

The Participatory Decision-Making Styles of the Principals of Vocational High Schools in Lembah Gumanti District, West Sumatera

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Abstract: *The Participatory Decision-Making Styles of the Principals of Vocational High School in Lembah Gumanti District, West Sumatera.* **Objective:** This study aims to obtain information on teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, West Sumatera. **Method:** This quantitative descriptive study was applied to all teachers at Vocational High Schools in Lembah Gumanti district with a total of 67 teachers. The research instrument was a Likert scale questionnaire with 5 alternative answers of which the validity and reliability had been assessed. The data were analyzed using the mean formula to get the respondents' average answers. **Findings:** Four characteristics of the principals' participatory decision-making styles, namely: (1) low direction and high support, (2) two-way communication, (3) involving subordinates, and (4) power, showed a good category with an attainment level of 76.77%. **Conclusion:** The principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, West Sumatera has good performance on participatory decision-making styles.

Keywords: participatory decision-making styles, principals, vocational high schools.

Abstrak: *Gaya Pengambilan Keputusan Partisipatif Kepala Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan di Kecamatan Lembah Gumanti, Sumatera Barat.* **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memperoleh informasi tentang persepsi guru tentang gaya pengambilan keputusan partisipatif kepala sekolah menengah kejuruan di Kecamatan Lembah Gumanti, Sumatera Barat. **Metode:** Penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif ini diterapkan pada 67 guru sekolah menengah kejuruan di Kecamatan Lembah Gumanti. Instrumen penelitian adalah kuesioner skala likert dengan 5 jawaban alternatif yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya. Data dianalisis berdasarkan rata-rata nilai jawaban responden. **Temuan:** Empat karakteristik gaya pengambilan keputusan partisipatif kepala sekolah yaitu: (1) sedikit memerintah dan banyak memberi dukungan, (2) komunikasi dua arah, (3) melibatkan bawahan, dan (4) kekuatan, menunjukkan kategori yang baik dengan tingkat pencapaian 76,77%. **Kesimpulan:** Kepala sekolah menengah kejuruan di Kabupaten Lembah Gumanti, Sumatera Barat memiliki perfoma baik pada gaya pengambilan keputusan partisipatif.

Kata kunci: gaya pengambilan keputusan partisipatif, kepala sekolah, sekolah menengah kejuruan.

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■ INTRODUCTION

Organization is a place or tool for a group of people to work together in order to achieve their goal with some tasks that have been appointed for each member. It is similar to school. School is educational organization that has member, task, and goal to achieve.

Nevertheless, for each goal, sometimes it is found some problems or obstacles that can obstruct or influence the goal. According to Purwanto (2016) problem that can be found in school are: violation of the school rules, the lack of parent support, the lack of facility, the lack of discipline from the teacher, the lack of teachers' motivation to develop the competence, and the teachers' difficulty to work together as a team. Therefore, some policies and effective solution are needed to solve each problem. The policy and the solution appear because of the decision that is made by school as an organization.

According to Stoner on Makawimbang (2012) that the decision-making is a process that is used to choose an action to solve a problem. He also states that the decision-making is very important in management and a main task of a leader. It means that the principal is the key in decision-making in the school. Each leader included the Principals is always related to decision-making because decision-making is the core of the leadership. This statement is in accordance with Wahab (2010) who states that the principal is responsible in the decision-making with the group.

The principal's responsibility to make a decision in school should be a good and correct decision, and able to solve the problem that is faced. It is because each decision made by the principal influences the school sustainability. Emery (2017), leaders should make a right decision to protect their organization. Rochaety et al (2009) adds that the decision-making by the principal as a leader will influence the school

sustainability and have an impact on the behaviour of the subordinates.

In decision-making, the principal needs to consider the effect from the decision that is made. Considering and following the steps of decision making also involving people in the organization such as the teachers, parents, school committee, or education supervisor are needed in the decision-making.

Furthermore the principal should pay attention to the style of decision making to help the principal get the effective decision. The style in decision-making is the method that is used by leader to influence and motivate the member to make a decision. The decision-making style indirectly influence the quality of the decision. Koutouzis, Manolis, & Milliara, Konsantina (2017) find that the use of the right decision-making style by the principal based on the right condition results the effective decision and accordance with the school's need.

