



**IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY IN PUBLIC AND
MISSION SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

POLICY PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP (PPL) THESIS

By

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my own original work and it has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Acknowledgments have been duly made where other peoples' work has been used. I bear the responsibility for the contents of this thesis.

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Signature

Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certified that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, my five sisters and my brother. You are my breath and light. To God be the glory.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of the implementation of the student discipline policy in public and mission secondary schools in Malawi. The main research question in the study was ‘how does the implementation of the discipline policy compare between public schools and mission secondary schools? The available studies do not distinguish between what happens in mission and public secondary schools, and yet, it is common knowledge that different school contexts have different experiences when dealing with discipline issues. Data collection and analysis in this study was guided by two theoretical frameworks: Education policy implementation and the three overlapping phases of change process. The study used a qualitative interpretative approach using case study as methodology. The data in the study was collected from two case studies comprising of two public secondary schools as case 1; and two mission secondary schools as case 2. Four methods of data collection were used, namely: in-depth face to face interviews, Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus group discussions (FGDs) and document analysis. While both the public and the mission secondary schools were guided by the Ministry of Education school discipline policy, the results show the significance of context in supporting the implementation of the discipline policy: The faith based Christian values and church support was found to be important in reducing cases of indiscipline in the mission schools. The results also indicate the need for establishing policy strategies focusing on reforming behaviour and not always using punitive action. Furthermore, the results clearly indicate that successful school discipline policy implementation requires an effective administrative structure, efficient management processes and clear procedures.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

B. Ed:	Bachelor of Education
CDSS:	Community Day Secondary School
CWED:	Central Western Education Division
Dip. Ed:	Diploma in education
HOD:	Head of department
PTA:	Parent Teacher Association
MSCE:	Malawi School Certificate of Education
J.C:	Junior Certificate

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents an introduction to this study. The study compares the student discipline practices in four secondary schools in Malawi: public and mission secondary schools. The chapter provides a background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions and the significance of the study.

1.1 Introduction and background

Discipline in the school is key to all teaching and learning. Student discipline impacts the learning process by creating a stress-free environment for learning. Discipline is the practice to control oneself or others. Learners who are disciplined at any level are most likely to acquire knowledge and skills. There is a relationship between punishment and learner performance (Amutan and Gordon 2014). Positive discipline allows students to learn and adopt behaviours to meet expectations in classrooms.

The school discipline policy in Malawi secondary schools is outlined in the *Secondary school Management Handbook: A practical guide*, produced by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in 2013. According to this document, the aim of the secondary school discipline policy is to provide proper functioning of a school for effective learning and quality of school life. Effective school discipline strategies need to be sought to encourage responsible behavior and to provide all students with a satisfying and fruitful school experience. The Malawi school discipline policy has the following three goals: (i) to ensure the safety of staff, students, and school property (ii) to create an environment

conducive to learning and teaching, and (iii) to contribute to the social development of the students (MoEST 2013).

Although it is well established that discipline is a cornerstone of effective teaching and learning in schools, available literature indicates that indiscipline cases are on the increase (Kamwachale and Mwenegamba 2017; Warui 2018; Dodo 2019 Kamangira and Kasambara 2010; Kuthemba-Mwale, Hauya & Tizifa 1996). Since we have a discipline policy in place, why are cases of indiscipline on the rise? Are there any gaps in the discipline policy? In Malawi, there has not been much study on how the discipline policy works in schools. Much of the focus has been on exploring factors that contribute to students' indiscipline in Schools (Kachepa 2015).

According to MoEST (2013), there are general and specific rules and regulations that guide the operations of schools and direct the schools in the management and controlling of student and teacher behaviors. MoEST (2013) also outlines procedures for formulating rules under the secondary school discipline framework. Furthermore, MoEST (2013) outlines discipline actions, guidance processes, counselling processes, and punishment measures that need to be followed in implementing the discipline policy in secondary schools. In terms of punishment, the policy provides for specific examples in cases of rustication, suspension, and expulsion. According to MoEST (2013) various roles of specific stakeholders from secondary schools in the implementation of discipline in schools is outlined. These include the roles of the Headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers, prefects, class monitors and Parents-Teachers' Associations (PTA).

The School Discipline Policy, MoEST (2013) provides a framework for the development of a conducive learning environment. While the policy applies to all schools, the specific setting in which the school operates needs to meet the varying needs of students. Malawi has different types of secondary schools. These are aided boarding schools, aided day schools, government conventional boarding-secondary schools, government day secondary schools, community day secondary schools (CDSS) and private secondary schools. Each of these school types is likely to have its own culture which has an effect on how the

discipline policy operates. It is therefore important to explore and understand how different schools implement the discipline policy in based on their school type and contextual settings.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Literature clearly indicates that school discipline during the twenty-first century has become one of the most topical and contentious issues in education; being commented upon by parents, educators, researchers, politicians, authors and speakers at public forums (Rossouw, 2003). A lack of discipline may seriously affect the teaching and learning process, and only a few ideals for education can be realised if disruptive behaviour prevails (Rossouw, 2003). The importance of positive discipline as the cornerstone of the creation and maintenance of a positive learning environment in schools cannot be ignored. Nxumalo (2001) emphasises the need for both learners and teachers to be disciplined for the effective functioning of schools.

