level concerning technology and work organization, principles guiding job design, personnel management, operation hours and so on (Knudsen, 1995).

2.4.3 Operational decisions

Operational decisions are more specific decisions taken, usually at department or workshop level, as to how the work should be carried out within the given technical organizational framework. The concrete deployment of labour defined through such measures as the definition of tasks, the assigning of workers to the specified tasks, the monitoring of the

labour process, the definition of shift-work schedules and the allocation of working hours for individual employee are covered by operational decisions (Knudsen, 1995).

2.4.4 Welfare decisions

All decisions concerning company-specific welfare arrangements, such as canteen facilities, housing facilities, sports and other recreational activities, scholarships, and other forms of financial support separate from the ordinary remuneration fall under welfare decisions (Knudsen, 1995).

2.5 Employees Involvement in Decision Making

Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed (2011) stated that one cannot write meaningfully about employee involvement in decision making or PDM without embedding it within a national cultural context.

Thus, Sagie and Aycan,(2003) cited in Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed (2011) propose a framework that links various types of PDM to the cultural context. This framework was based on two dimensions of Hofstede: power distance and individualism-collectivism (I/C),as their link with PDM is strongest compared to other cultural dimensions

Power distance signifies how individuals regard power differentials within the society or firms (Menzel et al., 2006).It influences the degree to which participation is practiced. In high power distance culture, decision-making is perceived as a privilege of management, and participation is considered as an infringement to management prerogative. Hence, employees are not involved in decision-making. In contrast, in low power distance culture, everyone is perceived to have the potential to contribute to the decision-making process; in fact, everyone is assumed to have equal rights. As such, employees consider it their right to participate in decisions that concern them (Sagie &Aycan, 2003).

On the other hand, individualism- collectivism helps identifying the person or group involved in making decisions. The individualism-collectivism continuum is the extent to which an individual defines himself as either an independent agent or a part of the collective. Cultures high on individualism (or low in collectivism) emphasize the welfare, interests, and

goals of the individual and his family. Each member in an individualistic culture is responsible for his actions. One's participation in decision- making is not the business of everyone else. Conversely, cultures high on collectivism (or low in individualism) emphasize the group.

In collectivistic cultures the entire group may be held responsible for the actions of its individual members. Hence, no individual is allowed to make decisions alone without the approval of the entire group (Sagie &Aycan, 2003).

According to Sagie and Aycan (2003),the combination of the two-by-two power distance (low/medium versus high)and individualism (low/medium versus high) give rise to four approaches to PDM: face-to- face, collective, pseudo, and paternalistic participation *Face-to-face PDM* :The combination of high individualism and low power distance gives way to face-to-face interaction. Face- to-face PDM is a direct superior-subordinate interaction; thus, the employees rather than their representatives are involved in decision-making process. However, employees who are necessarily involved are those who possess the needed knowledge and information not possessed by the superior. In other words, managers provide opportunities for participation on the basis of one's merits (Sagie &Aycan, 2003). Employee involvement (EI) and employee participation (EP) have been given much importance in the employee relations literature for a long time.

Employee involvement is normally initiated by the management and it takes place at lower levels of organization sharing information at the shop floor on matters that effect their day to day working not allowing them to give their opinion about the higher lever decision making., on the other hand ,employee participation is driven by indirect means of representation like unions and advice councils etc and its aimed at higher levels of the organization concerning matters of long term importance (Ackers et al, 2003).

2.6   Importance of Employee Involvement

Benefits in employee involvement and empowerment include team cohesion and higher productivity. Benefits in employee involvement and empowerment include team cohesion and higher productivity.

Employee involvement is a philosophy practiced by companies that gives their employees stake in decisions that directly affect their jobs, while employee empowerment is a corporate structure that allows non-managerial employees to make autonomous decisions. Each one is a distinct practice and is usually mutually exclusive to one another, though the benefits can be similar. The main benefits of employee involvement and empowerment are enhanced morale, more productivity, healthier coworker relationships and creative thinking (Ackers et al, 2003).

2.6.1 Improved Morale

Involving employees in decisions and policy changes that directly affect their job, while empowering employees to be more autonomous, greatly improves morale at large. When employees are treated as an asset and their input is given consideration, confidence increases among every team member, and the company sees significant gains in different facets such as productivity and loyalty. Moreover, improved morale can increase an employee longevity with the company. The longer the employee is associated with the company, the more experienced they become, making them mentors to new employees and indispensable to managerial staff (Ackers et al, 2003).

2.6.2 Increased Productivity

According to Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed (2011), employee involvement and empowerment translates directly into increased productivity. Employees with an investment in the company best interest increase their role in the company, fostering a stronger work ethic. When employees are given independence and expected to be more self-sufficient, they become more efficient over time, as they learn to navigate their responsibilities with minimal interference and/or relying less on managerial staff for direction. This allows managerial staff more time to attend to responsibilities other than giving assignments to subordinates and decreases micromanagement, which retards productivity.

2.6.3 Team Cohesion

Although employee empowerment is largely designed to give each employee autonomy, it likewise fosters better relationships between employees and with their managers, because

employees that are given more independence tend to form better working relationships. Each sees the other as mutually benefiting from their working relationship. In addition, more self-governance in the workplace lessens dependence on managers and supervisors and redirects that reliance laterally to coworkers (Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed, 2011).

2.6.4 Innovation

Employee empowerment helps to cultivate innovation. Employees that have a stake in the company's growth and sustainability will offer more ideas and problem-solving solutions when obstacles arise. Moreover, as the employee meets particular challenges or finds improvements in policies, procedures or products, it will foster growth and more critical and imaginative thinking. Employees may see a particular issue differently than a manager and be able to think of a creative solution, which may not be considered in a closed circle of managerial staff (Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed, 2011).

According to Owolabi & Abdul-Hameed (2011), there is an assumption held by many scholars and managers that if employees are adequately informed about matters concerning them and are afforded the opportunity to make decisions relevant to their work, then there will be benefits for both the organisation and the individual. Hence, the following are the benefits of employee involvement in decision making:

1. It increases employee's morale or job satisfaction and enhances productive efficiency
2. It provides employees the opportunity to use their private information, which can lead to better decisions for the organisation
3. As a result of the incorporation of the ideas and information from employees, organisational flexibility, product quality, and productivity may improve
4. It contributes to greater trust and a sense of control on the part of the employees.
5. Through employee involvement, resources required to monitor employee compliance (e,g. supervision and work rules)can be minimized, hence reducing costs
6. When employees are given the opportunities of contributing their ideas and suggestions in decision making, increased firms ' performance may result since deep employee involvement in decision making maximizes viewpoints and a diversity of perspectives (Kemelgor, 2002).