There are several decision-making styles that should be considered by the principal. According to Rival & Muyaldi (2012), the decision-making style consists of (1) directive, with characteristics of a quick process of decision making and oriented to short term, (2) analytic, adaptive and thorough decision-making, (3) conceptual, oriented to long term and often press off creative solution for the problem, (4) behavioral, trying to avoid conflict and strive for acceptance. Kazeem (2014) research finds that leadership style and decision-making is theoretically different but practically very related. The most liked leadership style and decision-making is participative leadership style and consultative decision-making approach.

On Thoha (2012) it is written that the leadership style in making decisions consists of (1) the instructive style which is characterized by problem solving and decision-making is only done by the leader, (2) the consultative style has the

characteristics of the leader hearing ideas and suggestions from subordinates about the decision but permanent decision-making on the leader (3) participatory style is characterized by exchanging ideas between the leader and followers subsequently the responsibility of problem solving and decision-making is largely on the part of followers (4) delegation style is characterized by the leader discussing the problem together with subordinates so as to achieve agreement then the decision-making process is delegated as a whole to subordinates.

Based on the expert opinion above, that there are four types of leader styles in decision making, one of which is participatory style. Participative decision making style ideally involves subordinates in decision-making by leaders. Assuming that subordinates have a lot of information about a problem that will be solved because it is they who experience the problem. Thus, leaders need to involve subordinates in decision-making so that the decisions made are in accordance with the problems experienced. Ballantyne (2012) explains that in our society where information and knowledge develop exponentially, leaders need to engage subordinates and stakeholders to help them in decision-making.

The research of Chizoba et al. (2019) found that participatory decision-making style can influence the achievement of organizational goals. With a sample of 136 staff from Vision Nigeria Limited, located at Abuja Kubwa express road, it was found that employee participation in decision-making significantly increased productivity, motivation and achievement of organizational goals. Omar, Uzel, & Ibua (2017) also found that participatory decision-making can also increase employee job satisfaction in Parastatals in Mombasa County, Kenya. Research by Aliyu (2019) shows that participation in decision-making can improve employee performance, increase productivity, production,

and efficiency of organizational employees. Participation in the decision-making process gives each employee the opportunity to voice their opinions, and to share their knowledge with others. So as to improve relations between managers and employees, this also encourages a strong sense of teamwork among workers. Daniel (2019) and Ugwu, Okoroji, & Chukwu (2019) found that employee participation in decision-making had an impact on organizational performance. The results of the study show a statistically significant relationship between employee involvement in decision-making and organizational performance.

Many research review such as Chizoba et al. (2019); Omar, Uzel, & Ibua (2017); Aliyu (2019); Daniel (2019) and Ugwu, Okoroji, Chukwu (2019) show the positive influence of leaders' decision-making style on the organization. However, this research has not yet explained how the characteristics of participatory decision making styles are used by leaders. Therefore, information is needed regarding the characteristics of the decision-making style of participation by the principal according to the teacher's perception. Thus, research was conducted to find out how teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, Solok Regency, West Sumatra. This study will provide information on teacher perceptions about how well principals use participatory decision making styles seen from the four characteristics of participatory decision-making styles. There are four characteristics of participatory decision-making styles according to Thoha (2012), namely: (1) low direction and high support, (2) two-way communication, (3) involving subordinates and (4) power.

Based on the four characteristics of the participatory decision-making style, the following research questions are prepared: (a) what is the teachers' perceptions of the participatory

decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, viewed from the direction and support?. Moreover, (b) what is the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, viewed from the characteristics of two way communication?; (c) what is the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, viewed from the characteristics of involving subordinates?; (d) what is the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, Solok Regency viewed from the characteristics of leadership power?

