



**EXPLORING CHALLENGES IN TEACHER DEPLOYMENT UNDER
DECENTRALIZATION OF THE PRIMARY EDUCATION SYSTEM: A
CASE OF CHIRADZULU DISTRICT.**

MED (Policy, Planning and Leadership) Thesis

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Submitted to the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Education (Policy, Planning and Leadership)

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

AUGUST 2024

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any institution of higher learning for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used, acknowledgments have been made.

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Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the students' own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Chilunga Kaperemera for his tireless financial and emotional support. For pushing me when I felt I could not go on. My daughters Devina and Michelle gave me inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks should go to the Almighty God for being by my side, I did not know that I can go this far.

A number of people have contributed towards the success of my studies.

In a special way I would like to thank my husband, Chilunga Keperemera who always pushes me to start new adventures, including this degree. He always says “don’t fail while you haven’t tried”.

I would like to give my gratitude to my main supervisor, Dr. Nyirongo for working with me tirelessly from the start to the finish. I do not take this for granted. His expertise and professional help is what has shaped this study.

Special thanks should also go to my co-supervisor, Dr. Semphere, for her humility and kind heart. She pulled me out of deep waters when I was about to sink. Her positive criticism and professional opinions gave me confidence that I can do it.

Thanks should also go to all the lectures for the knowledge they gave me during my coursework.

My class mates, just to mention a few, Lonnie Nantongwe, Chance Kaonga and Enock Chumachawo I am very grateful, they updated me, gave me materials and pushed me to work.

Lastly, I would like to thank all my research participants for taking their time to participate in this study.

ABSTRACT

The study attempted to examine the issues of teacher deployment at district level. This study was prompted by the fact that there are inequitable distributions of teachers not just between rural and urban areas but also between rural and remote rural primary schools. The study also looked at the why teachers preferred certain primary schools over others even though they belonged to the same district. A case study of two schools in Chiradzulu district was used to understand this. The researcher used focus group discussions, interview with key informants and document analysis to collect data. A total of twenty participants were involved in the study. The researcher used thematic data analysis to analyze the data. The study discovered that some schools close to the district centers were overstaffed while those in remotest areas were understaffed. As such, the problem of inequitable distribution of teachers in the district was not mainly in terms of numbers, but rather deployment process. The study discovered that the district office experienced various challenges when deploying teachers in the remotest areas of the district. Majority of teachers that were deployed in the district did not want to teacher in the remotest schools of the district for various reasons. Furthermore, lack of communication between the district office and the schools, pressure from stakeholders, lack of financial and human resource and inadequate number of teachers allocated to the district did not help the situation. District offices should therefore be rational and practice equity when deploying the teachers so that the remotest areas should also get the much needed resource, teachers. Furthermore, the function of teacher recruitment should be decentralized to the districts. So that the district should be able to identify teachers who are willing to teach in the remote schools of the district.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EMIS	Education Information Management System
DEM	District Education Manager
FPE	Free Primary Education
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MIITEP	Malawi Integrated In-Service Teacher Education Program
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Education
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
ODL	Open Distance Learning
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
TTC	Teacher Training College
IPTE	Initial Primary Teacher Education
DTED	Department of Teacher Education and Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a brief background on how primary education system has evolved over the years since the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in Malawi. To be more particular, in terms of how the problem of shortage of teachers has been dealt with, different policies and programs which the government has employed and how those have succeeded or failed in other cases. This chapter explains how the country has moved from the centralized system of managing the education sector to decentralization of education.

In addition to the above, the chapter explains the problem of inequitable distribution of teachers between rural and remote areas which the study seeks to understand. This chapter also talks about the purpose of the study which is to explore challenges of teacher deployment in remotest areas at district level. Furthermore, the significance of the study which is to inform policy, and practice as well as to add to knowledge has been explained as well.

1.2 Background to the Study

1.2.1 Shortage of Teachers

For so long, some countries in the world were faced with challenges in educating their fast growing population because of chronic teacher shortages. These challenges were

more severe in the Sub-Saharan Africa which required about 17 million teachers by 2017. There was progress in terms of teacher recruitment which grew by 75% by between 1999 and 2012 (UNESCO, 2015). However, although there has been great increase in teacher enrollment, most countries such as Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya still face problems of poor teacher deployment (Mulkeen, 2008). They have situations where urban areas have a lot of unemployed qualified teachers, on other hand, rural areas have a lot of unfilled teaching posts. This simultaneous pattern of surplus and shortage of teachers show that the problem of teacher inequity between urban and rural areas cannot be resolved simply by training more teachers (Mulkeen, 2008). It can rather be reduced by effectively deploying teachers where they are needed the most. Most developing countries have been struggling in deploying and retaining teachers in schools located in the most impoverished and hard to reach areas (Asin, et al, 2017).

The situation in Malawi is not different. High influx of students as a result of the introduction of the free primary education created unprecedented demand for teachers who were needed to fill the gap that was created (Kadzamira, 2006). In response to this unexpected challenge, the government came up with an emergency training program called Integrated In-Service Teacher Education Program (MIITEP) in which the government recruited untrained teachers to teach in primary schools. These teachers underwent a four months' college training and a twenty months supervised teaching in schools. As much as this was a way of training a lot of teachers at a low cost, it was put in place to resolve the teacher crisis without sufficient time to putting in place administrative structures for the program to function effectively. In the end, this program was later abandoned in 1991 when funds were exhausted but later

reappeared in 2001 in a much refined form (Centre for Social Research, 2005, Kunje, et al, 2003).

The enrollment rates at primary school level kept on growing ever since the introduction of free primary education and the problem of inadequate teachers still remained. This forced the government to come up with a number of measures over the years to ensure appropriate pupil teacher ratio (PTR). The government came up with a number of policies such as increasing annual capacity of Teachers Training Colleges (TTCs) from less than 3000 to 5000 since 2005, constructing more TTCs and the initiation of Open distance learning (ODL) for teachers in 2010. All these reforms were to deal with teacher shortages at primary level (Asin, et al, 2017).

Consequently, the above mentioned strategies led to increased number of teachers, from 27 748 teachers in 1994 (UNESCO, 2010) to 43 325 in 2008 (EMIS, 2012). The centralized system of management of teachers that was there could no longer effectively handle or manage services of the bloated education system. Hence the country saw that it was necessary to create a decentralized structure that would be appropriate for day to day tasks of teacher management such as teacher deployment, payment of salaries and distribution of school resources (Kadzamira and Rose, 2001, Dzimbiri, 2000). Decentralization of education was one way of effectively and efficiently managing an important resource in education, teachers (Kafumbu, 2017).

1.2.2 Variations in Teacher Distribution

Despite the fact that Malawi has over the years employed various strategies to expand its teaching workforce in primary schools, it is still struggling to effectively deploy them in schools. There are serious variations of school PTRs in schools within districts, teachers are inequitably distributed. with remotest schools having highest

PTRs (Zubairi, 2020). A study by World Bank, 2015, showed a school near district having an average PTR of 43:1 while remotest schools having PTR as high as 448:1. Another similar study showed great variations in PTR within the district with the remotest school having a PTR of 131:1. Such inequities make effective teaching and learning practically impossible (Zubairi, 2020).

Different scholars have critiqued and debated on the recommended class size that would facilitate effective teaching and learning. Malawi is still struggling to move from the current average PTR of 70:1 to the required ratio PTR of 60:1 (NESIP, 2020-2030).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Primary education is globally perceived as a way of eradicating poverty by providing basic knowledge and acting as a foundation for higher education. Consequently, for years, countries in the Sub Sahara region have focused on providing education for all and have recently been struggling to provide quality education (Bruns, Mingati and Rakotomalala, 2003, Kadzmira and Rose 2001., Webb, 1996., Sawamura and Sifuna, 2008). Quality education entails many things, including adequate teaching and learning materials, adequate teachers and relevant curriculum (Lockheed, Verspoor, et al, 1991). To ensure quality education, certain functions, including that of primary sector teacher deployment, was devolved to local level. Until now, district offices are responsible for teachers. The decentralized management systems would help address teacher management issues including that of teacher deployment making it done more efficiently and more effectively (Kafumbu, 2017).

Despite the efforts of transferring certain decision making powers such as deployment of teachers from the MoEST to district level, there are huge staffing differences.

Teacher inequities especially in remote areas still exist a decade after decentralization of education (Zubairi, 2020). Mvula, 2005, adds that disparities in PTR between schools near the district and remotest areas of districts are rather shocking, with schools near district centers overstaffed while those hard to reach areas understaffed.

In Malawi, policies relating to teacher deployment clearly state teachers should be allocated where there is a great need (MoEST, 2008). However, process of teacher deployment is very complex, even in small geographical areas (Asin, et al, 2017). This is because are so many issues that surround teacher deployment process and district offices face challenges that makes it hard for them to effectively and efficiently deploy the teachers that are allocated to their districts (Mvula 2005, Asin, et al, 2017, Mulkeen and Chen, 2008,).

Malawi Education Sector Analysis, 2019, and NESIP, 2020-2019 identifies inefficient deployment of teachers as one of the challenges of the primary education sector. The questions that still remains is why do we still have the problem of deployment of teachers decades after it was identified? This study intends to address this challenge by unfolding underlying issues which affect teacher deployment at district level.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out challenges surrounding teacher deployment at district level and how they affect the process.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Main research question

What are the main challenges that affect effective teacher deployment in Chiradzulu district?

1.5.2 Sub research questions

1. How do teachers, head teachers and district officers understand teacher deployment policies and practice at district level?
2. What challenges do teachers face when working in remote schools in Chiradzulu district?
3. What challenges do DEMs face when deploying teachers in remote schools of Chiradzulu district? What strategies can DEMs use to deal with the challenges of teacher deployment?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study seeks to provide an insight on the challenges surrounding deployment of teachers within the Chiradzulu district, so this study will help to fill the gap of knowledge. It will provide some insights on why some remote schools remain unfilled despite of a combination of policies and strategies that were created for the same such as forced deployment and hardship allowances.

It can also be used to inform policy on teacher deployment by looking at some of the shortfalls of certain policies and suggestions that can strengthen the policies which are failing. Furthermore, district offices can gain some insight on where things are going wrong and try different ways of doing things

1.7 Definitions of Operation Terms

This study employed the following terms as defined below

Teacher Deployment: Allocation of teachers where they are assigned teaching duties, includes posting, transfers in accordance with the need of teachers services in schools

Decentralization: It is the transfer of decision making authority from the central to the local entities.

Remote Areas: These are areas that very far from urban areas and are isolated from highly populated settlements or lack transport links that are typical in more populated areas.

Rural Areas: These are areas which are not developed properly with all modern amenities, facilities of transport, communication, hospital and education in comparison urban areas that have all these facilities.

Pupil Teacher Ratio: Average number of pupils per qualified teacher at a given level of education.

1.8 Chapter Summary

The focus of this chapter was a number of areas. Firstly, it has given brief background on how FPE in Malawi resulted to a high demand of teachers and how the government responded. It explains how un trained teachers were employed to deal with the problem of acute shortage of teachers. This expansion later created a need to decentralize the education sector. Secondly, the chapter has problem statement where the gap of knowledge that need to be filled has been explained. Thirdly, it has also explained the purpose of the study and its significance to the world of knowledge. Lastly, the chapter also consists of the questions which have guided the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Review

In this chapter, the researcher reviews the existing literature on teacher deployment issues and decentralization of certain functions in education including that of deployment. The chapter starts by analyzing deployment systems that are used in the world, which are deployment by central authority and the market system. The chapter also discusses what is in literature on issues such as supply and demand for teachers, teacher attrition and policy reforms that the government of Malawi has been using to send teachers in remote areas

2.2 Teacher deployment systems

There are two deployment systems according to Mulkeen (2005) and Kelleher (2008).