On his part, Sashkin (1976) cited in Frauenheim, (2009), identifies four corresponding outcomes of employees ' involvement or participation in decision making:

1. Quality Improvement. Better information flow-and use-can clarify tasks goals, and bring about qualitatively better decisions.
2. Increase in employees ' commitment and acceptance of decisions through a sense of "ownership " ((having been involved in decision-making).This outcome increases the likelihood that goals will be effectively implemented.
3. Support of the participative approach and continuance of its effects overtime, due to learning through behavioural practice; this represents the behavioural process effect.
4. Increase adaptive capacity of the organisation. Development of shared norms and values may result into more effective use of inter-dependency relations among organisation members, through an organisational process based on collaboration, as opposed to win-lose conflict.

However, CIPD(2009) stated that any potential benefits from greater employee involvement in decision making require that employee interest be aligned with firm 's interests. Individual contingency factors which support or hinder participative decision-making have also been identified by (CIPD, 2009).

1. Participative decision-making is appropriate when sets of choices are clear, individuals show desire for greater desire for job involvements, and several individuals can be given similar choice sets (that is, effort in developing choices does not render such a plan economically impractical)this would always be true when technology is low.
2. Participative decision-making may be useful in developing greater individual job responsibility.
3. Participative approach to decision- making is inappropriate when choices are complex, difficult to define, and vary in no small way; when task interdependence is very high; when environmental change is rapid (CIPD, 2009).

2.7 Advantages & Disadvantages of Employee Involvement

2.7.1 Advantages

Employee involvement is benefited for both the employee and the employers. According to CIPD (2009) employee involvement has lot to offer to the employer as they can use the skill and knowledge of the employees in different process which can lead to better performance. Further it can improve the reputation of the organization as a result of better employee satisfaction can attract new talent. EIP can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization. For the employees it gives them opportunity to develop their skill and knowledge and rewards and bonus for better performance. Further it can give higher job satisfaction and greater job security

Providing opportunities for active participation is beneficial for individuals as well as entire organizations. Applied organizational researchers have identified a myriad of positive outcomes of employee involvement initiatives. The list below shows just how much of an impact that employee participation and voice can have on the performance and well-being of a person, team, department, or entire organization:

a.   Improved organizational decision-making capability

b.   Improved attitude regarding work

c.   Substantially improved employee well-being

d.   Reduced costs through elimination of waste and reduced product cycle times

e.   Empowerment, job satisfaction, creativity, commitment, and motivation, as well as intent to stay

f.   Increased employee productivity across industries (Oostvogels, 2009)

2.7.2 Disadvantages

One of the primary risks in any participative decision-making or power-sharing process is that the desire on the part of the management for more inclusive participation is not genuine. In the words of Arnstein (1969. p. 216) cited in Oostvogels, (2009) stated that there is a critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power

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needed to affect the outcome of the process. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit."

When participative decision-making takes place in a team setting, it can cause many disadvantages. These can be anything from social pressures to conform to group domination, where one person takes control of the group and urges everyone to follow their standpoints. With ideas coming from many people, time can be an issue. The meeting might end and good ideas go unheard. Possible negative outcomes of PDM are high costs, inefficiency, indecisiveness and incompetence (Debruin, 2007).

Manager-Employee Boundary

One potential challenge of encouraging employee involvement is the risk that the line of distinction between the management level and employee level becomes blurred. Though managers may value employee involvement, a disciplined structure with clear reporting lines have long been vital to stability in organizations. Allowing employees to share ideas and make decisions without having them push the envelope and try to take on responsibilities that are reserved for management levels is a real risk.

Communication Complexity

According to Debruin, (2007) more lines of communication and the potential for inconsistent decision making are disadvantages with employee involvement systems. When more employees have input and decision-making ability, more communication is necessary to make certain that decisions are consistent across the organization. This consistency is critical to brand recognition and consistency. Managers may have a hard time monitoring decisions and activities with employee involvement to protect against negative consequences and to restrict the potential for chaos

2.8 Relationship between Employee Involvement in Decision Making and Firms' Performance

There is growing evidence that firm performance rests increasingly on the involvement of workers in decision making (Probst, 2005). Scholars have argued that employee

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involvement contributes to organisational efficiency because it has the capacity to enhance the quality of decision making by increasing the inputs and promotes commitment to the outcomes of the decision making process in the workplace (Markey, 2006).According to Smythe, (2008), workers who have greater choice concerning how to do their own work have been found to have high job satisfaction and consequently high performance. A significant relationship between frequency of employee's consultation and organisation commitment has also been established (Noah,2008).

While employee involvement may reside at the core of many contemporary practices and research, the extent to which organisational-level performance gains are actually achieved through decentralizing decision-making authority to lower level employee remains unclear (Richardson et al., 2002).Latham et al.(1994)contend that there is much less research evidence for the value of employee involvement on quality decision making. Scholars have also argued that employees ' involvement in decision making may primarily serve to make them feel good about their jobs and organizations but do little to increase firm 's performance.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design that was adopted in this study was descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design are those studies which aim at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population Asika, (1991). The choice of this design was informed by the fact that the study was interested in gathering data in employee participation in decision making in organization.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study includes all the non teaching staff of American University of Nigeria. The population is Drawn from both the university section and Abti primary and secondary school section. This included the 150 senior staff and 600 junior staff members; Making the whole population for the study to be nine hundred and ninety one (991) staff members.

3.3 Sample of the Study

The sample of this work research included two hundred and forty (240) respondents which were selected from the AUN which represented 30% of the entire population of the area of study. These included—Top management, middle class and the lower class. Top management made up the 10 percent of the respondents (24 respondents), while middle and lower class staff made up the 30 percent (72 respondents) and 60 percent of the respondents (144 respondents) respectively.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The Sampling Technique that was adopted for this work was stratified simple random sampling technique. In stratified sampling technique, the population was grouped into definite

characteristics (Top management, middle level management, and lower class staff). These groups are called strata. Selection was made using simple random sampling technique.

3.5   Method of Data Collection

For the purpose of getting the required data, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary data involves the formulation and administration of survey questionnaires and personal interview to some of the staff of the AUN staff. Secondary data were derived from extensive consultation of text books, magazine, journals, related website and publications.

3.6   Description of the Instrument of Data Collection

The sources of data adopted included primary sources, secondary sources and personal interview. Primary data are data collected specifically for this research and the instrument that were used were the questionnaire targeted at officers of the organization under review. The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections. The first section (section A), comprised the background information of respondents, Sections B focused on the nature of employee participation programmes used by AUN while section C focused on the impact of the programme on the staff in the area of study. The secondary data are already existing records; this included the journals, textbooks (published and unpublished), and website, other printed materials.