■ METHODS

Types of Research

This type of research is descriptive research, which is related to data collection to provide a description or affirmation of a concept or phenomenon in order to answer questions that can ultimately take a general conclusion from the existing reality. Descriptive research aims to identify and describe phenomena that exist in the study population (Loeb et al, 2017). Therefore, by using this type of descriptive research, this study can identify and describe as clearly as possible the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, Solok Regency, West Sumatra.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were all teachers in Vocational High School of Lembah Gumanti Subdistrict, Solok Regency, consisting are 2 public schools and 1 private school totaling 67 teachers, with the following details:

Table 1. Total of Research Populations

No	Schools	Total of Teachers
1.	SMKN 1 Lembah Gumanti	40
2.	SMKN 2 Lembah Gumanti	19
3	SMKS Pariwisata Lembah Gumanti	8
Total		67

Research Instrument

The type of research instrument used was a questionnaire. The main objective of the questionnaire in research is to obtain relevant information in the most reliable and valid manner (Taherdoost, 2016). The questionnaire was declared valid after being calculated using the Spearman rank and reliable using the Alpha formula.

The questionnaire used in this study was prepared using a Likert Scale. The Linkert scale is used to measure the attitude of a person or group of people with a series of questions that have supplemented alternative answers (Albaum, 1997). Alternative answers consist of five categories: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, and Never.

Data analysis

Data analysis techniques use Mean formula to calculate the average respondent's answers. Data analysis begins with data verification then data classification and tabulation. After that score each answer for Always = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2, and Never = 1. Data processing and data analysis using the Mean formula to calculate the average answer. After that, look for the percentage of achievement score. Next, compare the results of the percentages with table 2 in the scale of assessment categories to see whether teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District.

Table 2. Rating Category Scale

Scale	Category
81 – 100%	Very good
61 – 80%	Good
41 – 60%	Passably
21 – 40%	Deficient
0 – 20%	Not good

■ **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Findings in this study include the perceptions of teachers in three vocational schools in Lembah Gumanti District, Solok Regency, about the participatory decision-making style of principals. There are four characteristics

of participatory decision-making styles, (1) low direction and high support, (2) two-way communication, (3) involving subordinates and (4) power. This study will examine teacher perceptions about participatory decision-making styles in view of these four characteristics.

Low Direction and High Support

Teachers’ perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, Solok Regency, West Sumatra viewed from the direction and support can be described in Figure 1:

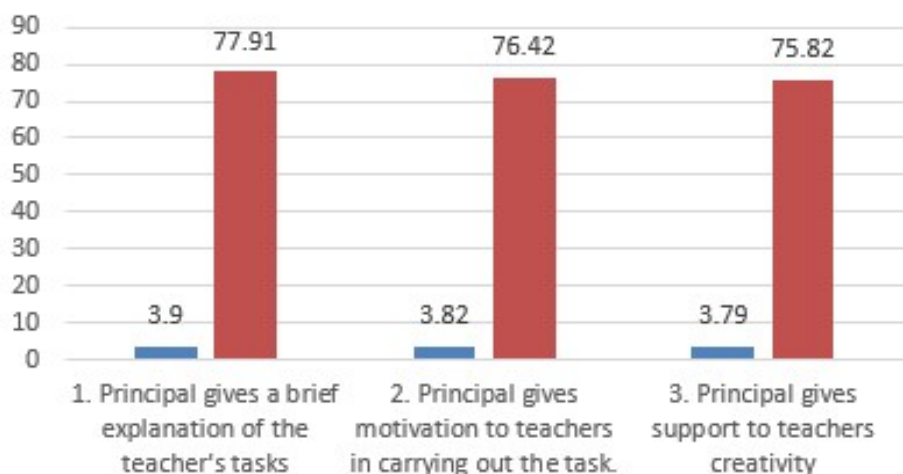


Figure 1. Teachers’ perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, viewed from direction and support. Mean (blue), % achievements (red).

The participatory decision-making style used by principals of vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District is characterized by low directives and high levels of support. The high level of support from school principals can be seen in figure 1, statement number 2 that principals provide motivation to teachers in carrying out assignments with an average score of 3.82 and a percentage of achievement of 75.82%. While the characteristics of the low level

of direction can be seen in statement number 1 principal gives a brief explanation of the teacher’s tasks obtaining an average score of 3.9 with a percentage of achievement of 77.91%. If calculated overall average will get an average score of 3.84 and the percentage of achievement 76.72%. Based on the scale of achievement categories in table 2, the 76.72% achievement percentage indicates the good category. So that the overall teachers’ perceptions of the

participatory decision-making style of principals of the vocational high school in Lembah Gumanti District viewed from direction and support is good.