2.2.1 Deployment by Central Authority

This is a model that has been used by most countries in the sub Saharan Africa, this is where deployment can be directed from national level. This is based on the fact that it allows rational deployment of teachers because authorities are free from local pressures (Mulkeen (2005). However, this system has inability to quickly respond to local level needs. In addition, teachers may easily circumvent posting by creating fake health problems, exploiting the poor record keeping and simply fail to take their assigned post (Kelleher, 2008). In Ghana, of 216 teachers who were recruited, 115

failed to report to their schools. This shows a serious deployment challenges (Mulkeen, 2008).

2.2.2 Market System

In this second system of teacher deployment, teachers are not sent to school but rather apply for specific posts in specific schools of their choice. This removes the burden of deploying teachers by a central authority since teachers practically deploy themselves by searching for jobs on the open market. This system is rather conducive to the private sector where schools have more autonomy to make decisions. This system ensures quick response to local needs (Chana, 2015). However, Kelleher, 2008 argues that in this system, the best teachers get the best jobs which are usually in towns, leaving the rural areas with unqualified teachers. A study by Mulkeen, 2008, agrees further because in Lesotho, through market system, most schools were able to fill their posts. However, most teachers in remote schools were underqualified.

Most countries in the Sub Sahara region such as Malawi adopted the system of deploying teachers by central authority through decentralized system. (Mulkeen, 2008). In accordance to the decentralization policy of 1998, the function of deploying teachers among other things, was left in the hands of DEMs. The DEMs were to post teachers to schools where vacancies existed (MoEST, 2008).

2.3 The Concept of Decentralization

There are several definitions of decentralization because the concept captures a variety of phenomena; this paper will use a modern concept of decentralization which is the transfer of authority and responsibility for public function from the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government organization or private sector. The local entities may be provinces, regional offices, municipalities, districts

or schools depending on the context of a country. This definition involves two elements, one which is assigning sub-national levels of government some form of “self-rule” so that they run some functions on their own be it in health care or primary education. The other one is about establishing a system of “shared rule” by allowing certain levels of government to regulate a certain area together (Dyer and Rose, 2005).

Roughly, decentralization covers three areas, political decentralization which means that sub national offices are elected by citizens. The second one, fiscal decentralization refers to the transfer of responsibility for expenditures and revenues to subnational levels. The last one, administrative decentralization involves the transfer of functions from national government to local units (Lago, 2021).

This paper is more focused on administrative decentralization which also leaves the national government with the right to also interfere directly with the local administration. Depending on the level of independence of the local administration, three varieties of administration decentralization arise. There is de-concentration, where de-concentrated bodies are created either at local levels alone or two to three levels (Dyer and Rose, 2005). Furthermore, de-concentration may also involve the transfer of authority and responsibility to lower levels such as government agencies and administration without giving them final responsibility for making decisions. In this case, district offices or schools may be given a certain workload to carry out within the central authority’s work line (Dyer and Rose, 2005). Govinda, 1997 argues that this form of decentralization is only a means of increasing the role of the state in decision rather than weaken it. However, locally placed civil servants are more informed and can take more account into local views. De-concentration is therefore, regarded as a weak form of decentralization.

In addition to the above, there is also delegation where the state transfers some power of decision making to some bodies outside government bureaucracy. The power transferred may be temporal, it can be withdrawn anytime. Delegation would allow involvement of entities such as non-governmental organizations. However, this is not usually the case, delegation of authority usually involves parastatals which are also government entities (Govinda, 1997).

The last of administrative decentralization is devolution, which involves government giving full decision making power and management authority to lower levels of government. As such, lower government can make their own decisions without asking for approval from central government (Dyer and Rose, 2005). It is argued that this represent a more genuine form of decentralization because specific powers are transferred to sub-national entities through appropriate legal reform processes (Lago, 2021).

2.4 Decentralization of education system in Malawi

The earliest countries to decentralize their education system include Latin America and former Soviet Union in the early 1980s. The main motive of these countries was to get rid of large and costly bureaucratic systems in education rather than to improve education. (Chana, 2015). Most African countries later joined in decentralization reforms of the education system in the 1990s and 2000s with a variety of motives, backgrounds and forms. Overall, advocates for decentralization of education in Africa cited efficiency, effectiveness, quality and access issues. They assumed that shifting of authority and management responsibilities to local levels would among other things enhance quality of education, enhance effective and efficient use of resources and enhance responsiveness of public education to local needs (Dyer and Rose, 2017)

In Malawi, the decentralization policy whose purpose was among other things to improve effectiveness of service and community participation was adopted in 1998 under the Ministry of local Government and Rural Development (Local Government Act, 1998). This decentralization involved central government departments transferring responsibility and authority to district assemblies through the Ministry of Local Government and rural Development Departments. This policy decision was to be implemented to other ministries including that of education .To be line with this, Ministry of education reorganized its three regional offices into six educational divisions to be responsible for secondary education, thirty-four district offices and three hundred and seventeen education zones to be responsible for managing primary education. Below is a flow diagram showing a decentralized structure of the education system in Malawi (Kufaine, 2014).

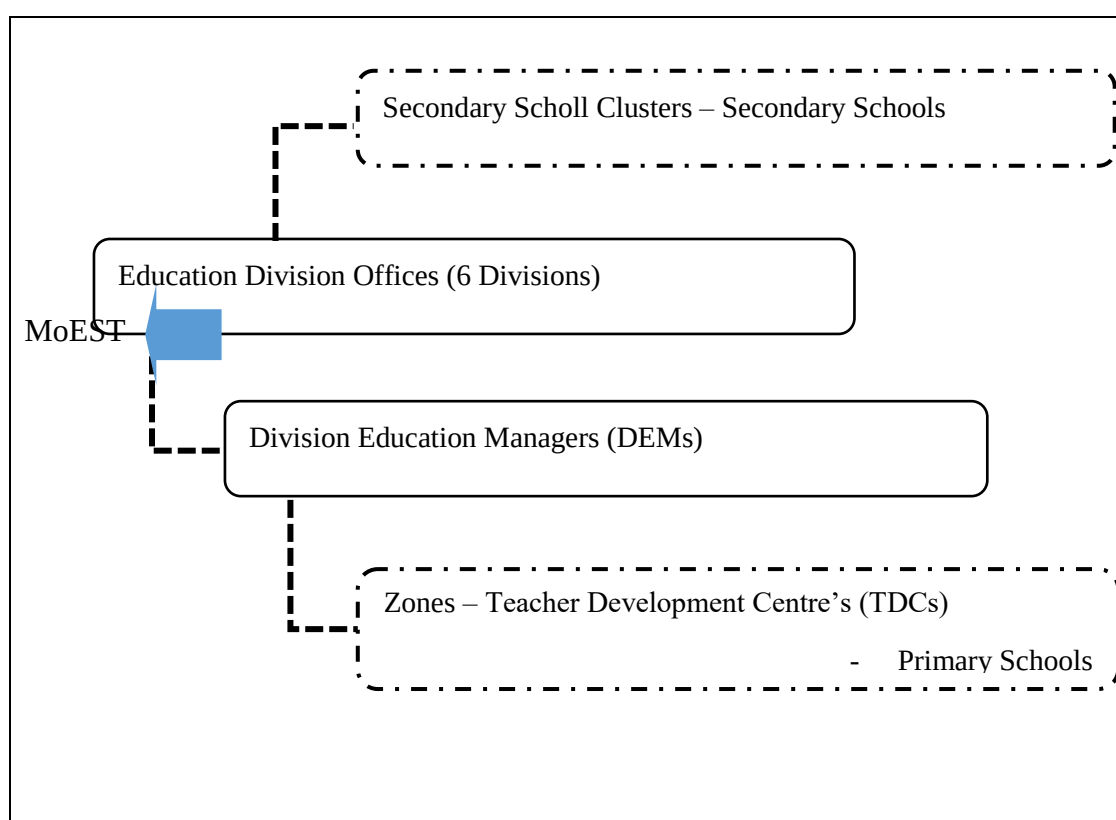


Figure 1: DECENTRALISED STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MALAWI. Source: MoEST Devolution Guidelines (2008)

In accordance to the decentralization policy of 1998, the ministry was to among other things assign functions and services of primary schools to District Assemblies (DAs). Furthermore, the ministry was to support the DAs with policy guidance, financial and technical assistance. On the other hand, the DAs, were left with the actual delivery of primary education. The ministry was however required have direct links and collaborations with the later (GoM, 2008).

Duties in the ministry of education at primary level were therefore divided between the central offices and the district/local offices. Duties of hiring teachers, setting education standards, setting salaries and staffing levels was still left in the hands of MOEST, the other duties such as those of teacher deployment and administration were delegated to lower education departments, (CSR, 2010, Cohen, 2004).

As noted above, the responsibility of deploying primary school teachers was then left in the hands of district offices to ensure efficient and effective deployment. These offices were to be guided by a policy which emphasized on deploying teachers where vacancies existed, in other words where they were needed the most (NEP, 2008-2017).

Guided by this policy, in an ideal situation, the primary education system would have teachers evenly distributed across the country, in remote as well as urban schools of all districts in Malawi. But this has not been the case, for a number of reasons, there are schools that are overstaffed on one hand, and other schools that are understaffed on the other side even where these exist in the same education district (DeStephano, 2013, Asin, et al, 2017).

2.5 The Process of Teacher Recruitment and Deployment in Malawi

Lately, majority of primary school teachers in Malawi enter the teaching profession through the national training program known as Initial Primary Teacher Education

(IPTE) which commenced in 2005. IPTE teachers undergo a one-year residential training at TTC and a one-year school training at selected schools the TTC. (Asin, et al, 2017).

MoEST regulates the training function through the Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED). DTED advertises and shortlists the trainees based on their Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) results and an aptitude test. However, there are no interviews or any formal process through which the trainees' motivation for teaching, pro-social inclination and psychological suitability is assessed. Despite the fact that the trainees are asked to confirm their willingness to work in rural and remote areas, there are no processes to measure their ability to endure some hardships which rural and remote areas present (Asin et al, 2017).

Kesser (2018), adds that MoEST has however recently pinpointed the importance of attracting candidates that have both a strong motivation to teach and a talent for teaching. It therefore wishes to complement the cognitive skills tests with non-cognitive attributes. Through the same process, their psychological preparedness to endure working in the rural and remote areas will also be measured.

Another large number of teachers was recruited through ODL. From 2012 to 2017, 40% of recruited teachers in primary schools between the mentioned years above were through ODL. This was a short term strategy to reduce PTR in rural areas because it was believed that the teachers would have more connection to the communities. Although ODL was later abandoned, it managed to increase the overall number of teachers in Malawi, but, inequalities in terms of teacher distribution were still there. When these teachers are posted to remote areas, the majority successfully request to be transferred elsewhere (Asin, et al, 2017). A study by Banda and Kaphesi,

(2017) found out that the majority of ODL students were not comfortable teaching close to their home village as this increase a burden helping their relatives in the village.

2.6 Supply and Demand of Teachers in Malawi

A number of authors have agreed on how the policy on education for all created a shortfall of teachers, increasing the demand for more teachers (Kadzamira, 2003, UNESCO, 2010, Wamba and Mgomezulu, 2014). Most countries in Africa that adopted this policy were not spared this challenge of inadequate teachers. Factors that have influence demand for more teachers in Malawi include; Policy Information Framework (PIF) requirements, increase rates of attrition due to HIV/AIDS and reduced dropout rates of students (DeStefano, 2013), Kunje (2003) estimated that to meet this growing demand of teachers, there was a need increase about 10 000 teachers annually.

Figures provided by EMIS 2015, show an increase in the supply of teachers. Below is a graph showing an increase of teachers over a period of five years. This show an overall increase of 34.6 % and a yearly growth of 7.8 %.