3.7   Instruments for Data Collection

The instrument that used was primary (questionnaires & interviews) and secondary.

Primary Included: Questionnaires: the questionnaires (240 questionnaires) are a combination of both structured and unstructured questionnaires. The structured questionnaire was close ended questions, thereby reducing the demand on the respondent of too much thinking and thus, reduced the risk of not being answered at all. While the unstructured questionnaire, the respondents were expected to express their opinions. The mixture were to get elaborate views of the respondents.

Personal Interview: this is an arrangement whereby the research comes into contact with the respondents and questions are being asked by the researcher and answer provided by the respondents who was normally part of the research population.

Secondary Source Includes: The secondary data are already existing records; this include the journals, textbooks (published and unpublished), and website, other printed materials on human capital development.

3.8   Validation of the Instrument

The questionnaire was subjected to face validation by the researcher's supervisor and two other experts in the area under consideration. Their input helped to enrich the instrument.

3.9   Method of Data Presentation

The data were presented in simple table and frequency count.

3.10   Method of Data Analysis

The Regression Analysis used to analyze the respondent's responses with regard to each item on the questionnaire in order to provide answer to research questions 1, 2, 3 and 4. For the purpose of interpretation and decision making, the concept of cut-off point were employed. With regard to the 5 point rating scale, the mean rating is 3 whose lower and upper limits are 2.5 and 3.5 respectively. To this end, all items with mean scores of 3.50 and above were regarded as being adequate while those with mean scores below 3.50 were regarded as inadequate.

The t-test was used to test for significance of hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 at 0.05 level of confidence. This inferential statistics was found suitable where there is need to test for significant difference between two independent. In this case the two independent samples are the senior and lower cadre employees working in AUN. The three (3) nulls Hypotheses was rejected where the calculated t-ratio was equal or greater than the critical t-ratio at 0.05 level of confidence, otherwise they are   accepted.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0   Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes all the data collected through questionnaire. It must be restated here that the sample of the study included two hundred and forty (240) respondents which was selected from the AUN which represented 30% of the entire population of the area of study. It will also present the major findings of the research based on the research question that were presented in chapter one. Tables were drawn to present the result based on the research questions.

4.1   Data Presentation

The researcher distributed two hundred and forty questionnaires to the respondents in study area; only two hundred and twenty seven (227) questionnaires were properly filled and returned. The remaining thirteen were either lost in transition or were not properly filled and were invalid. Hence, the researcher worked with 227 respondents which represent 95 percent of the whole questionnaires distributed. Therefore, the analysis of the study was based on the completed questionnaires. Table 1 indicates the questionnaire distribution

Figure 1 clearly male respondents constituted 66% of the respondents, while the female respondents were 34%. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were male as indicated by the above chart were male (66%).

Figure 2 indicated the age distribution of the respondents interviewed. Those within the ages of 25-40 were 48%, while those who are less than 25 years were 28% and respondents whose age is above 41 years were 24%. This show that majority of the respondents as indicated by the figure were within the age of 25-40 years old.

Table 1 Questionnaires Responses

Number of questionnaires distributed	Total number of questionnaire returned	Percentage of questionnaires returned	Number of questionnaires missing	Percentage of questionnaire missing
240	227	95	13	05
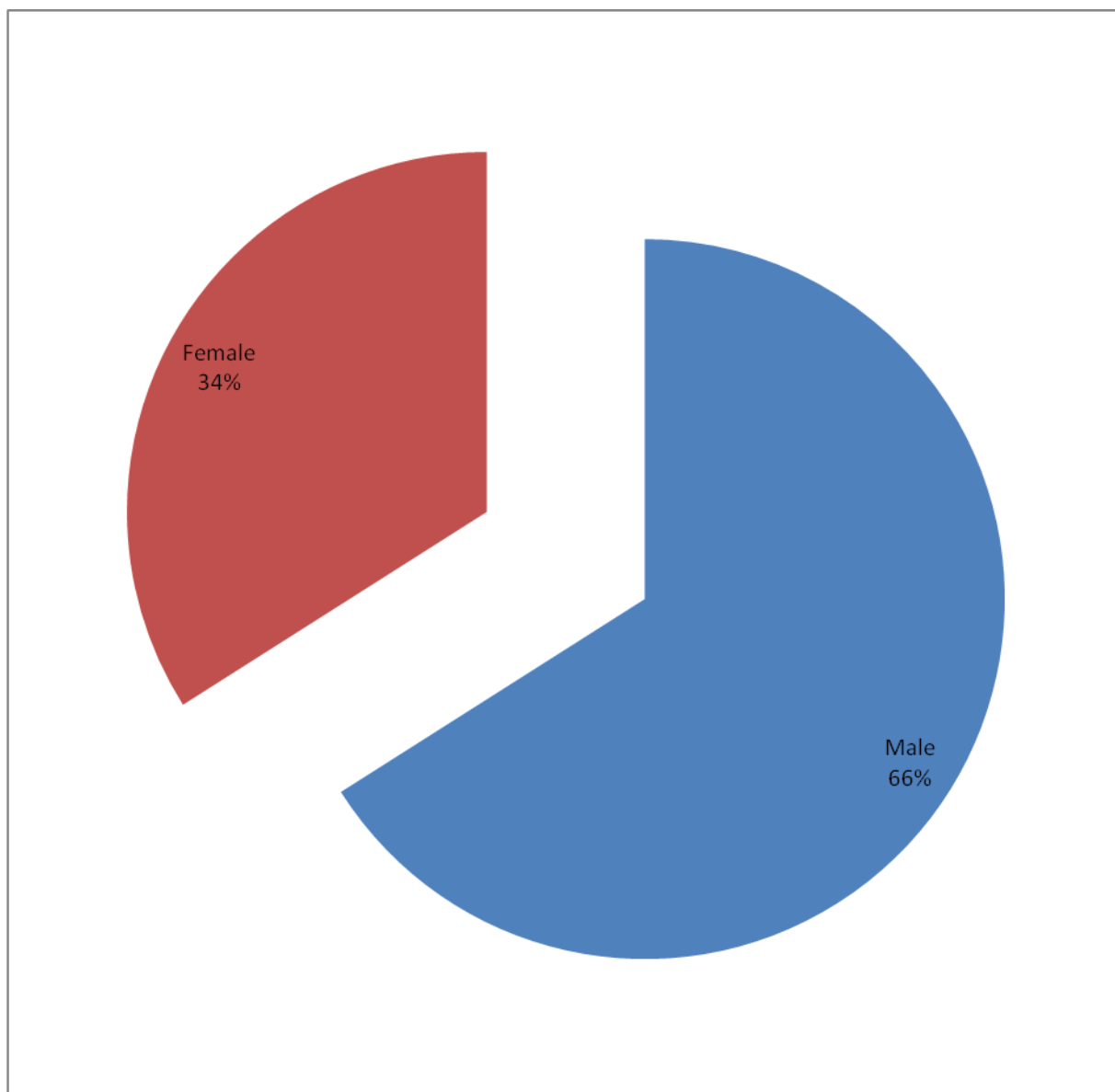
Source: Field survey, 2013