Above results are consistent with some experts who suggest that participatory decision-making styles are characterized with low direction and high support. According to Thoha (2012), this participatory decision-making style has the characteristics of high leader behavior and low directing behavior. The same was stated by Wahyudi (2012) that participatory style is characterized by high supportive and low level of direction. In addition, he also added that in the participatory style the principal motivated and supported the creativity of the teacher and trained the teacher in decision-making. José, Lúcia, &

José (2017) of 234 teachers in middle and secondary schools in Portugal showed the support of the principal, through the influence of the variables 'emotional support and information' and 'support for professional development', could increase teacher involvement in collaboration. Whereas Hughes, Matt, O'Reilly (2015) one of the supports that can be given by the principal is to provide feedback about the work of the teacher.

Two-Way Communication

Teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District viewed from the characteristics of two-way communication is described in Figure 2:

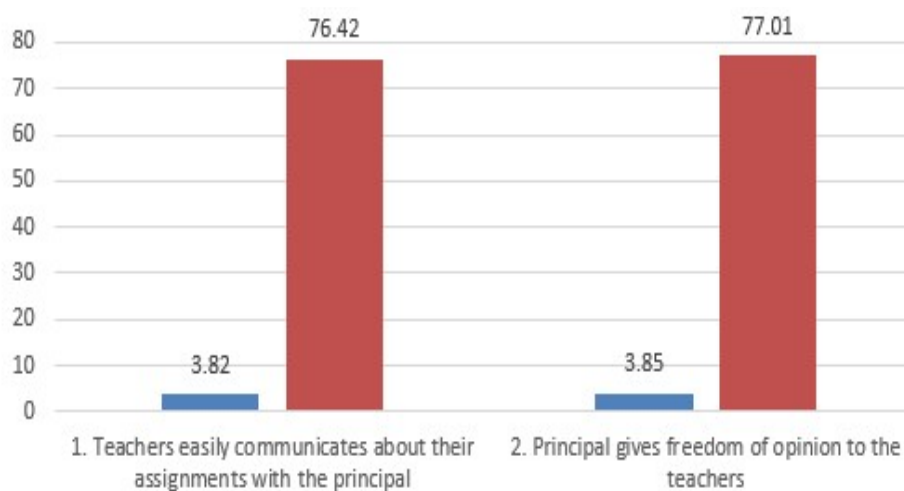


Figure 2. Teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals viewed from the characteristics of two-way communication. Mean (blue), % achievement (red).

Based on figure 2 teacher perceptions about the characteristics of participatory decision-making style is characterized by two-way communication between the principal and the teacher obtained a percentage of achievement of 76.42% in statement 1 and 77.01% in statement 2. If calculated as an overall average on the

indicator this obtains an average achievement rate of 76.72%. Referring to the table 2 scale of the assessment category with 76.72% achievement percentage indicates the good category. So that teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti

District viewed from the characteristics of two-way communication is good.

In a participatory decision-making style emphasizing to involvement of subordinates in decision making, the communication used is two-way communication. According to Setiawan (2013), leaders who have a participative style usually in decision making and determining the target of leaders always involve subordinates and communication patterns that occur are two-way patterns by giving freedom to subordinates by expressing all ideas or problems related to the implementation of work.

Therefore, principals need to improve communication skills to establish clear, meaningful

and bi-directional communication with teachers (Sezgin & Emre, 2016). The research of Ibrahim (2014) in the Al Ain city government schools in the UAE explains that there are several communication styles that can be used by principals: expressiveness style, supportiveness style, preciseness style, niceness style, reflectiveness style.

Involving subordinates

Teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District viewed from the characteristics of involving subordinates is described in Figure 3.