Furthermore, most studies that currently inform practice have been conducted in countries such as South Africa and the United States of America, which have a very different context from that of Malawi. In addition, not much studies have been conducted in Malawi to explore the issue of discipline in school (Kamwachale and Mwenegamba, 2017). The available studies do not distinguish between what happens in mission and public secondary schools (Kamwachale and Mwenegamba 2017; Warui 2018; Dodo 2019 Kamangira and Kasambara 2010; Kuthemba-Mwale, Hauya & Tizifa 1996) and yet, it is common knowledge that different school contexts have different experiences when dealing with discipline issues. It is therefore, important to understand how different school types with different experiences are implementing the discipline policy from their context.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the implementation of the student discipline policy between public and mission secondary schools.

1.4 Research Objectives

The main study objective was to compare the implementation of the discipline policy between government (public) and mission (private) Secondary Schools. The specific objectives of this study were to:

- analyse how the discipline policy is contextualised in public and in mission secondary schools
- analyse the specific roles of stakeholders in public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy
- examine challenges experienced by public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy in public and mission secondary schools.

1.5 Research questions

The study research question was *‘how does the implementation of the discipline policy compare between public schools and mission secondary schools?’* The following were the specific research questions:

- How is the discipline policy contextualised in public and in mission secondary schools?
- What are the specific roles of stakeholders in public, and in mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?
- What challenges are experienced in public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is important for informing effective implementation of the discipline policy in public and private secondary schools in Malawi. The results of the study will be important to the education system in general and to the secondary schools in particular. The results can be useful for making improvements in the implementation of the discipline policy to maximise its positive effects on classroom teaching and learning. Furthermore, the study bridges the gap in knowledge as far as the implementation of discipline policy is concerned in secondary schools in Malawi.

1.7 Definition of Key terms

- **Discipline Policy:** A discipline policy outlines the rules and procedures for managing student behaviour in schools. Its objectives include promoting a positive school climate, ensuring safety, and fostering an environment conducive to learning
- **Public Schools in Malawi:** Public schools in Malawi are government-funded institutions that provide free primary education and subsidized secondary education.
- **Mission Secondary Schools:** Mission secondary schools in Malawi are educational institutions established and often managed by religious organizations. They emphasize faith-based education, incorporating Christian values into their curriculum.
- **Education Policy Implementation:** This theoretical framework involves the processes and strategies used to put educational policies into practice. It includes designing policies, engaging stakeholders, creating conducive contexts, and developing coherent implementation strategies.
- **Three Overlapping Phases of Change Process:** This concept describes the stages of implementing change in an organization: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization.
- **Qualitative Interpretative Approach:** This research approach involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It was chosen for your study to gain in-depth insights into participants' perspectives and the context of the research problem.
- **Case Study Methodology:** This involves an in-depth, contextual analysis of a specific instance or event. In your research, it allows for a detailed examination of the implementation and impact of educational policies within a particular school or community.
- **Key Informant Interviews (KII):** KIIs are qualitative interviews with individuals who have specialised knowledge about the topic being studied. They provide detailed information and insights that are crucial for understanding the research context.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** FGDs involve guided discussions with a group of participants to explore their perceptions, opinions, and attitudes on a specific topic. They are used in your study to gather diverse perspectives and generate rich data.

- **Document Analysis:** This method involves reviewing and interpreting documents to gather data. In your research, it includes analysing policy documents, reports, and other relevant materials to understand the context and implementation of educational policies.
- **Faith-Based Christian Values:** These values are principles derived from Christian teachings, such as compassion, integrity, and respect. In mission schools, they influence the curriculum, school culture, and disciplinary practices.
- **Punitive Action:** In the context of school discipline policies, punitive action refers to disciplinary measures that aim to punish students for misbehaviour, such as detention, suspension, or expulsion.
- **Administrative Structure:** An effective administrative structure in school management involves clear roles and responsibilities, efficient communication channels, and well-defined processes for decision-making and policy implementation.
- **Management Processes:** Efficient management processes involve planning, organizing, directing, and controlling school activities to ensure effective implementation of policies and achievement of educational goals.
- **Clear Procedures:** Clear procedures are detailed, unambiguous steps that guide the implementation of policies. They are important for ensuring consistency, accountability, and transparency in school operations.
- **Positive Discipline:** An approach to discipline that focuses on teaching and reinforcing good behaviour rather than punishing bad behaviour. Positive discipline aims to build a supportive school climate where students feel respected and motivated to follow rules.
- **Disruptive Behaviour:** Actions by students that interrupt the normal flow of teaching and learning in the classroom. Examples include talking out of turn, not following instructions, or being physically aggressive.
- **Learning Environment:** The physical and psychological conditions in which students learn. A positive learning environment is safe, supportive, and conducive to academic and social-emotional growth.
- **Mission Schools:** Schools established and run by religious organizations, often with a focus on moral and religious education. These schools may have different disciplinary practices compared to public schools due to their unique values and objectives.