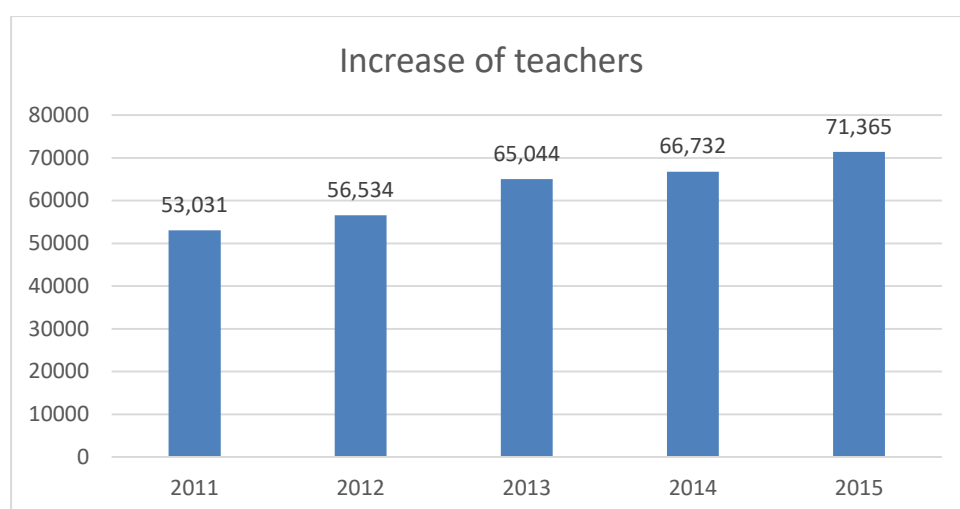


Figure 2: INCREASE OF TEACHERS

Although there is tremendous increase of teachers over the years, this does not show equitable distribution of teachers. Most of these teachers are concentrated either in urban areas or towns within districts. While the most remote areas continue to suffer because of understaffing (Wamba and Mgonezulu, 2014)

2.7 Problem of Teacher Disparities

It is a very big problem to deploy trained and experienced teachers to remote and hard to reach areas because most of them prefer to work in urban areas. Studies that were done in four countries have shown similarities despite their varied national characteristics. In countries such as Nigeria, Tanzania, Pakistan and New Guinea, disaggregation of teacher pupil ratio has illuminated three major areas in terms of disparities of teacher presence: Rural and remote area suffer from large classes with high PTRs, rural/urban disparities have gender disparities with female teachers concentrated in the urban areas, highly qualified teachers are concentrated in the urban areas (Kelleher, 2008).

In the Malawian case, the situation at primary school is a bit different. Most primary school teachers are qualified teachers as such, there are no disparities between rural and urban teachers in terms of their qualifications (Kadzamira and Rose, 2003).

2.7.1 Rural-urban disparities in living conditions.

Kadzamira, (2006) noted that most remote areas have conditions that are daunting and challenging. They have very poor housing, no portable water, no electricity and very poor roads to the urban areas. All these conditions make staying in such areas hard.

It is very difficult to deal with this problem because the situation requires large investments to develop the remote areas. This requires a very huge commitment and

financial sacrifice on the part of district authorities to ensure that the districts have all these things that attract people, particularly teachers in this case.

2.7.2 Limited Opportunities for Professional Advancement.

A lot of young and newly recruited teachers shun away from remote area because they offer no opportunities for career growth. Most young people have a desire to upgrade themselves academically as well as professionally and remote area offers no such chances to them (Kunje, 2005).

Plessis (2014) concurs with Kunje (2005) by saying that teachers view rural areas as a limitation for professional advancement since rural areas are unlikely to have opportunities for career development. He further adds that the problem of lack of support for newly qualified teachers combined with lack of career development opportunities make the teachers in rural areas less effective than their counterparts in urban areas.

2.7.3 Diversity of Culture which Create Barriers for the Teachers to Assimilate and be Accepted into the Communities.

Mulkeen and Chen, (2008) argues that if a teacher knows neither the language nor traditions of a particular area, it becomes very difficult for him/her since he/she may feel isolated professionally as well as socially.

Such situations exist in Malawi where there are is a diversity of different ethnic groups with different cultures. Teachers find it hard to adapt in the most remote areas where people have

a little or even no knowledge of Chichewa, which is Malawi's (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008).

2.7.4 *Poor recruitment and deployment*

A poor deployment policy has been identified as one of the major factors that cause inequitable distribution of teachers.

According to a study by Moraa, Chepkoech and Simiyi, 2017 in Kenya, decentralization managed to employ many teachers in rural schools since its establishment in 2001. Kenya follows deconcentrating system of decentralization where management of schools including teacher deployment is under school boards. In as much as decentralization managed to deploy teachers to rural areas, it was faces with challenges such as nepotism in recruitment, in adequate teacher subject combination and political interference in school management (Moraa, Chepkoech and Simiyu, 2017).

In Mozambique, teachers are recruited at provincial level, graduates for each province are required to teach in that province. However, the training capacity for the provinces are unequal, some train more than others. This creates unequal distribution of teachers although transfer between provinces is allowed. Another challenge is that newly recruited teachers refuse to teach in isolated areas of the provinces, creating imbalances within the provinces (Mulkeen, 2008).

Many countries that deploy teachers at local level experience both benefits and risks. More localized systems of teacher deployment are likely to keep in touch with the needs of the schools by responding quickly and flexibly. However, local structures are likely exposed to great influence by people with power, especially where there is weak administration. In many countries in Africa, administrators are exposed to political and local influence hence often decisions are biased (Mulkeen and Chen. 2008).

2.8 Policy Reforms to Address Deployment imbalances in Malawi

According to Asin, Chimombo, Chugunov and Gera 2017), Malawi has employed a number of reforms to address problems of poor teacher deployment within the districts.

2.8.1 Incentives

These can be in terms of hardship allowances, travel allowance and even subsidized housing. For these incentives to work, they need to be substantial to outweigh social and economic costs of living in remote areas.

2.8.2 Monetary incentives

One of the mostly used mechanisms to attract teachers to move to remote schools is the use of hardship allowance. According to the Cambridge dictionary, this is the extra amount that someone is paid for working in difficult conditions. It may be calculated as a percentage of a salary or a flat rate may be used. This is a growing mechanism a number of countries are using to attract teachers to move to rural areas. The overall goal is to improve the quality of education in under privileged areas.

2.9 Case studies of countries with hardship allowance

2.9.1 Gambia

Hardship allowance was introduced in 2005 to attract qualified teachers to move to rural areas. The program provided a salary premium of 30%, 35% and 40% depending on how far the school was from the capital. Schools that were included were those that were at least 3 km from the capital. This program managed to increase teachers in rural areas by 10% and PTR was reduced by 27. However, the program managed to improve situations of those areas that were closer to the city and not the remotest areas. Furthermore, it was less effective in attracting qualified teachers into the

system, it rather only managed to reallocate teachers that were already in the system. (Pugatch and Schroeder, 2014, Mwenda and Mgonezulu, 2018).

2.9.2 *Mozambique*

In Mozambique, location bonus is used to attract teachers to remote schools. This location allowance is paid on the basis of grade of a teacher and remoteness of the area they are in. locations of schools are classified into four; major cities, provincial towns, more remote schools and most remote schools. The teachers who benefit the most are those that have high qualifications and they are located in the most remote areas (Mulkeen and Chen 2008).

2.9.3 *Lesotho*

Lesotho has certain mountainous areas with harsh climate, sparse population, difficult transportation and poor infrastructure where teachers are not attracted. A flat amount money is given to teachers who teach in those areas. In addition, the hiring function is left in the hands of schools, where teachers apply for positions in various and are selected by school boards. This system brings discrepancies in distribution of qualified teachers between rural and urban areas. In addition, the system is open to abuse by powerful individuals. There are certain cases where qualified teachers are left because the community prefers someone else though not qualified for the position (Mwenda and Mgonezulu, 2018).

In Malawi, hardship allowance was introduced in 2010 to lure and retain teachers in rural areas. It was intended to reward a minority 20% of teachers working in rural schools. The allowance which was k10, 000 per month across all parts of the rural areas of the country flopped because of a number issues (Asin, et al, 2017, World Bank Group, 2016).

Firstly, there was no functioning instrument to determine hardship school. Secondly, no analytical capacity to determine reasonable amount and lastly, no institutional capacity to enforce compliance with the rules. All these weakened the system. By 2015, 87% of schools of which 80% of teachers, were eligible for the allowance. So this reform has failed to attract teachers to remote areas. Currently, there are plans to revisit this reform so as to make it more efficient (Asin, et al, 2017).

World Bank Group, 2016, argues that for hardship allowance to be effective in attracting teachers to remotest areas there is need for the allowance to be re-calibrated using distance measures as well as key factors that influence choice of teacher allocation.

2.9.4 Increasing Overall Teacher Numbers Through Gradual Increase in Capacity.

Over the years, a lot of primary school teachers have been trained to fill existing vacancies and consequently reduce PTRs in districts. Asin, et al, argues that the persistent delays in deploying the teachers to schools suggest that expansion of capacity alone will not address the current challenge of shortages of teachers. There is a need to combine this within great fiscal support for recruitment.

This is indeed true given the consistent failure of government to recruit primary school teachers after spending a lot of money training them. This reform indeed needs a strong financial base if it is to bring effective change in reducing PTRs within the districts (Zubairi, 2021).

World Bank Group, 2016, adds by saying that government treats the problem of teacher inequity as simply as a teacher shortage issue through the training of more teachers. There is however a need to rectifying the weak national systems of teacher

recruitment, deployment and accountability by addressing the systematic challenges within the regulatory bodies.

2.9.5 *Bonding to Rural Districts*

With the coming of IPTE in 2005, trainee teachers have been signing agreements to work in the rural areas for at least five years before asking for a transfer. Thereafter, they may be allowed to request for transfer basing on availability of vacancies.

2.9.6 *Open Distance Learning*

This was initiated in 2010 to provide a low cost way of increasing primary school teachers. ODL program was to recruit its students from area experiencing shortages of teachers. This meant that the students were to be recruited locally to maximize the chance of them remaining in the area (Asin, et al, 2017). However, studies by Mulkeen (2008) have shown that teachers do not want to work in their home districts for fear of being overburdened by responsibilities of their extended families in the village.

Another area of concern was the entry requirements for ODL which were lower than that of IPTE, people questioned the quality of its graduates. In 2015., the government announced its suspension. Sadly, ODL has also failed to address problems of teacher inequities within districts. (Asin, et al, 2017).

Most of the reforms above have failed to address the problems of inequitable supply of teachers within the district, one may wonder why? Most of these reforms have very good intentions and on paper, they seem to be very promising. However, when applied on the ground, they meet a lot of challenges some of which were not anticipated.

2.10 Gender Issues in Relation to Teacher Deployment

Deployment Patterns by Gender

A number of studies in the Sub Saharan Africa have shown that there is a great variation in the allocation of male and female teachers. Primary schools in rural areas are usually dominated by men. This is because of a number of issues. One of them being that culturally, it is very difficult to place women alone in unfamiliar places. In some countries, it may even be unsafe to do so, in such countries it may be a matter of policy not to do so. Apart from that, married women also refuse transfers to remote areas because they want to be close to their spouses (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008., Kelleher 2004, Bennet, 2004).

In Malawi, the conditions are the same, 82% of teachers located in urban areas are female teacher, and they make up of 31% of rural teachers. Of the 31 %, most of them live close the district centers (ILO, 2016). District offices find it very difficult to place females in remote areas because they are less willing than their counterparts (Asin, 2017). The most common reason for their refusal is that they want to be close their spouses. The only difference between the findings of these authors is that Malawi does not face the problem of lack of safety for female teachers.