Figure I General Distribution
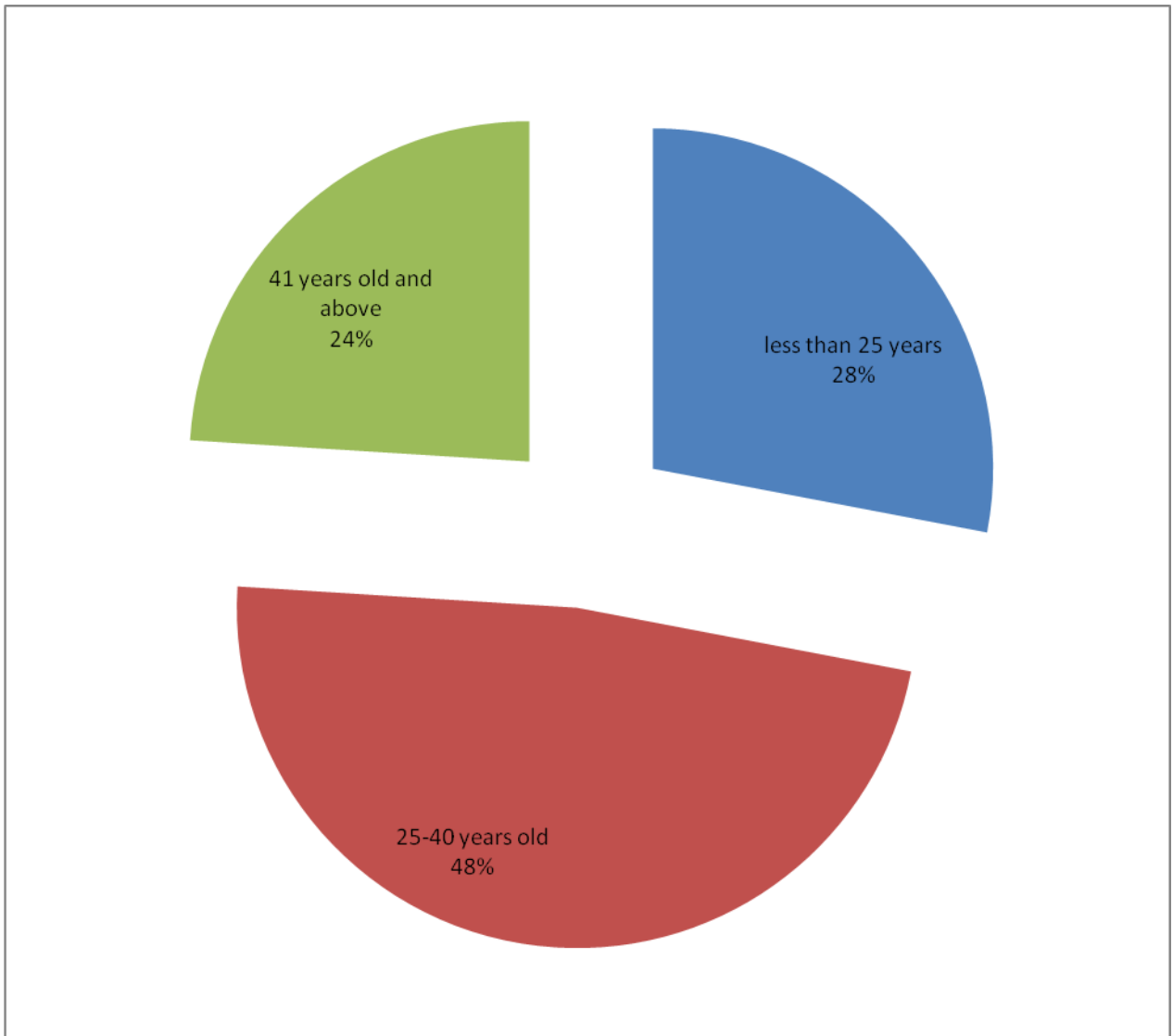
Source: Field survey, 2013

Figure 2 Age Distribution

Figure 3 shows the educational qualification of the respondents, 67% were holders of degree/HND, while 27% were those with post graduate certificates like Post graduate diploma, Masters Degree and PhD certificates. Hence, the majority were workers with degree/HND certificates.

Figure 4 indicates the positions of the respondents. Lower managers were 19% and middle managers 47% which constituted the majority and senior staff members interviewed were 34%. This shows that the majority of the respondents were the middle class managers, which include the departmental heads, sectional heads, etc.

The distribution shown in Figure 5 indicates the number of years of services of the respondents in AUN, Yola. While those who have served for less than three years were 31%, those under five years were 21% and less than seven years were 41%. Those who are less than one year in serve were 7%. From the above, it is indicated that the majority of the respondents were those under less than three years.