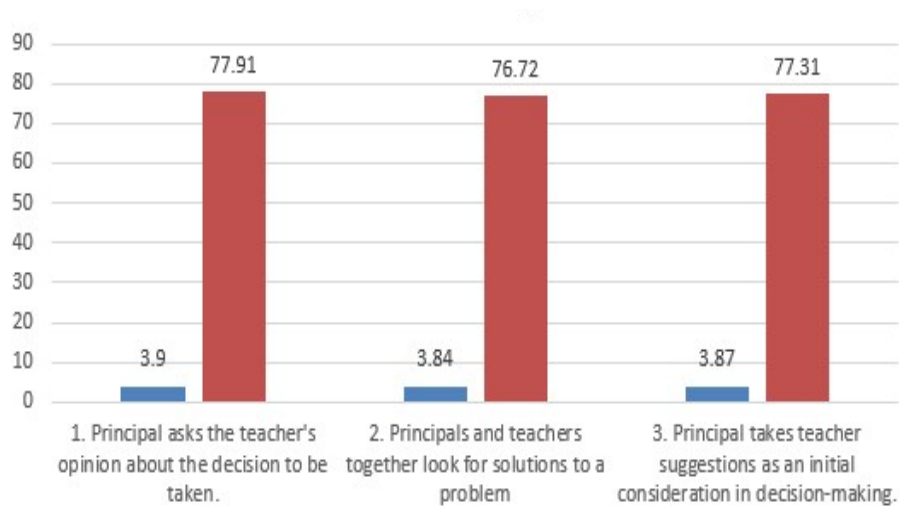


Figure 3. Teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals viewed from the characteristics of involving subordinates. Mean (blue), % achievement (red).

In figure 3 it can be seen that statement number 1 obtained a percentage of achievement of 77.91%; statement number 2 obtained 76.72% and statement number 3 obtained 77.31%. If calculated the average percentage of achievement on this indicator is 77.31%. Based on table 2 the rating category scale with a percentage of achievement of 77.31% in the good category. So Teachers' perceptions of the

participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District, Solok Regency viewed from the characteristics of involving subordinates that are already good.

Several experts explain that one of the salient characteristics of participatory decision-making style is the high involvement of subordinates in decision-making. Usman (2013)

explains that participatory style has the characteristics if the leader makes a decision then the decision is taken after heed the group's opinion. Paying attention to the teacher's opinion before making a decision is considered important because the teacher has many inputs and influences in the school (Lin, 2014). As said House & Mitchell in Nurdin & Sibaweh (2015) that participatory decision making style is to consult with subordinates and their ideas to be used as calculations when making decisions and taking important actions. Silong, Hassan & Madina (2009) Participatory leadership is

leadership that involves subordinates in decision-making, consulting with employees, gathering ideas and subordinates into consideration before making decisions, consulting subordinates about matters related to work, asking for opinions of subordinates, and often try to use subordinate ideas in decision-making.

Leader's power

Teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals viewed from the characteristics of leaders' power is described in figure 4.

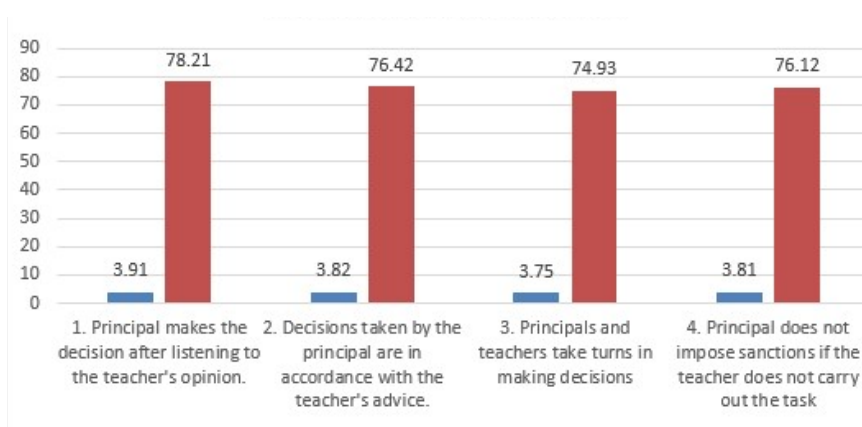


Figure 4. Teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals viewed from the characteristics of leaders' power.