2.11 Roles of female teachers

There is a lot of evidence to support that female teachers play a very important role in girls' education by encouraging girls to work hard in their studies, acting as role models and acting as counselors (Jackie, 2006, Caitlin, et al, 2011,). Caitlin, et al, 2011 notes that as the number of women grow, so does girls' enrollment because parents are likely to send their girls to school.

According to Jackie, (2006), at primary school level, female teachers have a positive influence on the learning process. This is because of their gender role as care givers.

Female teachers may be more understanding, caring as well as supporting since they are used to taking care of others than men. This may positively affect the learning abilities of pupils in a class

There is a debate on the contribution of female teachers towards effective teaching practice. Some scholars argue that compared to men, female teachers carry out a more effective teaching practice even though men and women have the same training. This is because female teachers are more satisfied with their work than men, as such, they bring a more positive attitude towards the profession, school work and students (Awan, 2015). Furthermore, female teachers use more modern methods of teaching, such as participation and problem solving methods; they also use less physical punishment (Awan, 2015, Caitlin, et al, 2011).

However, Islahi 2013, says that gender has little to do with performance of a female and male teachers if demographic factors are not given individual consideration. Effective teachers come from different backgrounds, issues such as marital status and training. Where marriage has a negative effect while training has a positive effect. Training of teachers has an influence on the performance of a teacher irrespective of their gender. On the other hand, marital status has an influence on performance of female and male teachers. Married female teachers are more satisfied hence perform better than male married teachers.

2.12 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the rational choice theory.

2.12.1 Rational Choice Theory

This study was guided by the rational choice theory. This is one of theories which is used by social scientists to understand human behavior. This theory developed by

Gary Becker, argues that it is possible to explain human behavior in terms of their preferences and choices they make. These preferences may include strict preference where one prefers a choice over its alternative, a weak preference where you prefer something for at least a minimal outcome and one has no preference for the available choices (Grimsley, 2016, Mc Ewan, 1998).

Furthermore, the basic notion is that individuals care about the quality of their work environment as well as the rewards associated with certain employment alternatives. They therefore seek to attain the greatest possible personal satisfaction by selecting a job that gives them both monetary and non-monetary rewards. The employers are also faced with a task of providing monetary and non-monetary compensation to meet the employees' expectations (Green, 2002). These compensation differentials can explain the supply of teachers as well as demand for teachers.

When teachers are considering a job in the rural or remote areas, they also consider the its respective compensation. In a case where a teacher has to consider a job in a rural and remote area where conditions of services are different but have similar incentives, he/she will obviously prefer a job where the benefit is more.

Furthermore, in case of demand for teachers, decision makers are faced with a task of providing a combination of monetary and non -monetary incentives to teachers in rural and remote areas. The key implication for this is that policy makers could choose to provide things such as hardship allowance, quality housing and availability of training opportunity so as to attract teachers.

2.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter's focus was on what has been written in literature and what other studies have found on issues surrounding teacher deployment. Key terms such as teacher

deployment and decentralization have been defined in line with the topic under study. Further, teacher deployment systems of deployment by central authority and by market system have been explained.

The situation of supply and demand for teachers has also been explained. The chapter shows that there is a shortfall of teachers in Malawi because of issue of teacher attrition, HIV as well as reduced students drop out rates. Despite of the fact the Malawi has been training a lot of teachers for a long time. There is still a demand for teachers as the student's enrollments keep on increasing yearly. Literature has further shown that the problem of shortage of teachers is aggravated by unequitable distribution of teacher across urban, rural and remote areas, remote areas being the most affected. To deal with the challenge of teacher shortages and inequalities, the government came up with a number of strategies such as employing more teachers, introducing a 5-year bond where newly recruited teachers sign a bond to stay in remote area for 5 years before transfer and the use of incentives such as hardship allowance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter explains the methodology that was used in the study. It first of all explains the use of qualitative method approach and why it was used. Secondly, the chapter also explains the use of case study design. It explains that the study used a case study design to get a deeper understanding on issues surrounding teacher deployment in the district of Chiradzulu. Thirdly, the researcher explains how the sample was identified. The researcher used purposive sampling to identify the sample for the study so as to pin point the key informants. Lastly, this chapter also talks about the data collection procedures that was used by the researcher and how the data was analyzed.

3.2 Research approach

There are two main approaches in education research, these are quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

Qualitative research seeks to explore and understand the meaning people give to a social problem (Creswell, 2009). Szyjka, 2012, adds that in qualitative research, there are two major assumptions; predisposition that reality is socially constructed, and that variables in a situation are very complex, interwoven and hard to measure. He further adds that the purpose of such research is to contextualize, understand and interpret a

situation. In order to interpret a situation, the researcher asks open ended questions and seeks to understand the complexity of a single phenomenon.

A paradigm in qualitative research is guided by a philosophical perspective of social constructivism which assumes that individuals seek understanding of the world they live in. Which means that people develop subjective meanings of their day to day experiences (Creswell, 2009)?

The other approach, quantitative research, use statistics to generate conclusion about a social problem. In addition, this research, acquires knowledge by broad generalizations over great populations. This is based on the assumption that social facts have an objective reality. In this case, the researcher plays a detached role of investigating a phenomenon and does not in any way interfere with the study findings (Creswell, 2009). The researcher therefore asks close-ended questions which test specific hypothesis or questions (Szyjka, 2012).

There is also mixed method approach which employs a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approach so as to utilize the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2009). Triangulation of data sources therefore cancels the biases inherent in the two methods.

There are three general strategies used in mixed methods. The first one is sequential mixed methods where a researcher expands on findings of one method with the other method. Another strategy is concurrent mixed method whose procedures merge qualitative and quantitative data to have a comprehensively analyze a research problem. Lastly, there is also transformative mixed method where a researcher uses theoretical lens within a design (Creswell, 2009).

This study used qualitative research approach so as to get in-depth explanations on issues of teacher deployment at district level. This allowed more flexibility on the part of both the researcher and the participants in trying to understand peoples' views and in the end captured as much information as possible (Creswell, 2009, Bell, 2005).

The use of qualitative approach also helped to capture some important issues that might have been overlooked by other studies but probably affected the participants. The researcher's wish was to interpret the meanings the participants have about their situations. Since there were multiple and varied experiences, the researcher looked for complexity of their views. So the research heavily relied on the views of the participants

3.3 Research Design

This study used a case study research design. It sought to understand issues surrounding teacher inequities in Chiradzulu's two remotest. They study used the Dem, the pea, head teachers and teachers to understand the phenomena under study better. A case study has been defined in a number of ways by a number of scholars. Yin (2010), defines it as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. Starman (2013), says, a case study can be used when we want to analyze and describe a person, individual, institution or a problem, process, phenomenon or event in a particular institution in detail.

From these definitions, case studies can aim at generating an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Starman, 2013, Dawson, 2002). This entail that with the use of a case study, a researcher can have a deep knowledge of what, how and why things are

happening the way they are in a particular area. As such, a case study can help a researcher discover relationships in social problems.

Case studies allow a lot of detail to be collected that would not normally be easily obtained by other research designs. The data collected is normally a lot richer and of greater depth than can be found through other experimental designs. This is because a researcher has an intensive study of a unit.

Case study is also important for developing different views of reality, including the awareness that human behaviour which cannot be understood merely as an act that is driven by a rule or a theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

In the context of this study, a case study was appropriate because it strives to portray 'what is it like' to be in a particular position, to have an understanding of reality as well as thick description. A case study allowed the researcher to analyze the complex issue of challenges district offices face when deploying teachers at the selected districts.

Apart from that, case study design also helped the researcher identify unique issues concerning teacher deployment within the district. In as much as a lot of districts in Malawi are facing problems of inequalities in allocation teachers within their districts, there may be some issues of teacher deployment that may be peculiar to Chiradzulu district that may need unpacking.

3.4 Sampling

Qualitative research allows a variety of sampling methods one of which is purposive sampling. The study employed purposive sampling method to pin point the key participants at the DEM's office and in schools. This helped to identify participants

that have relevant information in relation to this study at hand. These included the district education manager, PEAs, head teachers and teachers.

3.5 Participants

This study was done in Chiradzulu district. This study made use 20 participants who included two head teachers, two deputy heads from the schools under study, 13 teachers from the two selected schools and their PEAs as well the district education manager for the district.

Chiradzulu district was selected considering the researcher's knowledge of the district as well as financial limitations.

Table 1: SAMPLE OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS	LEVEL	TOTAL	LOCATION
DEM	District	1	Chiradzulu
PEA	Zone	2	Chiradzulu
H/TEACHERS AND D/H TEACHERS	Schools	4	Chiradzulu
TEACHERS	Schools	13	Chiradzulu

3.6 Data collection tools

The data was collected from both secondary and primary sources. Primary data was collected using face to face interviews with the participants and focus group discussions while secondary data was collected through documentary review.

Data collection tools used included, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and documentary reviews.

Semi structured interviews has non-standardized questions used by a researcher during an interview. The researcher had a list of issues and questions to be discussed and the order of the questions were adjusted depending on the direction of the interview. In the interview, addition questions may be asked to seek further clarification of the issues that may be emerging (Dawson, 2002).

The use of semi structured interview allowed the researcher to get in-depth information from the participants on the underlying reasons on why some schools have high PTRs compared to their counterparts within the district. in addition, it also helped the researcher to capture people's opinions and experiences on the topic at hand. The researcher was also able to seek further clarification on emerging issues.

FGDs involve 6-8 people discussing on a topic. These allow the participants to react and build up on the responses which others have given. It further helps the participants to disclose information more freely than in one on one interview (Dawson, 2002).

These FGD were conducted with teachers from the schools under study and helped the researcher get more information on the issue.

According to Bell (2005), documentary review provides insights on a problem under investigation. In this study, the researcher reviewed files at the district education office as well as from the schools.

3.7 Data analysis

In qualitative research, the researcher sorts and sifts the data in order to find types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns or wholes. This is done to assemble and reconstruct the data to make it more meaningful (Creswell, 2009).

In order to avoid confusion, the meaningful analytical units and themes were identified and then coded. The data was then summarized and analyzed using structured analysis of data to develop themes and categories. This helped to ensure that the data was more manageable. This method was also used after considering limitations of time and resources. The analysis was done as soon as data was collected to avoid forgetting important information.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Participants in a research have to be respected. As Creswell, 2009 pointed out, researchers collecting data need to respect participants and the sites for research. This means that the participants should not be put at any risk be it financially, emotionally and even in terms of their reputation. In this research, the researcher did not use words which may have been demining to the participants in any way or damaging to their reputation.

Furthermore, the researcher need to get the participants informed consent before involving them in the study. This research considered the above by getting informed consent from the participants beforehand. The researcher explained what the research was all about and how it was going to be used.

Last but not least, the researcher ensured that the participants anonymity and confidentiality was well protected. No names were mentioned during data analysis and the data collection. Furthermore, instruments were kept in a well secured place to avoid being lost.

3.9 Limitation of the Study

The findings of this study may be only applicable to Chiradzulu district, and cannot therefore be generalized to other districts in Malawi.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter was explaining and justifying the methodology that was used in the study. The researcher used qualitative method approach guided social constructivism paradigm in order to get a deeper understanding on issues surrounding teacher deployment in the district of Chiradzulu. Furthermore, the chapter also explained the use of case study design in the research which was to help the researcher pin point issues peculiar to Chiradzulu. In addition, the researcher explained how the sample was identified. The researcher used purposive sampling to identify the sample for the study so as to pin point the key informants. Lastly, this chapter also talked about the data collection procedures that was used and how the data was analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Chapter overview

This chapter focuses on presentation of the study results, discussion and analysis of the results. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges of deploying teachers in remote schools at district level. So to understand this, the discussion focuses on responses of the study participants, the research questions and literature review. These results come from face to face interviews with the DEM, PEAs, Deputy Heads and H/teachers and focus group discussions with teachers of the schools understudy. Furthermore, document analysis was also used to collect data. Data collected was analyzed using thematic analysis of data.

