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## **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Decision making is the process of choosing actions that are directed towards the resolution. It can be defined as “the selection from among alternatives of a course of action: it is at the core of planning”. The decision making process can be carried out either by individuals acting alone or by groups. There are several models and theories which are developed to explain decision making and how effectively you can make a decision.

Decision making is a process of selection from a set of alternative courses of action which is thought to fulfill the objectives of the decision problem more satisfactorily than others. Decision making is an essential part of every function of management. In the words of Peter F. Drucker, “Whatever a manager does, he does through decision making.” When we talk of teachers it can be seen that a teacher is continuously involved in decision making whether it is regarding school activities or related student centered activities etc. Knowingly or unknowingly a teacher is always at decision making. Decision making involves thinking and deciding before doing and so is inherent in every activity. That is the reason decision making is often called the “essence” of managing.

No one can survive without effective decision making. Some of the decisions may be of a routine type and repetitive in nature and some may be strategic in nature which may require a lot of systematic and scientific analysis. In the educational sector, a teacher is always a decision maker. Teachers are expected to make decisions that affect the growth and development of the students in their care.

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## **8.2 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the importance and process of decision making,
- discuss the models of decision making,
- explain the relativity of creativity and decision making,
- discuss common errors in decision making.

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## **8.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION MAKING**

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Decision making is important for organizational effectiveness because of its central role in the overall process of directing and controlling the behaviour of organizational members. Decisions are made that cover the setting of goals, strategic planning, organizational design, personnel actions, and individual and group actions. Besides its organizational effect, however, decision making also has an individual effect. The quality of a decision has a bearing on his or her professional success and sense of satisfaction. So studying decision making is important from both an organizational and an individual perspective.

Another major reason for studying decisions is to enable us to make better quality decisions than we do presently. This point must be emphasized strongly because the quality of our decisions is often much poorer than we realize. Selective perception tends to bias the information we use in making decisions and our attitudes and values influence how we interpret that information. Drives for consistency lead to oversimplified interpretations. Our willingness to attribute positive outcomes to ourselves. (e.g., taking credit for good decisions) and to attribute negative outcomes to forces outside our control makes us remember the results of decisions in a personally favourable light. All these forces degrade our decisions, and at the same time, limit our understanding of the decision making problem.

Besides being unaware of our human limitations in the decision making process, we are often unaware of the methods that can be used to increase our decision effectiveness. Very little training that emphasizes the actual decision making process is available either inside or outside organizations. In most cases experience is our guide and while experience can be a good teacher, it can be misleading as well. In many cases we may learn the wrong way to do something or we may obtain information that is actually irrelevant for the quality of the decision.

In order to increase our effectiveness in decision making, we must first understand the decision making process. Decision making and planning are deeply interlinked. The determination of objectives, policies, programmes, strategies, etc. involves decision making. The most outstanding quality of a teacher to be successful is his/her ability to make sound decisions. A teacher may be in a situation where he/she has to make up his/her mind quickly on certain matters. It is not correct to say that he/she has to make spur of the moment decisions all the time. While taking many decisions, he/she gets enough time for careful fact finding, analysis of alternatives and choice of the

**best alternative. Decision making is a human process. When a teacher decides, he/she chooses a course which he/she thinks is the best.**