Research Question one

Table 2 presents the mean responds of the respondents on the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN. The respondents responses were all above 3.5 and were all accepted, with the strong grand mean of 3.8; this shows that the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN and the organizations' firm performance.
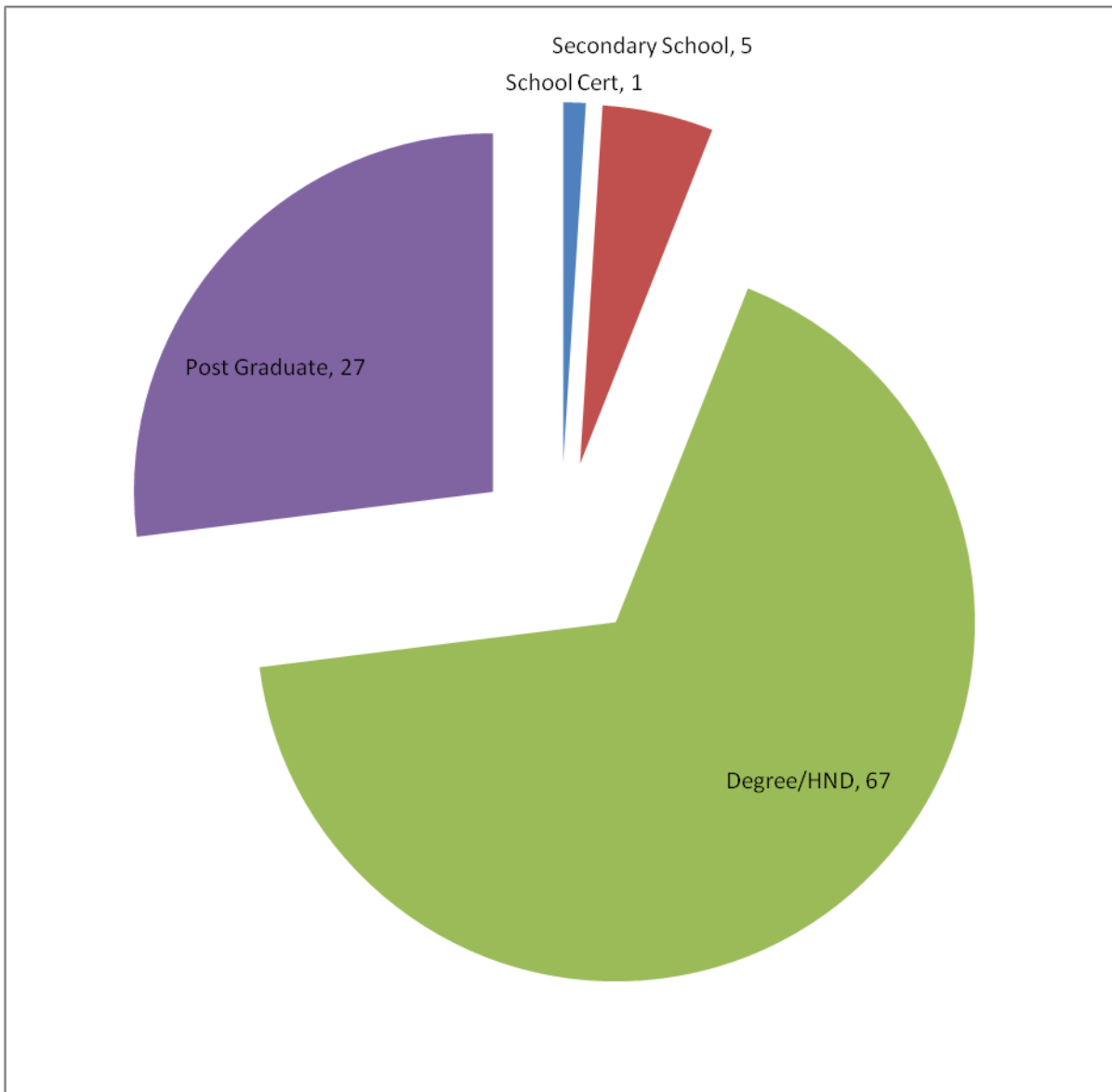
Source: Field survey, 2013.

Figure 3 Educational level
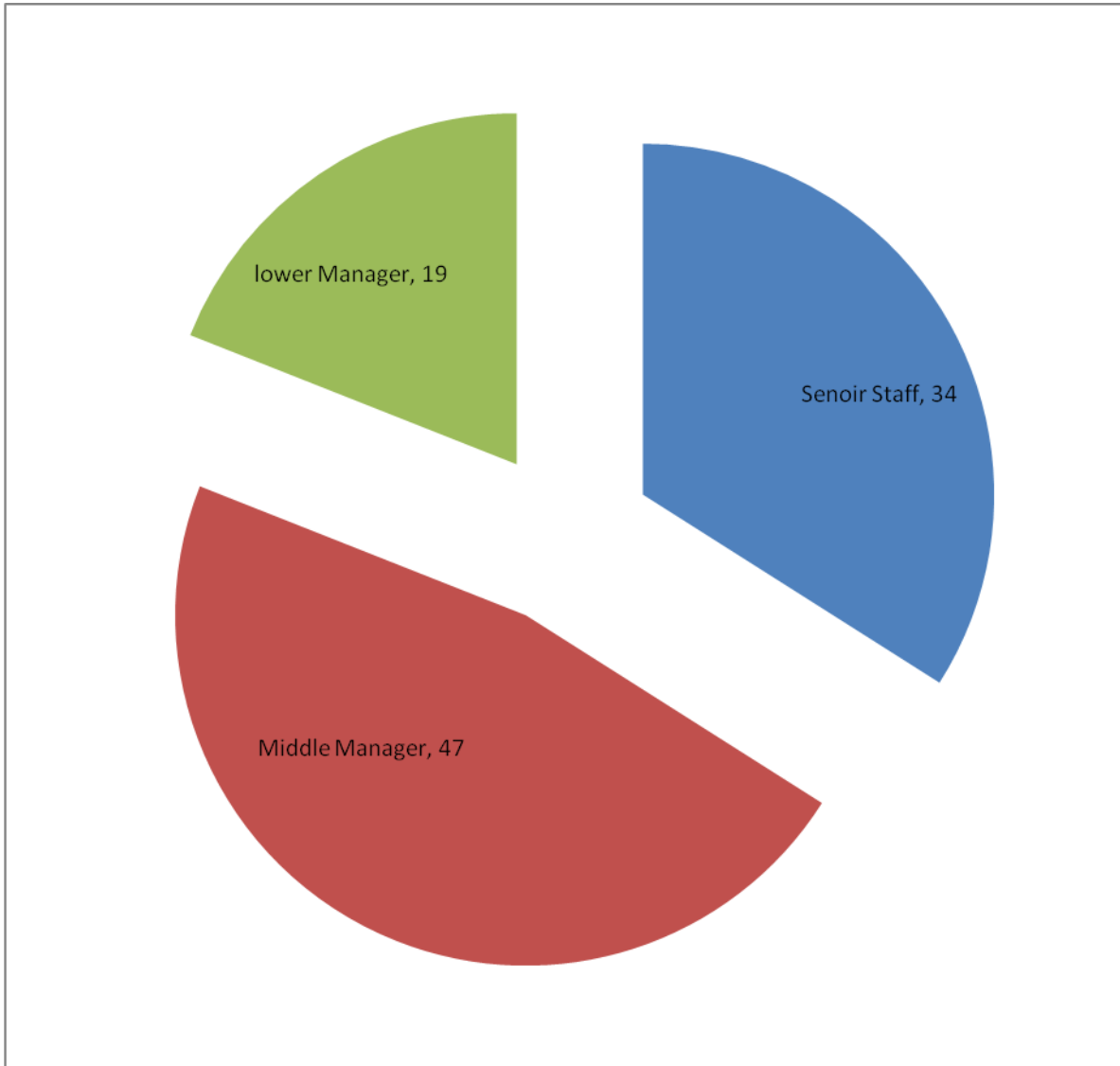
Source: Field survey, 2013.