This chapter provides a detailed analysis and discussion of the findings that have been constructed according to the following research questions.

1. How do teachers, head teachers and district officers understand teacher deployment policies and practice at district level?
2. What challenges do teachers face when working in remote schools in Chiradzulu district? What affects teachers choice of school?
3. What challenges do DEMs face when deploying teachers in remote schools of Chiradzulu district? What strategies can DEMs use to deal with the challenges of teacher deployment?

4.2 Understanding of Teachers Deployment Process

The results show that the majority of the respondents understood the way teachers were deployed into schools at district level; they cited PTR (Pupil Teacher Ratio) as the main determiner.

When asked if they are aware of any policy or document or circular which is used as guidance in teacher deployment process, the majority of them were not aware of such document. The district manager mentioned that there was no one particular document, however, she indicated that she used clauses from other documents and policies, as reported:

“....i don’t have one specific document to use, I use clauses from other documents, like today I have just received communication through WhatsApp on the same issue of teacher deployment and I am yet to read it”.

According to the results from interviews and focus group discussions, teachers are deployed into schools after consideration of PTR of the schools, gender of the teachers and the size of the school.;

4.2.1 PTR as determining factor for teacher deployment

When deploying teachers into the schools, the district office prioritizes schools that have high PTRs. However, the effectiveness of this process is affected by teachers who refuse to teach in their allocated schools for various reasons. A lot of teachers prefer to teach schools that are closer to the district. Document analysis showed that PTR for school C close to the district was 33:1 while a remote school B had a PTR of 78:1.

After studying the PTRs for a number of schools in the district, the researcher discovered that relying on PTR alone can make other schools suffer. School A had a

total of 409 students and 7 teachers. This gives a PTR of 58:1 which according to the recommended PTR of 60:1, is even less. Seven teachers were not enough to teach a school of 8 classes. This means that one class had no teacher. Furthermore, the teachers were overloaded with a lot of work. One teacher was supposed to teach all the subjects, a total of 11.

Apart from this, there was a big gap in number of students per class were not evenly distributed. Lower classes especially standard one and two had large number of students. In school B, standard one had about 170 students while standard 7 had 57 students. This means that the teacher teaching standard one was overstretched.

The DEM and the PEAs for the district agreed that all students had the right to quality education; as such they all needed a teacher in a class. It was not supposed to matter whether a class was made up of 100 or 20 students. They mentioned that the district was working towards ensuring that every school with 1 to 8 classes had a minimum of 10 teachers.

The findings of this study supports a study by Vaikalathur, et al (2016) who found out although PTR in Malawi is 69:1, slightly higher than the recommended 60:1. In addition, there are great variations in PTR between schools of urban and remote areas with low PTR and high PTR respectively. Furthermore, variations also exist between grades in primary schools. The lowest grades have PTR of 100:1 compared to 50:1 of standard 7 and 8. This study argues that high PTR in schools is often used as excuse to hire more teachers. However, variations in terms of PTR across schools and grades indicate the need to effectively use the teachers available.

On the contrary to the above, UNESCO (2015) argued that high PTR in developing countries can be dealt with by increasing the number of teachers in those countries.

The study found out PTR in developing countries of Sub Sahara Africa are in a worrying state, with Malawi 70:1, Mozambique 67:1 and Rwanda 65:1. The study also concluded that PTR has statistical significant effect on the performance of primary school students. Results found in the study indicate that PTR is an important indicator that affects pupils. With low PTR, teachers have more time dedicated to individual students than when the classes are big. Beyond this, PTR also affects pupil discipline and teacher motivation, where low PTR positively impacts on the two factors (UNESCO, 2015).

The variations in PTR between rural and remote areas in the district which are mainly caused by the fact that teachers refuse to teach in remote school, can be explained by the rational choice theory. Rationally, teachers prefer to be closer to the district Centre because they feel that it would be more beneficial to them if they are close to the district than if they are away.

4.2.2 Gender as a determining factor for deployment

The head teachers and the DEM also mentioned that gender of the teachers is also used as determining factor in deploying teachers. The DEM described the problem of lack of female teachers in the district as being very serious. The DEM mentioned that whenever the district received teachers to be deployed to various schools, schools that had no or very few female teachers were given a priority. The challenge was that the district received few female teachers compared to male teachers. Another challenge was on how to keep the female teachers in the schools they had been posted to.

Both school A and B under study had a maximum of one female teacher. School A had stayed close to 20 years without a female teacher, from 1990s to 2017. At the time of the study, the present female teacher had stayed there for almost a year. The

head teacher expressed his fear that once this female teacher got married, she would probably move away leaving the school without a female teacher once more,

“this school had no female teacher for so long, the girls had no role model, when we received this one last years, we were overjoyed, even the parents were happy. My only fear is that she will leave us once she gets married since she is single now”. (interview with the Deputy Head teacher, 5th July, 2017).

When asked how she felt being the only female teachers, she said that she sometimes felt lonely since she had no female friends, no confidant. She however mentioned that she was very happy that the girls or even boys in the school looked up to her for advice. According to her, the satisfaction of seeing the school happy with her presence was satisfying enough. She only wished the school had privileges such solar energy and conducive housing.

This study has discovered that remote primary schools in Chiradzulu district suffer from acute shortage of female teachers. Document analysis showed that a large number of female teachers were located in schools close to the district. On the other hand, the remotest schools had an average of one female teacher per school. The respondents agreed that female teachers play a crucial role in encouraging girls education by being not only mentors but also role models for the girls.

Many authors agree that female teachers undeniably play a very important function of promoting girls' education. A study by Muralidharan and Sheth (2017) done in India, revealed that female teachers are more effective at teaching girls than male teachers but no worse at teaching boys. As such hiring more female teachers would reduce gender gaps in test scores without hurting the boys.

In addition to the above study, Kelleher (2011), says the presence of female teachers is very crucial in any school. Female teachers are role models to rural girls who otherwise have no one to look up to. As role models, they play an important role of encouraging girl education.

In other cultures, parents prefer to have female teachers to teach girls than men. In Muslim communities, parents feel more comfortable when their girls are taught by female teachers. In extreme societies such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, girls are only taught by female teachers. In addition to the above, female teachers also play a role of counseling and guiding girls. Most girls do not feel comfortable talking to male teachers on certain issues (Awan, 2015).

Awan (2015) says that in most countries of the world, the teaching profession has long been associated with women. This has a lot to do with the fact that women are mothers so it seems natural for them to be teachers. At the same time, teaching is considered a soft job hence fit for women. As such, European countries show large numbers of female teachers than men with these disparities changing as the level of education increases, there problem is on recruiting men (OECD, 2017). On the contrary, Sub Sahara Africa needs more females than men (UNESCO, 2012). This situation of lack of female teachers is worse in remote schools compared to those close to towns, this situation is similar to what the study has found out.

Lack of female teachers in rural areas can be linked with the rational choice theory which describes human behavior. When female teachers weigh their options in terms of their families on one hand and work in remote areas on the other, they often choose their families. This is because the job in remote areas is often not compensating enough.

4.2.3 Size of the school as determining factor for teacher deployment

This factor was only mentioned by the DEM who said that the district also put into consideration the size of the schools when deploying teachers to schools. The district has different sizes of schools. Some have classes up to standard 8 while others had junior classes only. So the schools with up to standard 8 were supposed to have more teachers than the others. The DEM mentioned that the district was striving to ensure that every school in the district should have a minimum of 10 teachers.

The results from the research showed that the most common factor that was considered crucial when posting teachers to schools was the PTR. The other factors were rarely mentioned by the participants as shown in the diagram below.

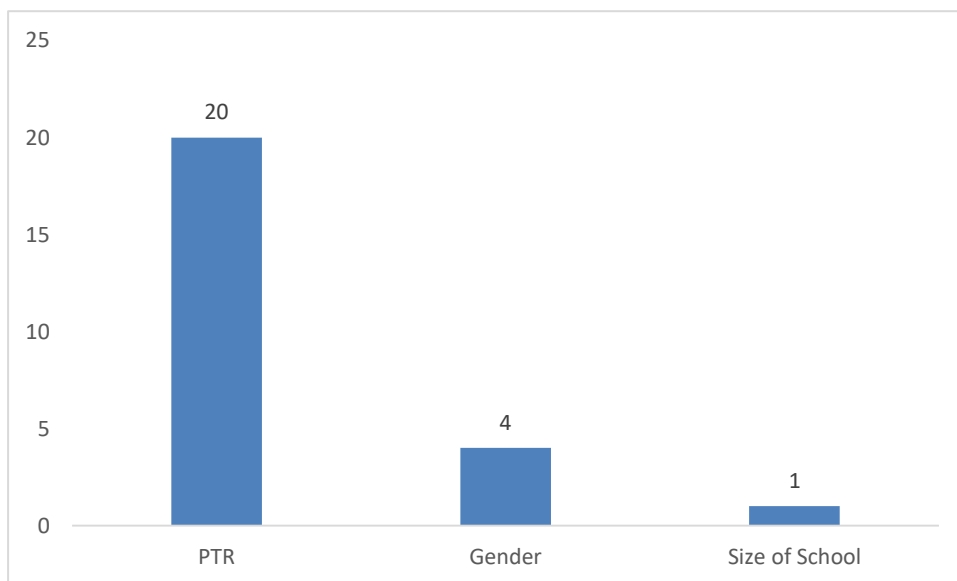


Figure 3: ANSWERS GIVEN BY PARTICIPANTS

However, as seen from the discussion above, the district will continue to suffer from teacher in balances if other angles are not seriously considered.

4.3 Issues Associated with Perceptions of Current Practice of Teacher

Deployment

4.3.1 *The teacher deployment process*

When the respondents were asked how they felt about the process of deployment of teachers into schools, the majority said it was good because teachers were going to remote schools they otherwise would have refused to go. A few that were against this policy said that forced deployment made teachers to work without motivation. The participants said that forced deployment policy was not effective in ensuring equitable distributing teachers in all schools in the district because it was not strictly followed. Some teachers did not even report to the school they have been posted or when they did, they did not return as narrated by one head teacher,

“Once they see this hilly area, they do not return despite the fact that this school is not very far from the road as you have seen. i received a total of 6 teachers this academic year, but only 1 returned, I don’t know where the rest went. I don’t know how they manage to convince the district office to give them other schools”. (Interview with the headmaster, 5th July, 2018).

When questioned why they were not strictly following the forced deployment policy, DEM and PEAs said it was difficult to follow forced deployment policy in some cases because some of the teachers came up with genuine reasons for refusing a posting requiring consideration which they could not just ignore, for instance health reasons.

This is in line with Isyaku and Keller (2008) who said that forced deployment has a number of barriers which hinder its success. He further said that in order for it to be successfully implemented, there was need for a relatively centralized system. This is because forced deployment looks simple on the surface if executed effectively but has

produce complex consequences. In Nigeria, least experienced teachers were deployed to rural areas, creating a disparity in the quality of teaching. In addition, in Guinea, although the staffing level of remote schools improved, it was detrimental to teachers' morale and ultimately affected the quality of education.

4.3.2 Perceptions of remote school

One of important issues that was raised from one of the focus group discussions was that some teachers refused to teach in certain remote schools because of the perception they were given at TTCs (Teachers Training Colleges). Being posted to certain schools in the district is perceived as a punishment. During lecturing, when talking to naughty students, some lectures would make comments such as,

“Olo muzioneka ngati ozindikira kapena ozitsata, adzakupangani post ku school B, mukathimbirira komanso kukwiririka (even if you are behaving as if you are knowledgeable or fashionable here, you will soon be posted to school B and you will change badly and you will be forgotten), we won't even recognize if we meet in future”. (FGD with teachers, 10th July, 2018)

In addition, when the students were talking amongst themselves they would also say that if one crosses or misbehave towards one of the people working at the district office, they would be posted to school B.