- **Public Schools:** Schools funded and operated by the government, providing free education to students or subsided fees. Public schools often follow standardized policies and regulations set by educational authorities in Malawi.
- **Discipline Policy:** A set of guidelines and rules established by a school or educational authority to manage student behaviour. This policy outlines acceptable behaviour, consequences for misbehaviour, and procedures for addressing disciplinary issues.
- **Context:** The circumstances or setting in which an event occurs, including cultural, social, and economic factors. Understanding the context of Malawi is crucial for implementing effective discipline policies that are relevant and effective.
- **School Discipline:** The strategies, policies, and practices employed by schools to manage student behaviour and create a conducive learning environment. This term encompasses both preventive measures (like setting clear rules) and corrective actions (like detention or counselling) to address misbehaviour.

1.8 Organization of the thesis

This thesis is organised into five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction of the study. It covers the background to the study, the research problem, purpose of the study, research questions and explains the significance of the study. Chapter two is a review of related literature and the theoretical frameworks which guided and underpinned the study. Chapter three is the research design and methodology. Chapter four presents and discusses findings of the study in light of literature and theoretical frameworks in the study. Finally, chapter five concludes the study.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the introduction to this study which focuses on the discipline policy in secondary schools. The chapter has outlined the background to the study and the problem under study. The chapter has also presented the research objectives, research questions and has explained the significance of the study. The next chapter provides a review of literature related to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents literature related to the study on implementation of the school discipline policy in different types of schools. The chapter reviews literature from around the globe, with a view of drawing experiences comparable to the Malawi case. The chapter also presents two theoretical frameworks that were important for developing research instruments. The theoretical frameworks were also used as analytical frameworks for this study.

2.1 Understanding the nature of discipline problems in schools

Discipline is an important component of effective education institutions providing teaching and learning services. Schools have commonly conceptualized discipline issues as undesirable disruptive behaviour (s) that adversely affect the feeling of safety and respect as well as ability to learn in schools (Mabeba and Prinsloo, 2000). Discipline problem can also be understood by describing indiscipline. According to Kochar (2001), indiscipline is a behaviour that breaks rules and regulations of an education institution, which in the long run undermines the effectiveness of a school.

From this understanding, discipline problems can be described as an act that is not in conformity with the agreed set rules and regulations of a school. A school with indiscipline problems is associated with a number of characteristics. A study by Gaustad (1993) reveals such characteristics as unclear rules which are unfairly or inconsistently enforced; failure by students to believe in the school rules; and teachers' and administrators' either lack of

knowledge of the rules or disagreement on the proper responses to student misconduct. The fourth characteristic is poor teacher-administration cooperation on top of teachers' punitive attitudes. The last two characteristics are ignoring of misconduct by teachers as well as large schools which also lacked teaching resources.

Discipline problems are manifested in schools in various forms. A report by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009) revealed that absenteeism, late reporting for classes, truancy, improper dress code, classroom disturbance, examination cheating, vandalism, stealing and causing physical injuries were forms of indiscipline cases common among secondary school students in England, Italy, Japan, Russia, Scotland and USA.

A study by Clarke (2002) on discipline in schools showed that violence against teachers and other students, possession of drugs and other substances, robbery, committing school assault to staff among others were the common indiscipline cases of students. Similar results were revealed by Parkay (2006) who argue that abuse of drugs, tobacco and alcohol was the most serious social problem confronting schools in the USA. The indiscipline cases of students in the USA mirror those of Jamaica. According to The Gleaner (2009), policy makers, administrators, teachers, parents and the public had been banging heads to find the lasting solutions to indiscipline problems in schools because cases such as stubbing, killings and assaults were part of the school life. Amplifying the situation is Rahul (2011) who reported that students engaged in copying and cheating in examinations, insulted their teachers, mutilating pages from library books, writing graffiti on the schools' walls and being involved in violent acts.

A study conducted in Malaysia portrays similar results. Schools in Malaysia are faced with indiscipline behaviours such as truancy, assault on fellow students or teachers, verbal abuse, offensive language against teachers and other students, possession of offensive weapons, using illegal drugs and sexual harassment (Azizi, 2009).

In Africa, the situation is not different. Literature is awash with reports of indiscipline problems manifested through various forms of indiscipline behaviors (Onyechi et al., 2007; Simatwa, 2007; Matsoga, 2003; Simata, 1993). A study in Nigeria revealed a number of deviant behaviors among secondary school students such as vandalism, truancy, alcoholism, examination malpractice among others (Onyechi et al., 2007). On the other hand, a study by Simatwa (2007) on management of student discipline in Kenya revealed cases of indiscipline such as lateness for classes, indecency, drug abuse and sales, rioting and possession of inflammable substances. Cases of student indiscipline were also on the rise in South Africa which to a greater extent have undermined safety of school environments. For example, Harber (2001) indicates that cases of learners murdering others in the school campuses were registered in some schools in South Africa. In addition to Harber (2001), Zulu et al. (2004) reported a number of indiscipline cases in schools in Northern Durban. These cases include truancy, noisemaking, fighting, beer drinking, drug abuse, stealing, bullying, improper dressing and many others. In a study of the relationship between single parenting and indiscipline among teenage pupils in schools, Beddings (2006) supports the findings of Simata (1993) which looked at the relationship between home background and indiscipline among pupils in Zambian schools. According to Simata (1993), the common forms of indiscipline among students were vandalism, strikes, bullying, smoking, drug abuse, aggressiveness, drunkenness, stealing among other cases.