Figure 4 Denomination of Post Occupied

Less than one year, 7

less than three years, 31

Less than five years, 21

Less than seven years, 41
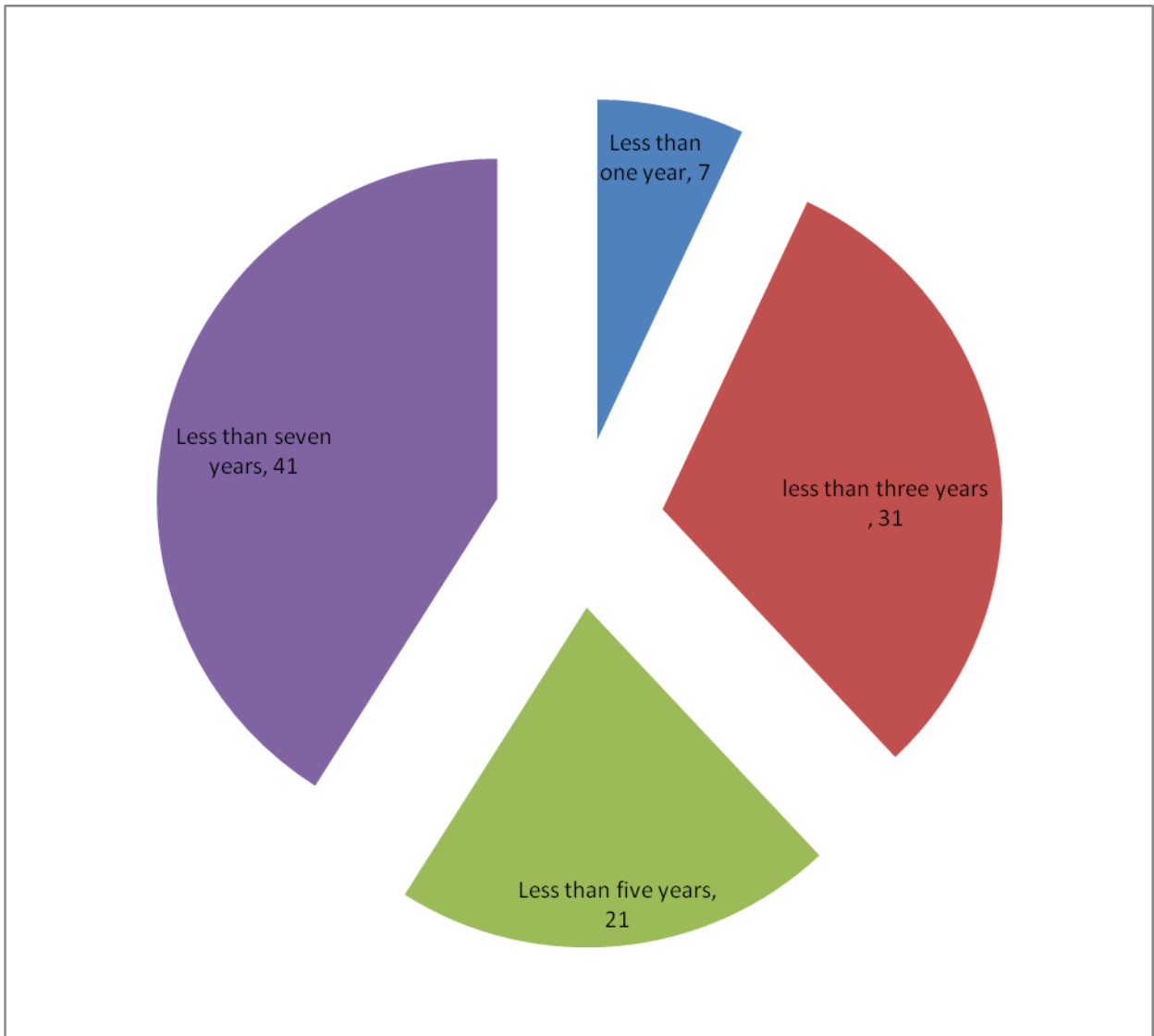
Source: Field survey, 2013.

Figure 5 Length of Service with Present Company

Table 2 what is the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN?

S/N		$\bar{x}$	REMARKS
1	Your company is not criticized for non-participation of employees in making the decisions.	3.7	Disagree
2	The reason for this is because employees do have an adequate level of education for making decisions.	3.5	Disagree
3.	Another reason is willingness of the Manager/heads of the enterprise to share decision-making power with employee	3.7	Agree
4	At the time of making the decisions at all levels, the degree of employees' view have more influence.	4.5	Agree
5	Lack of workforce diversity, illiteracy of the workers and political grouping among the workers affects workers' participation in decision making process.	3.5	Agree
	Grand mean (G$\bar{x}$)	3.8	

Research Question Two

Table 3 presents the mean responds of the respondents on the relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance. The respondents responses were all above 3.5 and were all accepted, with the strong grand mean of 4.1; this shows that there is a relationship between employees' involvement in decision making of the organization and the organizations' firm performance. This is because all the items in table 3 which included: Employee involvement in decision making increases job satisfaction and workforce retention rates; It increases employee morale; it can give higher job satisfaction and greater job security; Improved organizational decision-making capability; Employee Participation can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization; were all accepted with mean above the cut-off point.

Research Question Three

Table 4 indicates the mean responds of the respondents on the form(s) of participation being used in the organization under review. The respondents responses shows that the following were all used in ensuring employees participation in decision making; they included; Labour-management co-operation; Use of Joint consultation between management and employees unions; We use workers' representation on Company Boards; Works councils are the bodies elected by all employees at the workplace with the aim of meeting regularly with the management; We do use collective Bargaining as a means of employee involvement in decision making. All these items stated were all above 3.5 and were all accepted, with the strong Grand Mean of 3.66.

Research Question four

Table 5 revealed that the mean response of the respondents on the research question four, which enquire for the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making in AUN. They agreed and accepted the various statements above under research question. This is because the Grand Mean responses of both are above the cutoff point (3.50). This shows that they agreed on the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making in AUN.

Table 3 Is there a significant relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance?

