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**Research Article**

# Decision Making of Teacher Educators - A Study

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**ABSTRACT**

The current study sought to determine the level of decision-making among teacher educators and to examine whether any significant differences exist in decision-making of teacher educators based on gender, designation, subject specialization, and marital status. Designed as a descriptive research study, it utilized a survey method to collect data for hypothesis testing. A sample of 342 teacher educators from the Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, and Thoothukudi districts were selected through stratified random sampling. Data analysis was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The findings indicated that only 18.7% of the teacher educators demonstrated a high level of decision-making. Additionally, no significant differences in decision-making were found between sub groups based on gender, designation, subject specialization and marital status.

## Introduction

'Teachers are made, not born' in contrary to the assumption 'Teachers are born, not made' (Mohanty, 2008). For this process of teacher preparation some decisions are inevitable from the part of teacher educators. According to Mc Farland, (2001), "A decision is an act of choice where in an executive forms a conclusion about what must be done in a given situation" (Megrath, 2010). A decision represents a course of behaviour chosen from a number of possible alternatives. But, decision making is the process of selecting the best possible options from the list of all alternatives. Andrew M Colman (2009) defines decision-making as, "the act or process of making a preferred action or course of action from a set of alternatives". Sometime teacher educators have to take decision even there is no alternatives. But, decision making requires a person bestowed with the responsibility to possess certain skills, of which intelligence is the most important. Experience also play a crucial role in the decision making process. Decisions are made to attain certain goal/s and so, it is an unceasing process. But it has to be done properly, correctly, scientifically and systematically. Probably decision making is considered as a cognitive process which involves imagination, reasoning and judgment. Ultimately all the decisions taken by the teacher educators help to realise the learning outcomes and for the welfare and upliftment of the students as well as the institutions.

## Need and Significance of the Study

As a cognitive process, decision making helps to find out or select the solution in every situation. Teacher educators play a crucial role in shaping the future teachers, making decisions that impact not only their instructional process but also the overall learning experience of teacher candidates (Bhatia, 2001) in specific and the progress of the nation in a long run. So decision-making is considered as a core element of effective teaching and leadership in education. Modern educational environments are dynamic and complex, requiring teacher educators to make well-informed decisions that consider diverse student needs, instructional goals, and evolving educational standards. In an era of rapidly changing educational requirements, this study can contribute to the development of adaptive competencies among teacher educators, by enabling them to respond effectively to new challenges in the form of taking appropriate and timely decisions. So, the reflection on decision-making processes encourages teacher educators to become more aware of their teaching methods, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and lifelong learning within teacher education. Thus, the present study on the decision-making of teacher educators is needed to advance understanding of this skill and to support the ongoing development of effective, adaptable, and reflective teacher educators.

## Title of the Problem

The present problem is entitled as "Decision Making of Teacher Educators - A Study".

### Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the level of decision making and its dimensions of teacher educators.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in decision making of teacher educators with respect to gender, designation, subject, and marital status.

### Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in their decision making and its dimensions.
2. There is no significant difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in their decision making and its dimensions.
3. There is no significant difference between arts and science subject teacher educators in their decision making and its dimensions.
4. There is no significant difference between unmarried and married teacher educators in their decision making and its dimensions.

## Methodology

This study is considered as descriptive research, as it involves data collection to test hypotheses through survey method. The data were gathered using Decision-Making Scale (DPDMS) developed and validated by Delwin & Punitha (2022), the investigator and the research supervisor. The scale consists of 36 items across three dimensions: Thinking Pattern (10 items), Time Management (12 items), and Dependability (14 items). Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) with scoring values assigned as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for positive items, and 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for negatively phrased items. The study sample comprised 342 teacher educators from Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, and Thoothukudi districts, selected via stratified random sampling technique.

## Data Analysis

The statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, t-test and F-test were used for analyzing the collected data and are presented as below;

### Level of Decision Making and Its Dimensions of Teacher Educators

**Table 1: Level of Decision Making and its Dimensions of Teacher Educators**

| Dimensions | Low | | Moderate | | High | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Thinking Pattern | 49 | 14.3 | 229 | 67.0 | 64 | 18.7 |
| Time Management | 47 | 13.7 | 220 | 64.3 | 75 | 21.9 |
| Dependability | 54 | 15.8 | 224 | 65.5 | 64 | 18.7 |
| **Decision Making** | 56 | 16.4 | 222 | 64.9 | 64 | 18.7 |

It is inferred from the above table that 16.4% of teacher educators have low, 64.9% of them have moderate and 18.7% of them have high level of decision making.

### Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in their decision making and its dimensions.