The problem of indiscipline in schools is not peculiar to certain category of schools. Literature agrees that this is a worldwide problem and affects both government and mission owned schools. For example, both mission and government schools in Uganda experience discipline problems (Ssekamwa and Lugumba, 2000). This revelation was against the traditional belief among many Ugandans that mission schools were characterized with high levels of discipline. An effective school has to have high levels of discipline (Kelly, 1999) for a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere to be achieved (Salifu and Agbenyega, 2012). Thus, discipline is one of the key factors in the equation of high achievement among students in schools.

Schools are a vehicle of molding responsible and productive citizens. Where teaching and learning is hampered, students' achievement is also negatively affected. Hornby and Wehmeier (2000) view discipline as the training that corrects, molds or perfects the mental faculties or moral character of a person. Therefore, discipline includes the training of both the mind and character of a human being in order to have a controlled and obedient conduct. If knowledge is acquired in the absence of discipline, the value of the knowledge acquired therefore becomes of no value.

Apart from being an important facet of personal life, discipline is also vital to the political and social life. At a work place for example, the behavior of workers leaving their duties unattended to is likely to disrupt stability of a country's development. According to Selby (2008), "in Ghana, and many parts of Africa, acts of indiscipline have been the main incitements to the destabilization of the development of the continent." A nation with disciplined citizens has enhanced unity and cooperation.

Based on the foregoing, it is important that all schools strive for high standards of discipline with clear strategies and promote self-discipline of students. Thus, indiscipline in schools needs serious interventions. While schools and the society have a joint duty of instilling discipline in students, government is key in offering direction on the same. For example, the government can come up with policies on discipline which would guide schools and the society in dealing with indiscipline issues among students.

2.2 Causes of student Indiscipline

It is clear from the preceding section that indiscipline cases are increasing in schools and no form of secondary school has been spared in Malawi just like elsewhere. The incidences of indiscipline in schools are attributed to any factors which can broadly be categorized as internal and external forces. The internal forces relate to indiscipline generated within the school environment while external forces relate to those cases generated outside the school environment (Ralmi, 2010). In this sense, the epicentres of discipline problems in schools

may be either students, schools or society (Tikoko and Bomett, 2011; Ngwokabuenui, 2015; Regis and Tichaona, 2015; Belle, 2017).

In terms of internal causatives, literature identifies a number of internal factors that lead to indiscipline among students. According to Rhalmi (2010), favoritism, uninforced rules, lack of communication, teacher student relationship, lack of leadership, lack of motivation and bad habits as some of the internal causes of indiscipline. Other internal factors include lack of motivation, relationship between a teacher and a student, and peer pressure (Sian & Ekwuegbu, 1980; Allen et al., 2005).

On the other hand, in his study, Lochan (2010) believes that community influence, lack of positive role models, the re-entry policy, human rights awareness, drug abuse, the media and home influence are the external causatives of student indiscipline. Another research conducted in Ireland by National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) (2000) identified external causes such as lack of discipline in pupils' homes, lack of self-discipline in pupils themselves, the influence of television, video and the internet, different attitudes to discipline between home and school, lack of access to the school psychological services, large classes, lack of effective sanctions, lack of parental support and involvement in matters of discipline, lack of in-service training on school discipline behavior for teachers and inconsistency among the teaching staff in relation to discipline and having not enough physical space in the school. In Malawi, Mwale et-al (1996) observes that among other factors, students' upbringing, substance abuse and peer influence are the major causes of indiscipline in schools.

Further to the foregoing, some government policies are believed to be a source of indiscipline behaviour among the secondary school students. The readmission policy that allows pregnant school girls to complete their education after delivery has to some extent become a recipe of fornication among school going girls. According to Mulenga (2015), such girls know whatever the case, they would go back and continue where they stopped. Rossouw (2003) observed that over emphasis on human rights especially children's rights has led to indiscipline cases in schools. Teachers are afraid of correcting the pupils through corporal punishment for fear of victimization. Similarly, parents are finding it difficult to

control their own children accordingly due to human rights awareness. In some cases, when parents try to punish their children in the process of correcting them, they react and act in a disrespectful manner.

Asserting the foregoing literature is a recent study conducted in Zimbabwe. According to Regis and Tichaona (2015), indiscipline in secondary schools of Zimbabwe is largely caused by a variety of factors which include poor group influence, bad company within and outside the school, lack of discipline at home and in school, irresponsible parents and guardians, use of drugs and alcohol, family problems, poor teacher-student relationships and failure of the school to effectively enforce school rules and regulations.

It is clear from the foregoing that as a social system, school discipline behaviour is a factor of many components. While in agreement that the school, the family, the peer pressure, the community and the new media negatively impact on the student behaviour, Belle (2017) narrows down the factors to adolescent secondary school students as the main factor causing indiscipline in schools. The adolescent students are in a difficult phase of their lives, therefore, very susceptible to negative external influence. This is however, a diversion from Tikoko and Bomett (2011) who observe that male students are seen as the main causative of indiscipline behaviours in school.

2.3 Strategies of curbing indiscipline in schools

It is clear from the literature reviewed so far that discipline problem is a universal concern. To show the seriousness of the problem, Maree (2000:1) indicates that some South African schools “are increasingly beginning to resemble war zones. It has become clear that all schools are not free to teach and all pupils are not free to learn”. Countries have therefore been involved finding the lasting solution to the vice hence coming up with various strategies of arresting the problem.