Such comments scared some teachers who otherwise would not mind teaching in certain schools. Once posted the teachers refuse to teach in such schools even without physically going there to see the school in question. Some of the schools that had been blacklisted as being very remote and not very conducive were not bad at all. One of the schools that was considered very remote which the researcher visited looked modern according to the standards of most primary schools in Malawi as shown in the

picture below. It had eight classes constructed with concrete blokes, had iron sheets and was well ventilated. It was also surrounded with teachers' houses.



Figure 4: RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

This study has discovered that school environment, especially school infrastructure had little influence on the decision primary school teachers made on whether they should accept an offer to teach in a remote school or not. What mattered the most to them was the remoteness of the area and social amenities that were there

According to a study done by Maphosa, Bhebhe & Shumba (2014) in Zimbabwe, newly recruited teachers have different perceptions on the kind of conditions they expect to find in and around the schools in which they will work. Their preferences and choices are therefore made depending on those conditions. Most of these factors are related to living conditions of an area. These conditions include, availability of reliable road network, availability of water and electricity and supportive parents. Such choices have certain implications on teacher deployment policies and practices.

According to the rational choice theory, individuals choose what is more beneficial to them. As such their behavior, preference and priorities is determined by a number of

things including the environment. When teachers make choices on whether to accept their place of deployment or not, conditions of service matter a lot. Teachers shun remote areas because the remote areas do not have attractive conditions.

4.4 Challenges of District Managers in Teacher Deployment Process

4.4.1 Lack of communication between the district offices and the schools

One of challenges identified by some of the participants was lack of communication between the district office and school over the posted teachers. According to the district office, once a teacher was posted to a school, the school was required to report back to the office in writing. The schools under study did report through information schools gave yearly as well as through staff returns.

When questioned whether the schools were given names of teachers that were posted, the district office said that they did. There were contradictory answers from the head teachers, some said they did others not. One of the head teachers said that he only knew the names of the teachers who were posted to his school through the teachers who reported as narrated,

“..... We do not receive any information pertaining to the names or number of teachers we should expect, we just receive them as they come. In some cases, we just hear from the teachers who have started work saying so and so were supposed to come here but have gone to these schools”. (Interview with the Head Teacher, 10th July, 2018)

Lack of communication between the district office and the schools made follow ups of the posted teachers difficult. Some said that it was possible for some teachers to forge letters of posting and deliver them to the schools of their choice without the district realizing that it has been tricked.

This finding is in line with Asin, Chimombo, Chugunov and Gera (2017) whose study discovered that the education system in Malawi has incomplete and fragmented data on the physical location of its most important asset, teachers and no ability to monitor their physical presence in the school. The multiple databases that were studied showed huge variations, which showed that there was a flaw in the way information moved between the administrative offices.

4.4.2 Pressure from Teachers

The DEM explained that one of the challenges that the DEMs faced when deploying teachers was pressure from people. Most newly recruited teachers and teachers on transfer did not want to be posted to the remotest areas of the district. Most of them wanted to be close to trading centers. Once posted, some refused their posted school and wanted to be given different schools. If not changed, some even quit the profession.

When asked if there were any stipulated guidelines which the office followed in cases where a teacher did not want to teach in a certain school, the DEM said there was none. The office acted on humanitarian grounds. The DEM commented while laughing,

“.... Am telling you sometimes we are tested beyond, there was this young lady that refused to go to the school she was allocated. She came to my office everyday close to 2 weeks and cried her eyes out, in the end, i gave her a different school, although it was not the school she wanted, I couldn't take it anymore....”. (Interview with the DEM, 30th August, 2018)

The DEM further said that sometimes when posting the teachers to the remotest areas, they felt sorry for them considering the remoteness of the area. In such cases, they sent them to stay for 2 to 3 years and later moved them.

Another issue that was raised by the DEM was that the district office sometimes received pressure from powerful people above them. Some of the teachers had powerful relations who would call them telling them to change postings if their relation was posted to a remote school. The teachers also suspected the same. They mentioned that newly recruited teachers with relatives with political power would command the district office to send their relation to certain schools.

The study also discovered that there were three major reasons teachers were giving when requesting to be posted to another school once they were not comfortable with their initial postings.

Marriage

According to the respondents, it is very difficult to post and retain female teachers in rural areas since most of them wanted to be close to their husbands if cases where they were married. The most common excuse female teachers have given to avoid being posted to remote areas is marriage. Most of them want to be close to their husbands working close to towns. With the problem of HIV/AIDS MoEST does not want to separate families. If not married, female teachers want to be close to towns so that they can have a chance of meeting their prospective husband.

The DEM and one of the PEAs mentioned that at first, all the district wanted was a marriage certificate in order to transfer someone to a school close to their spouse. However, things changed over the years. The teachers were supposed to do cross transfer with some else if they wanted to move. MoEST (2006), states that teachers

should be posted to areas where vacancies exist, and that this rule applies to those following their spouses as well.

When females request to be transferred to schools close to their husbands, they rarely move to remote areas. In Malawi, most organizations, companies and government offices are located in town or close to the districts (Mvula, 2005). So female teachers move to such areas. As a result, a lot of female teachers are concentrated near the district offices while remote areas face acute shortages of female teachers.

Health problems

Teachers with certain health problems were also transferred to areas close to hospitals. When a teacher with a certain health problem has been posted to a remote area without hospitals and has complained to the district office, he/she is moved. However, some teachers do abuse this privilege by obtaining fake health reports.

Old or sick parents

In some cases, teachers with sick or old parents who want to be close to their parents were also considered a transfer. When a teacher has come with proof that they have sick or old parents that need help, they are given a school close to their home village.

These findings support Mvula (2005) who mentioned that decisions on teacher deployment at district level are usually swayed on the grounds that it is the human duty of DEMs to listen to teachers' problems. This force DEMs to change their initial deployment plans so as to accommodate teachers that have 'genuine' reasons for requesting transfers. Marriage is one of the most common reason female teachers give to refuse deployment to remote areas. Deployment of teachers is however, not driven by the need of schools but by force from teachers who want to move to areas near towns (Mvula, 2005).

A study by Asin, Chimombo, Chugunov and Gera (2017) also agree with the findings of this study. Their study found out that the DEMs fail to enforce teacher deployment because they are limited by rules and conventions that have been put in place to minimize teachers' hardships. Teachers can therefore request for transfers if they are not happy with their school of deployment by presenting medical reports. Other reasons for transfer being marriage, proximity to family, lack of housing and safety concerns when travelling to school.

The behavior which DEMs display by making decision on whether a teacher should be allowed to change their school of deployment or not can be explained by the rational theory. When they are faced with individual cases, they do consider the forced deployment policy on one hand and the well fare of teacher on the other hand. Their final decision however depends on the situation they are faced with.

4.4.3 Inadequate Number of Teachers

The PEA mentioned that one of the challenges which district was facing was that number of teachers that were posted were not enough to fill the huge gap that was there. The ministry had been allocating teachers to the district over the years as shown in table 2. The table also shows that the total number of teachers allocated to the district is higher compared to those that have left over the years. The fact that the teachers are still not enough shows that the problem of inadequate teachers in the district must have been acute in the past compared to the present.

Table 2: NUMBER OF TEACHERS POSTED TO AND TRANSFERD FROM CHIRADZULU DISRTICT OVER A PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS

YEAR	NUMBER OF TEACHERS POSTED	NUMBER OF TREACHERS TRANSFERD
2014	214	28
2015	6	20
2016	25	13
2017	2	11
2018	100	-

When questioned why the district had inadequate teachers yet MoEST had been recruiting more teachers over the years, the DEM pointed out that this was the case probably because the process of teacher recruitment was still centralized. The district neither involved in teacher recruitment nor allocation to the districts. The only role the districts did was to send data to MoEST through EMIS. The DEM for the district wondered on the criteria which MoEST used when allocating the recruited teachers

“.....the people you have seen outside filling forms are newly recruited teachers. We have received 100 teachers, yet Mangochi has receive 800 teachers, how do they come up with these figures”? (interview with the DEM, 30th September 2018).

A study by Ellion (2004) discovered that the accuracy of the information given to the ministry by the districts is questionable. He said that some schools give out wrong information just to fill the forms; they do not appreciate the harm they are making

because they do not see the fruits of their efforts in any way. Other schools deliberately distort data where they think resources will be allocated to them.

4.4.4 *Lack of Resources*

This study found out that another challenge the district had which contributed towards inequitable distribution of teachers was lack of financial and human resource.

Lack of Money for Following up Teachers

The results from the interviews with the DEM and PEAs showed that the PEAs had the responsibility of following up teachers within the district. This meant that they could easily know the whereabouts of all teachers in the district, including names of teachers who did not report or had moved to other schools. But this was not the case, the PEAs failed to do this because the district did not have enough money to buy fuel. Moving about meant more money for fuel which the district could not afford considering its strict budget. Results from the FGD showed that teachers were able to forge letters and report to schools of their choice successfully without the district office knowing. This could not happen if the PEAs were following up the deployed teachers.

Lack of Money to Enforce Forced transfer

MoEST give forced transfers to teachers that have stayed in one school for long to make sure that the teachers do not overstay in one school. When asked why the district was not using this policy to move teachers to schools that have teacher shortages, both the PEAs and the DEM answered that this was not strictly followed because of inadequate finances. When a teacher has been given a transfer, he/she was supposed to be given not just transport but also disturbance allowance. Such

requirements acted as a drawback for the district since it was expensive to move teachers from one school to another.

Lack of money for Teachers to Requested transfer

Government policy, allows teachers working in remote areas to request for a transfer once they have served for a period of 5 years in one school. Unlike forced transfer, no disturbance as well as transport is given. This means that teachers are to look for their own transport to move. Which act as a hindrance to most teachers who would want to change schools. In school B, the longest serving teacher had served for 21 years. When asked if he had never contemplated on transferring, he said,

“.... It's not that I have never wanted to move to other school, but I can't afford to move, I have been told that if I want to move I have to find my own transport”. (Interview with the Deputy Head Teacher, 5th July, 2018)

Other teachers mentioned that it was not easy to get a transfer even if one had stayed for 5 years or more and had their own transport. Some of them had been asking for a transfer but had been denied several times.

One of the PEAs added that if a teacher was asking for a transfer, he still had to consider other factors. He mentioned that such factors included availability of vacancies in school where the teacher wanted to move to as well as gender of the teacher considering that most remote schools had acute shortages of female teachers.

4.4.5 Lack of Human Resources

The PEA mentioned that another issue that affected the transfer of teachers within the district was lack of human resource. First of all, teachers in the district are not enough, making transfer within the district difficult.

Secondly, moving teachers within the district also required human resource to be involve in transportation process, for example drivers.

The PEA gave conflict views on the issue of teacher transfers, on one hand, some schools near the district were overstaffed and other schools in remote areas were understaffed. On the other hand, teachers could not be transferred because there were no vacancies. So the question that still remained was why not move teachers in overstaffed schools to fill the gap in understaffed schools in the remote areas?

4.5 Factors Influencing Teacher Choice of School

4.5.1 Social Services

According to the DEM and PEAs, the schools that were close to the district were overstaffed while those away from the district faced acute shortages of teachers because remote schools did not have good social services which their counterparts enjoyed.

The teachers also pointed out that most teachers refused the schools in remote areas because they were far from things such as electricity, portable water, good hospitals and good roads. One of the participants commented while shaking his head,

“Working in this area is a sacrifice, imagine, we drink water from a borehole, we don’t have electricity, I can’t even buy a good phone with applications like WhatsApp because I need a phone that saves power, we also want good things”. (FDG with teachers, 5th July, 2018)

A lot of authors agree that most teachers want to be posted to schools where social amenities are close. Teachers are attracted by things such as portable water, electricity, hospitals and markets. However, remote areas have few amenities or opportunities for cultural activities and social engagements that are often desired by

professionals. Lack of such things make remote areas undesirable (UNICEF, 2014, Zvavahera, 2014, Maphosa, Bhebehe, and Shumba, 2014, Asin, Chimombo, Chugunov and Gera 2017).