S/N		$\bar{x}$	REMARKS
6	Employee Participation can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization	4.1	Agree
7	Improved organizational decision-making capability	3.6	Agree
8	it can give higher job satisfaction and greater job security	3.7	Agree
9	It increases employee morale	4.5	Agree
10	Employee involvement in decision making increases job satisfaction and workforce retention rates.	4.6	Agree
	Grand mean $(G\bar{x})$	4.1	Accepted

Table 4: what are the form(s) of participation being used in the organization under review?

S/N		$\bar{x}$	REMARKS
11	We do use collective Bargaining	3.7	Agree
12	Works Councils	3.6	Agree
	Works councils are the bodies elected by all employees at the workplace with the aim of meeting regularly with the management.		
13	We use workers' representation on Company Boards.	3.9	Agree
14	Use of Joint consultation between management and employees unions.	3.5	Agree
15	Labour-management co-operation.	3.6	Agree
	Grand mean (G$\bar{x}$)	3.66	Accepted

Table 5 what are the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making in AUN?

S/N		$\bar{x}$	REMARKS
16	An authoritarian approach of Management (Centralization) can hinder employees' involvement in decision making process.	3.9	Agree
17	Manager is unwilling to share decision-making power with employees	3.5	Agree
18	Manager hesitates to accept employees as valuable partners in making decision	4.2	Agree
19	Inadequate understanding of employees concerning their new roles in management of their enterprises.	3.9	Agree
20	Lack of initiative and support to the participation process from the government and business community.	4.0	Agree
	Grand mean $(G\bar{x})$	3.9	Accepted

Test of Hypotheses

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre employees on the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN.

$H0_2$: There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre on the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making

Table 6 revealed that there was a significant relationship between response of senior staff and junior staff employees on degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN. This is because the $P \geq 0.05$ (0.085) is highly positive significant. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 7 revealed that there was a significant relationship between response of senior staff and junior staff employees on the relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance. This is because the $P \geq 0.05$ (0.096) is highly positive significant. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Table 8 revealed that there was a significant relationship between response of senior staff and junior staff employees on the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making in AUN. This is because the $P \geq 0.05$ (0.090) is highly positive significant. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between the response of senior cadre and lower cadre on the employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance.

Table 6 Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the senior staff and lower cadre workers on the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process in AUN.

Group	N	$\tilde{x}$	SD	SE	r-cal.	P ≥ (0.05)	Remark
Senior staff	77		0.17	0.14			Highly positive
					0.772	P ≥0.085	Significant
Junior staff	150		0.57	0.24			

Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the senior staff and lower cadre workers on the relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance

Group	N	$\tilde{x}$	SD	SE	r-cal.	P ≥ (0.05)	Remark
Senior staff	77		0.33	0.12			Highly positive
		4.1			0.742	P ≥0.096	Significant
Junior staff	150		0.55	0.27			

Table 8: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the senior staff and lower cadre workers on the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making in AUN?

Group	N	$\tilde{x}$	SD	SE	r-cal.	P ≥ (0.05)	Remark
Senior staff	77		0.36	0.12			Highly positive
		3.9			0.772	P ≥0.090	Significant
Junior staff	150		0.61	0.43			

4.2 Findings of the Study

The following findings were made after the careful analysis of the data collated:

i.   One of the findings included that willingness of the Manager/heads of the organization to share decision-making power with employee affects the rate of employee participation in decision making process.

ii. Another finding of the study included also that employee Participation can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization.

iii. Employee involvement in decision making increases job satisfaction, workforce retention rates and increases the morale of the employees.

iv. It also discovered that an authoritarian approach of Management (Centralization) can hinder employees' involvement in decision making process.

v.   The study also discovered that employees participation in decision making improves organizational decision-making capability.

4.4   Discussion of the Findings

One of the findings included that willingness of the Manager/heads of the organization to share decision-making power with employee affects the rate of employee participation in decision making process. This was in line with what Hewitt, (2002) stated that a modern forward-looking business does not keep its employees in the dark about vital decisions affecting them. It trusts them and involves them in decision making at all levels. Command and control is no longer an adequate model. A more open and collaborative framework will exploit the talents of all employees (Hewitt, 2002). Employees must be involved if they are to understand the need for creativity and if they are to be committed to changing their behaviour at work, in new and improved ways.

Another finding of the study included also that employee Participation can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization. Participation tends to improve communication because employees feel more accepted and

involved in the situation. Their self-esteem, job satisfaction and cooperation with management may also improve. The results often are reduced conflict and stress, more commitment to goals, and better acceptance of change. Other research shows that volunteer programs develop employee competencies in such areas as: Teamwork, Planning and implementation, Listening skills, Communication, Project management and Customer focus (Tybout, 2000).

Employee involvement in decision making increases job satisfaction, workforce retention rates and increases the morale of the employees. Employee involvement in decision making serves to create a sense of belonging among the workers as well as a congenial environment in which both the   management and the workers voluntarily contribute to healthy industrial relations (Noah, 2008). In order to increase the workers commitment and humanise the workplace with the intention of improving work performance and good citizenship behaviour, managers need to permit a high degree of employee involvement (Cohen et al., 1997).

Turnover and absence may be reduced because employees feel that they have a better place to work and that they are being more successful in their jobs. The act of participation in itself establishes better communication as people mutually discuss work problems. Management tends to provide   workers with increased information about the organization's fiancés and operations, and this sharing of information allows employees to make better-quality suggestions (Newstrom & Davis, 2004).

Participation especially improves motivation by helping employees understand their paths towards goals. Finally, participation encourages people to accept responsibility for their group activities. It is social processes by which people become self involved in an organization and want to see it work successfully (Newstrom & Davis, 2004).

Participation can have statistically significant effects on performance and motivation (Wagner, 1994). Participate practices may provide power opportunities earlier to minority workers in an increasingly diverse workforce, since such workers need not wait until reaching higher organizational levels. It also helps to satisfy the awakening employee need for meaning and fulfillment at work. Participation typically brings higher output and a better quality of

output. It tends to improve motivation because employees feel more accepted and involved in the situation.

Turnover and absences may be reduced if the employees feel that they have a better place to work (Newstrom & Davis, 2004). Employee motivation is the level of energy, communication and creativity that a company's workers bring to their jobs. One approach to employee motivation has been to view, add-ins to an individual's job as the primary factors in improving performance.