According to Van Wyk (2001), the worldwide reaction to these problems is the increased use of reactive and punitive strategies. However, some of these strategies are not effective or educationally sound. For example, the use of corporal punishment has been discouraged

by many human rights advocates hence it has been dropped by many schools. Other possible remedies have been the inclusion of moral leadership, moral education/instruction, education orientation and behaviour-accountability policy implementation (Ngwokabuenui, 2015; Centre for Education, 2015).

A study by Bear (2008) argues that safety, correction of misbehaviour is a prerequisite for developing self-discipline but is not sufficient. The study looked at the zero – tolerance approach to compliance and misbehaviour exclusively focusing on school discipline on punishments, suspension and expulsion in education. The results argue that fair and reasonable policies should be part of the school wide program. However, effective schools make four important goals; developing self-discipline, preventing misbehaviour, correcting misbehaviour and remediating and responding to serious and chronic behaviour problems.

Similarly, Jackson (2017) wrote about punitive approaches to discipline in a school survey. The study noted that many students misbehave and they are referred to juvenile justice system for infractions that were once handled in the school. Schools were now associated with significant increase in reports of serious and minor crimes. The presence of law enforcement and zero tolerance policies in the schools negatively impacted a disproportionately large number of minority students. This finding suggests that positive approaches to discipline teaches and reinforce positive behaviors.

Although, there are different strategies to curbing indiscipline, this study focuses on how the implementation of school discipline policy contributes to school discipline. The school discipline policies and practices are critical to promoting students' successful learning and well-being. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (2018), policies strengthen students' behavioural skills by addressing the causes of their misbehavior while preserving the integrity of the learning environment, ensuring the safety and dignity of all students and staff, and fostering progress toward long-term learning and behavioural goals. This explains the use of alternative to corporal punishment. While it may be true that use

of policies is effective, literature is still awash with reports of increasing indiscipline cases in schools. For example, in Malawi, Kamwachale and Mwenegamba (2017) report that indiscipline is one of the major reasons why many children fail to access and complete education. This revelation is against the background of the existence of discipline policy in the country. Are there issues with the implementation of discipline policies? However, literature is not dichotomized to specific category of schools.

2.4 Implementation of discipline policies in schools

Policy formulation involves the creation of new policy or revising an existing one (Brewer and de Leon, 1983). It involves seven key steps namely; problem identification, research and analysis, stakeholder engagement, option development, drafting, decision making and evaluation (Kingdon 1984; Weiss 1977; Sabatier, 1988, Dunn, 2004 Weiss 1977). Policy dissemination is important in order to share the formulated policy with relevant stakeholders (Nutley et al 2007). It involves communication, publication, training and awareness campaigns (Guetzkow 1965; Weiss, 1977; Snyder, 2001). This study focuses on policy implementation. Policy implementation is the process of putting the policy into action (Pressman and Wilddavsky, 1973). It involves resource allocation, institutional arrangements, monitoring, evaluation and making adjustments (Weiss 1977; Brewer and de Leon 1983). The key actors in policy implementation include policy makers (government officials, legislators), stakeholders (interest groups, civil society organisations), implementing agencies (government departments, NGOs,) and target groups (beneficiaries of the policy (Weiss 1977; Kingdon 1984; Sabatier 1988).

This study focuses on policy implementation, which is the process of putting the policy into action (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). Implementation involves several critical components: resource allocation, institutional arrangements, monitoring, evaluation, and making necessary adjustments (Weiss, 1977; Brewer and de Leon, 1983). Key actors in policy implementation include policymakers (government officials, legislators), stakeholders (interest groups, civil society organizations), implementing agencies

(government departments, NGOs), and target groups (beneficiaries of the policy) (Weiss, 1977; Kingdon, 1984; Sabatier, 1988).

Governments through the ministries of education have the responsibility of formulating, disseminating and implementing policies that would guide schools in dealing with indiscipline cases. A policy in this regard should be viewed as a guide to action that should be followed by individuals in the organization in order to provide consistence of decisions (Fox and Meyer, 1995). In this same regard, Trowler (2003) describes education policy as a set of guidelines or rules that aim at improving the quality of education and the performance of teachers at school, colleges and universities. Therefore, an education policy is a specification of principles and actions related to education issues, which are followed or which should be followed and which are designed to bring about desired goals in the education sector.

2.5 Discipline Policy in Malawi Schools

A student discipline policy in schools refers to a set of guidelines and regulations designed to manage student behaviour and promote a conducive learning environment. These policies outline acceptable behaviours, consequences for violations, and the processes for addressing disciplinary issues, aiming to create a safe, orderly, and respectful school atmosphere.