4.5.2 Conducive housing

Both school A and B had a number of teacher houses around them. These houses were enough for the teachers considering that they had few teachers. Most teachers were accommodated in these houses except a few who preferred to stay in their home villages since they were from the same area. At schools B, two teachers' houses were vacant.

The teachers however mentioned that although the schools had teacher's houses, they were not conducive for living. Most of them had broken windows, leaking roofs and broken doors. They mentioned that the standards of the houses were very low and that they accepted the houses because they had nowhere else to go. One of the teachers commented,

“ ...the two houses you have been told are vacant are in a very bad shape, even the houses we are living in, you will feel sorry for us if you enter our houses. I wonder why this is the case in the education sector, imagine at agriculture, someone is refusing to enter a house which is like a mansion to us, saying it's too small... ”. (FGD with teachers, 10th July, 2018)

Kadzamira (2006), agrees that one of the things that affect poor distribution of teachers is lack of suitable houses within the vicinity of the school. An article of the Nation, (Jan 31, 2018) on the contrary says that teachers care more about social amenities when expressing their preference of school rather than facilities like housing.

4.5.3 Ease of transport

The respondents also mentioned ease of transport as another factor which influence teachers' preference of schools. Teachers want places that have easy transport so as to move to and from town without problems. Both school A and school B were located at an average distance of about 20km from the main road. The main transportation mode were motor bicycles and bicycles.

Travelling to school A was difficult than school B mainly because of its hilly terrain. The teachers mentioned that travelling to town was very costly because they were charged very high by the bicycle men who had tough time riding through the highlands. However, the roads to school A and B were well smooth and well levelled, courtesy of Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) projects.

Table 3: SUMMARY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHER SCHOOL CHOICES IN CHIRADZULU

FACTOR	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B
Electricity	Unavailable	Unavailable
Pipe water	Unavailable	Unavailable
Road network	Available	Available
Reliable transport	Unavailable	Unavailable
Housing	Available	Available
Good hospital	Unavailable	Unavailable

The table above shows that most of the conditions that teachers look for when choosing a school were not available in school A and B. One respondent mentioned that one of the most draw back for the area was lack of electricity. The respondent mentioned that things would be easier if they had solar energy in the school premises.

This study agrees with Ravashankar, et al, (2014) who revealed that teacher satisfaction and motivation in Malawi is greatly influenced by location and remoteness of a school. This is because the most disadvantaged teachers are not adequately compensated. This is similar to what Mulkeen and Chen found, teachers shun schools located in rural areas.

Contrary to the above, the study by Maphosa, Bhebhe & Shumba (2014), reveals that the remoteness of an area has no impact on teachers' choice of schools. What matters are the living conditions and teaching and learning matters, if the conditions matches their preferences, they will go regardless where the schools.

According to rational choice theory, everyone makes choices basing on something that will maximize their reward while minimizing their cost. This agrees with the study findings where teachers prefer to teach in areas that have things that will make their lives easier, for example conducive housing, good transportation, portable water and good hospitals.

4.6 Problems Faced by Teachers Working in the Remote Areas

4.6.1 Hostility and lack of support from the communities

One of the challenges that were cited by the majority of the teachers in all schools under study was hostility of the community. The teachers agreed that surrounded communities looked at them as intruders, despite the fact that some of the teachers had worked in the schools for many years; they were not yet accepted by the communities they were in.

The teachers said that they were sidelined in most activities in the communities. They suspected that people in the communities would prefer to have all teachers from Chiradzulu. The teachers further said that the comments people had been making,

proved that they were not comfortable seeing teachers doing well. It was as if they felt that the teachers benefited more from the communities than what the community were getting. During the school holidays some drunkards passing by the teacher houses would shout,

“agalu inu mukungokhala ngati mulibe kwanu bwanji? Dzipitani musakakamire pano.” (You dogs, go to your home villages. Why are you acting as if you don’t have your homes? Go do not stick around (FGD with teachers, 5th July, 2018).

The teachers seemed hurt and disappointed by lack of support they were getting from the communities. The hostility even affected some of the school activities, parents did not want their children to do school work like sweeping or mopping. Whenever a student did wrong, parents did not their child punished, they would come shouting why their child was punished. All this according to the teachers, made working in such communities challenging.

A study by Mulkeen (2005) supports this study by saying that teachers in rural school face lack of support from parents who are not educated themselves. As such, they do not see the relevant of education. They would rather have their children help in farming than go to school.

Kadzamira (2006) agrees by saying parents that teacher morale affect their productivity. The more teachers are motivated, the more they work. It is therefore very important for the communities to live in harmony with the teachers.

4.6.2 Difficulties in accessing their salaries

The respondents mentioned that another challenge that teachers working in remote areas experienced was difficulties in accessing salaries. The system of accessing

salaries through the banks meant that teachers covered long to access the banks which are located in towns. This was an extra cost for the teachers because travelling to town was costly. During month ends, some teachers left classes to travel to town to access banks. The head teachers said that they gave the teachers some hours off the classes to go to town since most banks operated week days.

This challenge was also identified by Mulkeen, & Chen (2008) who says that teachers in rural areas often missed school and taught less than their counterparts working in town because they travelled to town to among other things collect their salaries. Often times rural communities do not have some of the things which teachers need, including banks.

4.6.3 Long distances to the hospital

In addition to the above point, the results of the study showed that teachers working in remote areas travelled long distance to hospital. On average, teachers in most schools travelled an average of 9 km to access a hospital. The situation was worsened by the lack of proper transport the communities have. The teachers said it was hard to use bicycles to cover such distances more especially when one is sick. To make matters worse, they did not find medication in the hospitals since the closest hospitals were small health centers.

The challenges that teachers working in rural areas face make living in rural areas difficult. A lot of teachers would rather move to areas close to district centers because such problems are minimal. This behavior is explained by the rational choice theory. The teachers prefer to live close to centers because their suffering is less compared to their colleagues in remote areas.

4.7 Consequences of Unequal Distribution of Teacher

4.7.1 Low performance

The majority of the respondents said that lack of teachers in remote schools affected the performance of the schools at national examinations. They said one of the main reasons why most schools located in remote areas failed to perform well was because of inadequate teachers.

The head teacher in one of the school A commented,

“There was a time when this school had 6 teachers, by 6 teachers I mean me, the deputy and 4 other teachers. That year we had no selection, am telling you not even one. But when we received 2 more teachers the next year, 10 pupils were selected.” (Interview with the Head Teacher, 5th July, 2018)

When asked on the same, the DEM however said as much as lack of teachers in schools affect the performance of schools, the district showed different results. This was because the schools that were overstaffed were also performing very badly. This concurs McEwan, (1999) who said that there is empirical evidence which support that there is no direct link between lack of teachers and the performance of the students.

4.7.2 More work

The study found out that lack of teachers in a school meant more work for the available teachers. In some of the schools, one teacher was teaching up to 10 subjects. There were also other classes without teachers, so the head teachers were performing two functions, administrative function and as well as teaching. Where the head teacher was unavailable, some teachers handled more than one class. The situation was worse if a teacher got sick as narrated by the H/teacher,

“there was a time two of my teachers got sick, at that time we were only 6 in the school, it was a tough situation, for the whole week, we were just giving work to the junior classes while attending to the senior classes especially the examinations class.” (interview with the Head Teacher, 5th July, 2018).

Heavy workload has a lot of impacts on a teacher, one of which is lack of preparation time. Preparation of lessons that meets the needs of students with varying learning abilities takes great deals of time, without which the teacher will not be able to teach effectively. Apart from this, heavy workload leads to stress for the teacher. A stressed teacher cannot teach effectively. (Dibbon, 2004).

4.7.3 Lack of assessment

The study has found out that most teachers of remote schools found it hard to do continuous assessment mainly because they were few as such they had heavy workload. The teachers said it was difficult to give the students continuous assessment because that meant that they would have a lot of exercise books to mark. This is however contrary to what MoEST is trying to achieve by encouraging learner-centered education, where the students do more work and teachers assess the work.

Literature review shows that class assessment is very important for the achievement of students. Amhed, (2016) says that continuous assessment improves the academic performance of students by engaging them in learning and related activities. Abejehu, (2016) and Muskin, (2017) agree by saying that nowadays continuous assessment is an integral part of everyday classroom instruction and a key in ensuring quality learning. This is because it determines students' achievement and their learning difficulties requiring special support. Despite the fact that continuous assessment has

a very crucial role in the learning process, large classes have been identified as one of the factors that affect the use of continuous assessment.

4.7.4 Ineffective teaching

Inefficient teaching was also mentioned as another impact of high PTRs. The study found out that where teachers are not enough, not all subjects are taught. Teachers selected what they considered as main subjects such as English, Mathematics, Chichewa and General science. Other subjects, although equally important, were not taught.

The teachers also mentioned that there was poor interaction between the teachers and the students especially in the junior classes where classes were big. In such cases, the teachers only focused on those students who raised hands. Furthermore, the interaction was minimal because the teachers were unable to move about in the classes. Below is a picture showing a crowded classroom.



Figure 5: CROWDED CLASSROOM

In overcrowded classes such as the class shown above, it is very difficult for the teacher to move about the class to observe the pupils when they are doing some work or even to mark their work.

From the answers generated above, inadequate teachers in a school negatively affect the attainment of quality education. Quality education cannot be achieved if teachers are either ineffective or overworked or if the students are not assessed continuously. All this is against one of the goals of MoEST through the just ended NESP 2008-2017, (2008) which is to achieve quality and relevant education by reducing class size at primary school through progressive employment of teachers.

4.8 Solutions to Challenges of Teacher Deployment

4.8.1 Decentralization

Some of the respondents suggested full decentralization of both recruitment as well as deployment of teachers. They said that vacancies should be created and filled at district level. Teachers applying for the vacancies should do that fully aware of the school they are applying for. In addition to that, even those in need of transfers should also wait for vacancies to appear.

4.8.2 Employing teachers on time

The respondents suggested that teachers who have been trained by the government should be employed on time. There were a lot of teachers who are just staying at home waiting for the government to employ them. They said that government had been delaying in employing teachers due to financial constraints for so long, it was high time it found a lasting solution. Such delays resulted to some of teachers migrating to other countries such as South Africa to looking for employment while the country continues to suffer.

4.8.3 *Forced deployment*

The study also found out that the problem of high PTRs in remote schools continue because the district office was not strict enough. When student teachers, especially those of ODL and IPTE applied for a place in a teacher training school, they were asked to sign a bond which said that they would work for five years before asking for a transfer. When asked about the bond, the teachers said that they were fully aware of the bond, and that they knew that their work would be to teach in remote areas. When questioned why some of the teachers refused the schools they were posted to, they said they did because they knew that there was a loophole. So some suggested that if the district wants the policy to work, they should strictly adhere to it. On the contrary, others said that forcing the teachers to work where they were not comfortable would lead to demotivation.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has given findings of the study based the research questions. DEMs face a number of challenges when deploying teacher to remote areas. They receive a lot of pressure from teachers who do not like their deployed school. When faced with this challenge, they act based on humanitarian grounds because the policy is silent on what should be done in case a teacher will find it hard to live in that area. In addition, they receive few teachers, especially female teachers. They also find it difficult to do follow ups because of lack of resources. The study has also revealed that teacher in remote schools face a lot of challenges, some of them being hostile communities, lack of nearby hospitals, and difficult transportation to town to access salaries. All these problems make living in remote areas unattractive.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

5.1 Conclusion

5.1.1 Overview of the Study

This study wanted to investigate challenges of teacher deployment at district. This was in the view that teacher deployment functions were decentralized at district level. With this in mind the researcher wanted to understand the cause of teacher inequities within the same district despite government's continuous efforts to deal with the same. To understand this, the researcher used a case study of two primary schools in Chiradzulu district.