The characteristics of a leader's power in the decision-making style of participation can be interpreted by the leader's control in decision-making. In figure 4, statement number 1 gets the highest achievement percentage of 78.21%, principal makes the decision after listening to the teacher's opinion in good category. While statement number 3: Principals and teachers take turns in making decisions get the lowest achievement percentage of 74.93%. This means statement number 3 has a low response from the teacher, and it can also be interpreted that teacher and principal have not alternately made decisions. Meanwhile, according to Thoha (2012) control over problem solving and decision-making is held

alternately between leaders and subordinates. In this part, the leaders role is listener. Responsibility for problem solving and decision-making is mostly on the part of followers. This is only natural because followers have the ability to carry out tasks. Ejimabo (2015) revealed that organizational leaders should allow their skilled subordinates - individuals and/or groups to participate in the decision making process mostly when their involvement will enhance the quality and/or acceptance of the decision by everybody at the workplace. However, if calculated the average percentage of achievement in this indicator obtained an achievement percentage of 76.42%. Based on table 2 the scale of the

assessment category with 76.42% achievement percentage is in the good category. So that the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District viewed from the characteristics of leaders' power is good.

Masaong (2011) adds that leaders who adopt a participatory style have the primary role of providing facilities and communicating. In this style is characterized by the weak power of the leader to set their own decisions, and the punishment also does not apply. This is reinforced by the opinion of Wahab (2011) explaining that a leader who uses a participative style does not need to be a person who is feared because he likes to punish and sanction. Furthermore, House

and Mitchell in Nurdin and Sibaweh (2015) explained that participatory decision making style is to consult with subordinates and their ideas to be used as calculations when making decisions and taking important actions.

Based on table 3, the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District are good with an average score of 3.84 and the percentage of achievement reaches 76.77%. If the participatory decision-making style has been done well by the principal, it will have a good impact on teacher satisfaction with the decisions that have been made. According to Purwanto (2012), participative decision-making style is a way of making decisions by involving subordinates.

Table 3. Average score of four characteristics of participatory decision making styles

No	Characteristics	Average	% Achievement	Criteria
1	Low Direction and High Support	3.84	76.72	Good
2	Two-way Communication	3.84	76.72	Good
3	Involve Subordinates	3.87	77.31	Good
4	Power	3.82	76.42	Good
	Average	3.84	76.77	Good

The research results show that participatory decision-making can increase the effectiveness of an organization or institution. This is proven in the study of Pashiardis (1994) that teachers can take a greater role in the overall success of schools when they are committed to being active participants in the decision making process. In addition, teachers need to feel that they are needed for their role by the school in addition to teaching in their classrooms. So schools must understand that the whole system will benefit when teachers play an active role in controlling their work environment.

The participatory decision-making style that is characterized by the involvement of the teacher

in decision-making also impacts on teacher performance. Ayeni's research (2018) revealed that teacher involvement in decision-making had a positive influence on teacher performance in Nigeria. Participatory style principals are considered to foster teacher job satisfaction, because they participate in formulating school goals, how to achieve goals, and what needs are needed to achieve goals. The Jalilzadeh, Abbasi & Sardar (2013) study found that the principal's participatory style was significantly positively related to the efficiency of teacher performance. This can happen because the teacher has information about the decisions to be made by the principal. Danim (2010) explains that this

participatory style is used on a team of workers who know their work. The leader knows the problem, but doesn't have all the information. Meanwhile, employees know their work and can become a team.

In addition to having an impact on teacher performance, the principal's participatory decision-making style also has a positive relationship with teacher commitment. Safaei and Ashtari (2014) research results show that participatory decision-making by leaders has a positive and meaningful correlation to the commitment of teachers in the female high school in Karaj City, Iran. Still in the same source shows that the more principals consulted with teachers in making decisions the higher the teacher's commitment. Furthermore, Huang (2011) found that the participatory style of the principal had a positive and significant relationship with the commitment of elementary school teachers in the Sarikei district, Sarawak. Edmondson, (1999) provides a reason that the principal's participatory style helps teachers to find new opportunities and challenges and enables them to learn, acquire, share, and combine knowledge.

■ CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study shows that the teachers' perceptions of the participatory decision-making styles of the principals of the vocational high schools in Lembah Gumanti District are good with. Participatory decision-making style is characterized by low direction and high support, two-way communication, involving subordinates, and power which all the characteristics get a good response by the teachers. To be more effective, headmaster and teachers can improve communication to create mutual understanding and the decision making process can run smoothly and can solve problems.

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