The student school discipline policy in Malawi, according to MEST (2013) is formulated and implemented through a structured approach to ensure consistent and fair management of student behaviour. The policy comprises of general rules set by the Ministry of Education, which provide a framework for school operations, and school-specific rules tailored to each school's unique context. The formulation process involves collaborative rule-making with students, teachers, and parents, reviewing existing rules, customizing them to fit the school's needs, and effectively communicating these rules to all stakeholders. Disciplinary actions for indiscipline include warnings, physical punishment, mediation, demotion, guidance and counselling, rustication, suspension, and expulsion. Guidance and

counselling are integral, providing developmental support and helping students address challenges. Punishments are aimed at behaviour modification and are used as a last resort. Key actors in managing discipline include the head teacher, deputy head teacher, teachers, prefects, class monitors, and the Parents-Teacher Association (PTA): all playing distinct roles in enforcing and monitoring discipline. Schools follow a set of disciplinary procedure to handle indiscipline cases, ensuring fairness and consistency. For instance, handling pregnancy cases involves confirmation, guidance, counselling, parental involvement, and re-admission policies, demonstrating the comprehensive approach to discipline management in Malawi schools.

The policy context and appropriate approach to its formulation are critical causes of a policy success (Abbasi and Hassanpoor, 2021). This explains why Haddad (1994) argues that the manner in which a reform has been formulated determines its successful implementation. In this regard, the successfulness of a discipline rests in the manner in which it was formulated. However, Abbasi and Hassanpoor (2021), continues to argue that judging a policy by only focusing on its formulation is misleading. According to them, providing proper context to policy implementation, developing policies with consideration of the capacities and constraints of its area of implementation are equally important.

According to Rampa (2014), a programme that works in one particular setting may not work in another. However, in Kenya, each secondary school has its own unique way of maintaining discipline within the school even though there are common methods of maintaining discipline that most schools use like, school rules, punishment, and guidance and counselling (Kiprop, 2012). In this regard, appreciation of the implementation of discipline policy in government and mission secondary schools should be done by looking at the two contexts. However, literature on discipline in general and implementation of various discipline interventions in secondary school does not separate the two contexts. It was therefore important for this study to be conducted as it provides the dichotomized contexts of discipline policy implementation in Malawi.

2.6 What constitutes an effective discipline policy?

Literature on the implementation of policies in general and discipline interventions in schools highlight a number of conditions that explain the success of the policies. A study by Tummers et-al (2012) indicates that the willingness of public professionals to implement policy programmes is important for achieving policy performance. The study further showed that even though the policy content is the most important factor in explaining willingness, organizational context and the personality characteristics of implementer also have a significant effect and should be considered. Thus, understanding the willingness or resistance of professionals is key when it comes to implementing policies.

Furthermore, the implementation process of a policy is affected by variables related to communities, providers and innovations, and aspects of the prevention delivery system (i.e., organizational functioning) and the prevention support system (i.e., training and technical assistance) (Durlak and DuPre, 2008). A study conducted in South Africa found out that non-punitive discipline measures that replaced corporal punishment were not effective. Among other major reasons was lack of capacity building among teachers on how to implement the strategies. For example, the study found out that teachers did not know how to identify and implement strategies to reverse the decline and respond to the challenge (Rampa, 2014). This finding agrees with Van Wyk and Pelse (2014) who report that in South Africa, discipline policies might not have been effectively implemented due to inadequate resources, lack of commitment and training of school leaders. The results of their study suggest that the broader school community should be taken on board to ensure effective discipline policy implementation. It goes further to suggest that the correct legal sources should be employed in the process of developing school policies. In addition, school leaders need thorough training for the development and implementation of discipline policies. Another study in South Africa further reported similar findings. According to Moyo et-al (2014), an Alternative to Corporal Punishment strategy met challenges because it did not conceive the cultural, religious and personal experiences of teachers, parents, cultural and religious groups.

Namphande (2016) observed that human rights and school discipline lead to the introduction of a discipline policy in secondary schools. The policy appeared controversial because it took away teachers' prerogative and unrestricted powers to discipline accused students. The study brings to the fore covert and subtle forms of resistance to policy implementation through the dynamics involved in the procedures for handling disciplinary cases. Namphande (2026) argues for a negotiated approach when there is a clash between socio - cultural beliefs and policy changes that dictate universal demands.

Some studies have identified characteristics of discipline policies that do not yield positive behavior change, these include:

Punitive Approaches: "Get tough" punitive approaches do not yield lasting results. While they may temporarily suppress unwanted behaviour, they can lead to negative consequences, reduced perceptions of safety, and perpetuate the school-to-prison pipeline. Research consistently shows that harsh discipline is counterproductive (Dawo and Simatwa, 2010).

Zero Tolerance Policies: Empirical evidence does not support zero tolerance policies. In fact, they can hinder academic achievement, increase problem behaviours, and contribute to higher dropout rates among middle and secondary school students (Dawo and Simatwa, 2010).

Schoolwide Discipline Plans: Schools should create and enforce discipline plans that provide acknowledged consequences for misbehaviour. Consistency and fairness are essential in applying behavior standards (Gitome et al., 2013).

Leadership Matters: The actions of school leaders, including principals and assistant principals, significantly influence the overall school climate. Their leadership sets the tone for discipline practices (Gitome et al., 2013).

Effective Follow-Through: Implementing discipline plans requires consistent follow-through. Regular reviews and teacher training can ensure fair application of behavior standards (Tikoko and Bomett, 2011).

Alternative Education Opportunities: Providing alternative pathways for students who struggle with traditional disciplinary measures can be beneficial. These alternatives allow students to continue learning while addressing their behavior (Dawo and Simatwa, 2010).