It also discovered that an authoritarian approach of Management (Centralization) can hinder employees' involvement in decision making process. This goes with what US Dept. of Labour (1995) opined that participation mechanisms are often initiated by management in order to improve that firm's capacity to achieve competitive market standards of quality and price and to respond to market changes under conditions of high uncertainty. The Department stated that Managers can draw upon the willingness and preference of an increasingly educated and skilled work force to participate in decisions which affect their immediate working conditions. This raises the issue of whether the renewed interest in participation involves a deliberate attempt in some management cultures to by-pass union representatives when negotiating organizational change (US Dept. of Labour 1995).

The study also discovered that employees' participation in decision making improves organizational decision-making capability. Participative practices may also provide power opportunities earlier to monitory workers in an increasingly diverse workforce, since such workers need not wait until reaching higher organizational levels before being allowed to contribute meaningfully. Participation also seems to help satisfy the awakening employee need for meaning and fulfillment at work. The use of participative practices is noteworthy. The educational level of the workforce often provides workers with unique capacities that can be applied creatively to work problem (Tybout, 2000).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Summary

There is an assumption held by many scholars and managers that if employees are adequately informed about matters concerning them and are afforded the opportunity to make decisions relevant to their work, then there will be benefits for both the organization and the individual. Workers who have greater choice concerning how to do their own work have been found to have high job satisfaction and consequently high performance. A significant relationship between frequency of employee's consultation and organization commitment has also been established (Noah, 2008). Scholars have also argued that employees' involvement in decision making may primarily serve to make them feel good about their jobs and organizations but do little to increase firm's performance.

5.2   Conclusions

Business organization all over the world plays vital roles in the growth and development of the economy. It is believed that the effectiveness and efficiency in performing these roles may inter-alia depend largely on employee involvement in decision making of the firms. However, the findings of the study reveal that on the average, the employee involvement in decision making of participating firms was low. This implies the possibility of managers of the firms not being critical about employee involvement in decision making, probably because of their practice of high power distance culture. In which case the employees are expected to be seen and not heared.

The findings of this study indicate a significant relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance. The results also reveal that firms with high employee involvement in decision making outperform firms with low employee involvement in decision making.

This study has some important implications for management of firms. It signifies the need for firms to exhibit high level of commitment to employee involvement in decision

making in order to enhance their performance. In other words, an intensive employee involvement in decision making regime is a probable approach for increasing firm performance in competitive markets with uncertainty.

5.3   Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

i. One of the major findings included the willingness of the Manager/heads of the organization to share decision-making power with employee affects the rate of employee participation in decision making process. It is recommended that participative climate which promote feeling of psychological empowerment be created and emphasis is placed on individual contribution and initiative.

ii. Another finding of the study included also that employee Participation can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization. A participative system is a huge and complex issue. Important efforts should, however, be made in terms of educating and training employees in general, and particularly worker representatives on the principles and purpose of participation. This will ensure the appropriate knowledge, skills and even attitudes to make participation work.

iii. Employee involvement in decision making increases job satisfaction, workforce retention rates and increases the morale of the employees. Therefore, the roles of the government and top management in promoting an effective involvement of employee in the decision-making process, should be made central in every organization.

iv. It also discovered that an authoritarian approach of Management can hinder employees' involvement in decision making process. Hence, there is needs to be a total decentralization. Rigid system position classification schemes and archaic work rules such as the centralization of authority and control or authoritarian approach should be eliminated to enhance flexibility, adaptation, and responsiveness to facilitate employee cooperation and team building and to decentralise the decision processes.

v. The study also discovered that employees participation in decision making improves organizational decision-making capability. It is recommended that employees need to be given the authority to participate in substantive decisions, employees need to have training or experience with appropriate decision-making skills and Incentives to participate (either implicit or explicit) must be present.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Questionnaire Addressed to the Employees of America University of Nigeria (AUN).

Topic: Participation of Employees in Decision-making in American University of Nigeria.

This survey is being carried out to determine the perceptions that employees of America University of Nigeria (AUN) possess with regard to their participation the in decision-making process.

This survey will contribute towards research being carried out for a dissertation in the Masters of Business Administration Degree offered by the Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola.

Kindly oblige by taking few minutes of your time to assist in supporting me in this study, by completing the questionnaire attached.

Please note that you cannot be identified from your responses: individual responses to this survey to remain anonymous. It would be greatly appreciated if you could complete this questionnaire.

OBOT, UDUAK GODWIN
Researcher

Section A:

Demographic information

N.B: Mark with an "X" at your appropriate answer for each factor listed below.

1. Gender Distribution

Male	Female

2. Age Distribution

Less than 25 years	Between 25-40 years	More than 40 years

3. Educational level:

Primary school	Secondary school	Degree/ HND	Postgraduate	Others (specify)

4.   Denomination of Post Occupied:

Department manager	Lower manager	Agents

5. Length of Service with Present Company

Less than one year	More than three years	Less than five years	Less than seven years	Less than ten years

Section B:
Information Related to the Study Problem.

Key

SA—Strongly Agree,

A—Agree,

SD—Strongly Disagree,

D—Disagree

U—Undecided

What is the degree of employee participation in the decision-making process AUN?

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	SD	D	U
6	Your company (as other private organizations) is criticized for non-participation of employees in making the decisions.					
7	The reason for this is because employees do not have an adequate level of education for					

S/N	ITEM					
	making decisions.					
8	Unwillingness of the Manager of the enterprise to share decision-making power with employee					
9	At the time of making the decisions at all levels, the degree of employees' view have little influence.					
10	Lack of workforce diversity, illiteracy of the workers and political grouping among the workers affects workers' participation in decision making process.					

Research Question Two

Is there a significant relationship between employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance?

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	SD	D	U
11	Employee Participation can improve the communication and understanding which can leads to less conflict in the organization					
12	Improved organizational decision-making capability					
13	it can give higher job					

S/N	ITEM					
	satisfaction and greater job security					
14	Increased employee morale					
15	Employee involvement increases job satisfaction and workforce retention rates.					

Research Question Three

What are the form(s) of participation being used in the organization under review?

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	SD	D	U
16	We use collective Bargaining					
17	**Works Councils** Works councils are the bodies elected by all employees at the workplace with the aim of meeting regularly with the management.					
18	We use workers' representation on Company Boards.					
19	Joint consultation.					
20	Labour management co-operation.					

Research Question four

What are the obstacles to the participation of personnel in decision-making?

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	SD	D	U
21	An authoritarian approach of management (Centralization)					
22	Manager is unwilling to share decision-making power with employees					
23	Manager hesitates to accept employees as valuable partners in making decision					
24	Inadequate understanding of employees concerning their new roles in management of their enterprises.					
25	Lack of initiative and support to the participation process from the government and business community.					

26. How do you think employee participation can be improved in your organization?

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Thanks for participating.