**Table 2: Difference between Male and Female Teacher Educators in their Decision Making and its Dimensions**

| Dimensions | Category | N | Mean | S.D. | t-value | Remarks at 5% level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking Pattern | Male | 76 | 38.83 | 5.45 | 0.111 | NS |
| | Female | 266 | 38.76 | 4.951 | | |
| Time Management | Male | 76 | 44.54 | 7.44 | 0.833 | NS |
| | Female | 266 | 43.78 | 6.86 | | |
| Dependability | Male | 76 | 53.83 | 8.28 | 0.142 | NS |
| | Female | 266 | 53.68 | 7.72 | | |
| **Decision Making** | Male | 76 | 137.20 | 18.17 | 0.438 | NS |
| | Female | 266 | 136.22 | 16.83 | | |

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between male and female teacher educators in their decision making and its dimension namely thinking pattern, time management and dependability as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

### Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in their decision making and its dimensions.

**Table 3: Difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in Their Decision Making and Its Dimensions**

| Dimensions | Category | N | Mean | S.D. | t-value | Remarks at 5% level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking Pattern | Assistant Professor | 319 | 38.70 | 5.08 | 0.950 | NS |
| | Associate Professor | 23 | 39.74 | 4.71 | | |
| Time Management | Assistant Professor | 319 | 43.86 | 6.89 | 0.900 | NS |
| | Associate Professor | 23 | 45.22 | 8.25 | | |
| Dependability | Assistant Professor | 319 | 53.62 | 7.83 | 0.813 | NS |
| | Associate Professor | 23 | 55.00 | 8.03 | | |
| **Decision Making** | Assistant Professor | 319 | 136.18 | 17.05 | 1.021 | NS |
| | Associate Professor | 23 | 139.96 | 18.00 | | |

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in their decision making and its dimensions namely thinking pattern, time management and dependability as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

### Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between arts and science subject teacher educators in their decision making and its dimensions.

**Table 4: Difference between Arts and Science Subject Teacher Educators in Their Decision Making and Its Dimensions**

| Dimensions | Category | N | Mean | S.D. | t-value | Remarks at 5% level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking Pattern | Arts | 167 | 39.01 | 4.97 | 0.857 | NS |
| | Science | 175 | 38.54 | 5.14 | | |
| Time Management | Arts | 167 | 44.37 | 6.84 | 1.089 | NS |
| | Science | 175 | 43.55 | 7.12 | | |
| Dependability | Arts | 167 | 53.47 | 7.92 | 0.560 | NS |
| | Science | 175 | 53.95 | 7.77 | | |
| **Decision Making** | Arts | 167 | 136.86 | 16.95 | 0.440 | NS |
| | Science | 175 | 136.04 | 17.31 | | |

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between arts and science teacher educators in their decision making and its dimension namely thinking pattern, time management and dependability as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

### Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference between unmarried and married teacher educators in their decision making and its dimensions.

**Table 4.39: Difference between Unmarried and Married Teacher Educators in Their Decision Making and Its Dimensions**

| Dimensions | Category | N | Mean | S.D. | t-value | Remarks at 5% level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking Pattern | Unmarried | 56 | 38.70 | 4.51 | 0.122 | NS |
| | Married | 286 | 38.79 | 5.17 | | |
| Time Management | Unmarried | 56 | 42.39 | 7.53 | 1.830 | NS |
| | Married | 286 | 44.26 | 6.85 | | |
| Dependability | Unmarried | 56 | 52.54 | 8.03 | 1.234 | NS |
| | Married | 286 | 53.95 | 7.79 | | |
| **Decision Making** | Unmarried | 56 | 133.63 | 17.52 | 1.347 | NS |
| | Married | 286 | 136.99 | 17.01 | | |

(At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between unmarried and married teacher educators in their decision making and its dimension namely thinking pattern, time management and dependability as the calculated 't' values are less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

## Findings and Discussion

The research result revealed that most of the teacher educators, i.e., 64.9% of them possess moderate level of decision making and only 18.7% of them have high level decision making. This may be due to the reason that teacher educators in many educational settings, may work within a structured and framework. They may take snap decisions. But, the permanent or firm decision needs careful thoughts because the policies, curricula, and administrative procedures of the institution may limit their autonomy, leading them to operate within a fixed boundaries, since they may depend upon the higher order organizational and administrative hierarchy. This may discourage independent decision-making and restrict opportunities to make high-level decisions, keeping many educators in a moderate decision-making category.

The research results also showed that, there is no significant difference between male and female, assistant professors and associate professors, arts and science subjects, married and unmarried teacher educators in their decision making.

## Conclusion

This study reveals that a significant proportion of teacher educators exhibit an average level of decision-making ability, signaling an urgent call for policy makers and educational administrators to prioritize and enhance focus on decision-making skills within the field. The findings support that decision-making skill is an integral part of teacher educators' professional practices, with direct relationship with the quality of teacher preparation. These insights underscore the need for ongoing professional development programmes that incorporate structured decision-making frameworks, which could substantially improve teacher training quality and advance overarching goals in educational reform and student success.

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