High Expectations: Maintaining high expectations for student behaviour fosters a positive school environment. When students know what is expected of them, they are more likely to meet those expectations (Tikoko and Bomett, 2011)

The important role of discipline in students' academic performance is reported in a number of studies within Africa (Dawo and Simatwa, 2010; Gitome et al., 2013; Sureiman, 2010; Tikoko and Bomett, 2011; Ehiane, 2014; Keating and Rossouw, 2009). These studies are corroborated by a number of studies conducted in European, Asian and America (Bodovski, Nahum-Shani, and Walsh, 2013; Duckworth and Seligman, 2006; Ning, Van-Dammme, Yang, and Gielen, 2013; Pasternak, 2013; Whisman and Hammer, 2014; Zhao and Kuo, 2015). All these studies indicate the important role that discipline plays in teaching and student learning. From the studies reported in the literature, it is clear that in secondary schools, effective discipline policies and practices play a crucial role in promoting students' successful learning and well-being in a number of ways including addressing misbehavior: Effective discipline policies focus on strengthening students' behavioral skills by addressing the root causes of misbehavior. They aim to maintain the integrity of the learning environment while ensuring the safety and dignity of all students and staff (Bear, 2010; Walker, *et. al*, 2004).) The wide use of punitive approaches, inconsistent policies, and practices that students perceive as unfair have often been identified as barriers to effective implementation of discipline policy in schools. It is important to compare these findings to the way discipline is implemented in Malawi public and mission schools.

2.7 School Discipline policy in Malawi

In Malawi secondary schools, discipline plays a crucial role in maintaining a conducive learning environment. In general, it is generally believed that secondary schools prioritize discipline through policies, student engagement, and adherence to ethical standards. The goal is to create a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Section 76 of the Education Act of 2014 in Malawi emphasizes that the curriculum should foster self-discipline, promote moral and ethical behaviour, and respect human rights. Indiscipline,

which creates disruptive and unsafe environments for teaching and learning, is strongly condemned (Namphande 2016).

A practitioner research conducted in a Malawi secondary school examined the impact of Study Circles on students' discipline and development. Study Circles involve group discussions where students share experiences and learn from each other. During the study, various forms of indiscipline such as truancy, rioting, teasing, bullying, vandalism, fighting, substance abuse, cheating in examinations, and more were addressed. Through vicarious learning in Study Circles, students gained increased personal and social understanding, contributing to better discipline within the school community (Mgugwe, 2023).

Studies conducted on school discipline indicate that student discipline lies at the very heart of the school culture. According to Kamwachale and Mwenegamba (2017), indiscipline in schools is a hindrance in a number of ways. Firstly, it reduces teacher-student contact time in the sense that teachers, sometimes, use learning hours to settle discipline cases, which may take a day or more. Secondly, the learning process is interrupted because sometimes internal punishments are administered to the culprits during class time while their friends are learning. MoEST (2013) agrees to the foregoing by emphasizing that effective school discipline strategies need to be sought to encourage responsible behaviour and to provide all students with a satisfying and fruitful school experience.

As reported earlier, the introduction of the discipline policy in Malawi created a case of challenges and Controversies (Namphande 2016). The introduction of a discipline policy in Malawi secondary schools was controversial because it limited teachers' unrestricted powers to discipline accused students. The advent of democracy led to changes in disciplinary practices, which some found challenging.

Overall, the discipline policy in Malawi emphasizes effective communication, respect and positive educational exchanges between teachers and students, and the recommended disciplinary measures. Every school is supposed to use the policy as a guiding tool for the

formulation of the school based discipline strategies. Thus, although the implementation contexts may be different the ultimate goal has to be realized. Contrary to the expectation of many in the presence of a discipline policy, secondary schools in Malawi continue to register indiscipline cases regardless of the category of the school. The literature on the other hand falls short on explaining the reasons behind such an increase in indiscipline cases in the secondary schools. In addition, it is also not clear on the role of context especially by looking at the government schools and mission schools. The current study therefore is important because it seeks to explore how the discipline policy is understood and implemented, and the challenges experienced from the perspectives of of different stakeholders in two types of secondary schools in Malawi.

The available studies do not distinguish between what happens in government and private secondary schools, and yet, it is common knowledge that different school contexts have different experiences when dealing with discipline issues. The question that one may ask in line with the implementation of discipline policy in Malawi secondary schools is: to what extent does the implementation of discipline policy differ across/between government and mission secondary schools? What factors account for the situation? In the absence of international, and local literature on the implementation of discipline policies in government and mission secondary schools, attempting these questions would prove futile. The current study will therefore be handy as it strives to respond to these questions.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in this study is based on a framework developed from a literature review of *Education policy implementation* from different OECD countries by Viennet, R and Pont, B. (2017). The framework is further informed by another theory by the theory of *The new meaning of educational change* (Miles *et al*, 1987; Fullan, 1991, 2015).

The literature review of *Education policy implementation* (Viennet and Pont, 2017) defines education policy implementation as a purposeful and multidirectional change process

aiming at putting a specific policy into practice and which may affect an education system on several levels. According to this framework:

- Implementation is purposeful to the extent that the process is supposed to change education according to some policy objectives.
- It is multidirectional because it can be influenced by actors at various points of the education system.
- It is contextualized in that institutions and societal shocks and trends –in culture, demography, politics and economy- affect the education system and the ways in which a policy is shaped and translates in the education sector.