Following social constructivism philosophical perspective, the study employed the qualitative approach of study in order to have grip of the reality on the ground. As Creswell (2009) says, reality of different issues exists in people. By questioning them, one can come up with what is really happening. To do this, the researcher used focus group discussions, interviews as well as document analysis. A total of 20 participants were involved in a case study of two schools of Chiradzulu district.

The first research question generated a number of issues. To begin with, it has confirmed that there is indeed a huge problem in the way teachers are deployed in the district. Remotest schools of Chiradzulu district continue to suffer with inadequate teachers regardless of the fact that teachers, administrators at district level and schools in question are fully aware deployment policies which emphasize on the need to prioritize neediest schools during the process of teacher deployment. there are a

number of factors which district offices are supposed to consider when deploying teachers which include PTR, gender and size of the school. However, much emphasis is put on PTR. This creates a problem particularly to full schools that have smaller number of students and those with uneven distribution of teachers across classes. Their PTR may be around the recommended 1:60 but some classes are left with no teachers and other teachers that are there have heavy workloads. So it is very important for the DEMs to focus on the number of classes the schools have as well.

The second and third research questions revealed that the DEMs are exposed to a lot of pressure from the same teachers who signed bonds to teach in remote schools. Teachers want to be posted to schools close to the district center because remote areas lack attractive social amenities like portable water, good roads, conducive housing and good hospitals. To make matters worse, the incentives that the government give to teachers working in remote areas are not enough to compensate for the suffering they are subjected to. The study confirmed that teachers feel that the hardship allowance which is given to them is not enough to curter for their suffering. Furthermore, the allowance does not attract teachers to remote areas because it does not consider the geographical location of the school; teachers who are located in the remotest areas are not compensated more. The rational theory says that human beings make rational decisions of selecting jobs by balancing conditions of service with gains.

In addition to the above, for some reasons, there is inadequate communication between the districts and the schools making it difficult to follow up teachers that have been deployed in the remotest schools of the district. Most teachers do not report to the school they were deployed, instead some fake letters and report elsewhere.

Since the schools have little information on the deployed teachers, teachers are able to place themselves in the school of their choice.

Last but not least, the study discovered that the district does not receive enough teachers to fill existing vacancies in the remotest schools of the district. Furthermore, there are few female teachers recruited in the district. The district finds it difficult to place these female teachers to remote schools since most of them do not want to be posted there, marriage being their major reason. The situation is made worse with high numbers of teachers who transfer out of the district every year.

5.2 Implication of The Study

The results of this study have implications for a positive change in the way district offices deploy teachers. The study has discovered that despite the fact that schools close to the district enjoy high numbers of teachers, remote schools continue to suffer from acute shortages of the same teachers. This is the case because the district offices face some challenges that hinder the process of balancing the teachers in all schools in the district. The DEMs are subjected to a lot of pressure from people, be it from those above them or the teachers. The respondents suggested that the DEMs should be strict when deploying teachers. They should ensure that teachers report to schools they have been posted to.

Teachers refuse to go to certain schools because they do not have adequate social services such good hospitals, portable water, good road networks and electricity. However, some teachers can be willing to move to remote areas if they are compensated enough. The main problem with the current system of compensation is that it is not enough to attract teachers, it only works in retaining teachers that are close to the district because they also receive the same amount although they are

better off than their counter parts. There are current plans to compensate teachers according to remoteness, if this is coupled with increase of the allowance, it may bear positive results.

5.2.1 Recommendations

Complete decentralization of some functions such recruitment, deployment, discipline and firing functions. By completely transferring such powers to the districts, the district will be completely sure of the vacancies they have and teachers will only apply for such vacancies. As already noted, the information which the ministry uses are sometimes completely distorted due to various reasons. By leaving such functions at district level, the district offices will pay more attention since they will have non to blame but themselves. This will also help to eliminate the gaps which the current system has which some teachers take advantage of such as fake marriages and fake illnesses.

In addition to the above, this challenge requires holistic approach. The government should work hand in hand with the communities to improve the conditions of the rural areas. As noted in the discussions, most teachers are not happy to stay in the remote areas mostly because of the conditions. Things like electricity, good transport networks, portable water, good hospitals; conducive housing among other things would make teachers to stay long in the remove schools because they would have the thigs they want in the remote areas. This may not be done immediately because of financial constraints, but if they projects are strategically planned; their fruits may be leaped later.

Another way of solving this problem is through employing teachers that come from the surrounding communities. As noted from the discussions above, one of the

challenges that teachers face in the communities they work is that of hostile community, this sometimes motivates the teachers to move away because they don't feel comfortable. The government should therefore employ teachers whose home villages are close by the schools. In this case, the communities will be happy and the teachers will be happy as well, a win-win situation.

More incentives to the teachers working in the remote areas would also help to attract more teachers. Teachers that have worked for a number of years in the remote areas should be promoted. This will also give the teachers a chance to rise through the ranks

The ministry should come up with clear guidelines that will be used to avoid certain loopholes. The DEMs act on humanitarian grounds because there are no clear ways of dealing with certain situations. Once a teacher has been posted to a certain school and have not reported there, they should not be allowed to back to a different school without valid reasons. If the request is on medical grounds, follow ups should be made to ensure that the teacher is indeed sick.

5.2.2 Areas for Further Research

After this study on challenges of teacher deployment under decentralization of primary education system, a number of areas have been identified for further research.

These are:

1. Impacts of high PTR on school performance
2. Decentralization of school functions and practice
3. Forced teacher deployment and its impacts

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<https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.63605APPENDICES>

APPENDIX 1: Letter from the District Education Manager



In reply please refer to: TEL: 0888633559/0888319474

The District Education Manager
P.O. Box, 29,
CHIRADZULU.

3rd July, 2018

Ref. No. C7/DEM/12/10/02

TO: The Head teachers,

- Midule Primary School,
- Mulinda Primary School.

CC: The PEA, NAMITAMBO ZONE

✓ CC: The PEA, NAMITAMBO ZONE

Dear Madam,

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter is **C.Chikaaneka** who is doing her research for Master of Education (Policy, Planning and Leadership) at Chancellor College.

Would you please assist her to get the information pertaining her research.

This office has granted her permission to collect the information as per her request.

I therefore request you to assist her accordingly.


A.S.MBEWE (TEL 0888319474)

FOR ;The District Education Manager.



APPENDIX 2: Letter from Postgraduate Coordinator (EDF)



CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

Principal: Richard Tambulasi,
B.A. (Pub Admin), BPA (Hons), MPA, PhD

P. O. Box 280, Zomba, MALAWI
Tel: (265) 01 524 222
Tel/Fax: 44742 CHANCOL, MI
Fax: (265) 01 524 046

Our Ref.: EDF/6/19
Your Ref.:

29th June 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR MASTER OF EDUCATION (POLICY, PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP)

Ms. Chimwemwe Chikaoneka (MED/PPL/45/15) is a student of Education in the Department of Education Foundations at Chancellor College, University of Malawi.

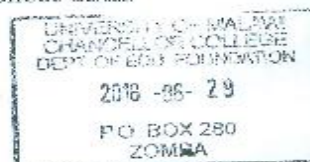
She is working on her thesis titled, *"Exploring Challenges in Teacher Deployment under Decentralization of Primary Education Functions."*

This is meant to be a request to your institution or organization to assist our student in her endeavor to collect data.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E.T. Kamchedzera'.

E.T. KAMCHEDZERA, PhD
POSTGRADUATE COORDINATOR EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS DEPARTMENT



APPENDIX 3: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

EXPLORING CHALLENGES IN TEACHER DEPLOYMENT UNDER DECENTRALIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUILDE

Name of school

Composition: Males_____ **Females**_____

DATE OF INTERVIEW

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

1. How do you asses teacher deployment and transfer system in this district?
2. Are there any problems regarding teacher deployment? If yes, what are they?
Can you suggest solutions to the problems above?
3. Are you given an opportunity to choose a school?
4. Were you posted to the school of your choice? If yes explain, if no, what did
you do about it? Did you appeal?
5. Are there any problems which you experience working in this school? If yes,
what are they?
6. Is there a chance to request for transfer to another school?
7. What do you look for when choosing a school to be transferred to?
8. What are the consequences of having few teachers in a school?
9. How can these problems of teacher in adequacies be dealt with?
10. Is there anything you would like to add to what you have said?

APPENAPPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION

EXPLORING CHALLENGES IN TEACHER DEPLOYMENT UNDER DECENTRALIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

INTERVIEW GUILDE FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION MANAGER

DATE OF INTERVIEW_____

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS

TEACHER DEPLOYMENT POLICY AND STRATEGIES

What strategies does the Dem use when allocating teachers in Chiradzulu district?

1. Can you tell me your responsibilities as the DEM?
2. How do you deploy teachers in the district?
3. Are there any guidelines for deploying teachers? What are they?
4. Do you adhere to these guidelines? If not, why?
5. What problems do you face when allocating teachers to the remotest areas in the district?
6. How do you deal with these challenges?

What factors influence teachers' choice of schools?

7. Do teachers have an opportunity to refuse a school they have been allocated to for certain reasons? Is that part of the guidelines? if yes what reasons do they give?

8. Is there a different reaction between men and women when you have posted them to the remotest part of the district?
9. What factors influence teachers' preference of certain schools within the district?
10. What are the consequences of uneven distribution of teachers in the district?
11. What can be done to reduce these inequalities?
12. Is there anything you would like to add on what we have discussed?

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

EXPLORING CHALLENGES IN TEACHER DEPLOYMENT UNDER DECENTRALIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

DATE OF INTERVIEW

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS

TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS AND PREFERENCES

1. What do you know about teacher deployment?
2. What is your perception on teacher deployment guidelines?
3. How serious is the problem of lack of teachers in your school?
4. How does this affect management of this school?
5. How do you deal with problems lack of teachers in the school? Does the community help? If yes how?
6. How often do you request for teachers from the District Education office? Do they respond? How quick is the response?
7. What do you think are the challenges Doms meet when deploying teachers to the remotest areas in this district?
8. Do teachers refuse to teach in certain schools? What things do they look for?
9. How do inequalities in teacher distribution affect education in general?
10. How can the problem of inequality in teacher distribution be solved?
11. Is there anything you would like to say on what we have discussed?

APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW GUILDE FOR PEAs

EXPLORING CHALLENGES IN TEACHER DEPLOYMENT UNDER DECENTRALIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

INTERVIEW GUILDE FOR PEAs

DATE OF INTERVIEW _____

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS _____

1. What is your role in teacher deployment?
2. Are there any guidelines you follow when allocating or transferring teachers within the district? If yes, what are they? If not what strategies do you use?
3. Do you adhere to the stipulated guidelines? If no why not?
4. What problems do you experience when allocating or transferring teachers in the remotest parts of the district?
5. How do you deal with these problems?
6. Do teachers have an opportunity to refuse a school they have been allocated to for certain reasons? (Should they?) Is that part of the guidelines? if yes what reasons do they give?
7. Is there a different reaction between men and women when you have posted them to the remotest part of the district?
8. What factors influence teachers' preference of certain schools within the district?
9. How serious is the problem of high PTR in your zone?
10. How often do h/teachers request for teachers in your zone? How do you respond?
11. How quick does the Dem respond to your requests for teachers?
12. What are the consequences of uneven distribution of teachers in the district?
13. What can be done to reduce these inequalities?
14. Is there anything you would like to add on what we have discussed?