This theoretical framework proposes four generic determinants, each of which should be considered for analyzing education policy implementation effectiveness:

- *Smart policy design*: a policy that is well justified, offers a logical and feasible solution to the policy problem, will determine to a great extent whether it can be implemented and how. For instance, if a new curriculum requires the use of high technology equipment which schools cannot afford, the policy may fail to be implemented unless some budget is available at the national or local level.
- *Inclusive stakeholder engagement*: Whether and how key stakeholders are recognized and included in the implementation process is crucial to its effectiveness. For example, engaging teacher unions in discussions early on in the policy process will have long-term benefits.
- *A conducive institutional, policy and societal context*: An effective policy implementation process recognizes the existing policy environment, the educational governance and institutional settings and external context.
- *A coherent implementation strategy to reach schools*: The strategy outlines concrete measures that bring all the determinants together in a coherent manner to make the policy operational at the school level.

Education policies may refer to various programmes affecting the education system from kindergarten to tertiary education (Van Zanten, 2014). The strength of the framework proposed in this study is that it directly focuses on policies at primary and secondary education. This then makes it relevant for this study. However, the theoretical framework

is based on OECD countries, which are developed countries and present a different context from Malawi. Nevertheless, the framework has potential to enrich the present study and fill existing gaps in research from Malawi. The concepts as used in this theoretical framework were used to guide the development of research instruments for this study. The theoretical framework was also used as an analytical framework for the study.

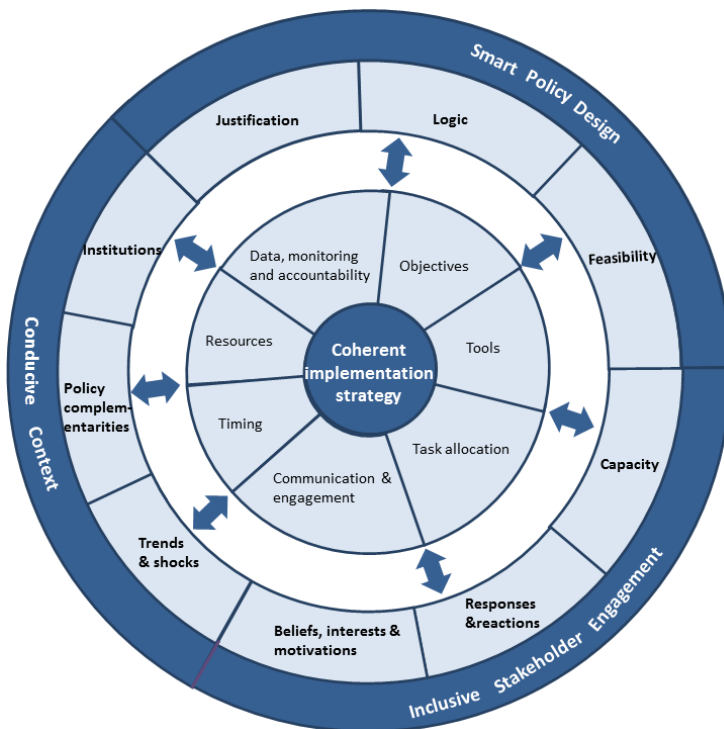


Figure 1: Theoretical framework (Viennet and Pont, 2017)

This study was further guided by the ‘three overlapping phases theory of change process’ by Miles *et al* (1987) and Fullan (1991). According to this theory, besides understanding the change process, educators also need to become more skilled in its use. Miles *et al* (1987) and Fullan (1991) have demonstrated that any change process consists of a series of three overlapping phases: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization (see figure 2).

The *initiation* phase is about deciding to embark on an innovation, and developing commitment towards the process. The key activities in the institutionalization phase are the decision to start, and a review of the school's current state as regards the particular change. Miles *et al* (1987) made an analysis of the various stages of school improvement which he believes make for successful initiation:

- the innovation should be tied to a *local agenda* and high-profile *local need*
- a clear, *well-structured* approach to change
- an active *advocate* or champion who understands the innovation and supports it
- *active initiation* to start the innovation (top-down is OK under certain conditions)
- good *quality* innovation.

Implementation is the phase of the process that has received the most attention. It is the phase of attempted use of the innovation. The key activities occurring during implementation are the carrying out of action plans, the developing and sustaining of commitment, the checking of progress and overcoming problems. The key factors making for success at this stage, according to Miles *et al* (1987), are:

- clear responsibility for *orchestration/co-ordination* (head, coordinator, external consultant)
- *shared control over implementation* (top-down is not OK); good cross-hierarchical work and relations; empowerment of both individuals and the school
- mix of *pressure*, insistence on '*doing it right*', and *support*
- adequate and *sustained staff development* and *in-service training*
- *rewards for teachers* early in the process (empowerment, collegiality, meeting needs, classroom help, load reduction, supply cover, expenses, resources).

institutionalization is the phase when innovation and change stop being regarded as something new and become part of the school's usual way of doing things. The move from implementation to institutionalization often involves the transformation of a pilot project, to a school-wide initiative, often without the advantage of the previously available funding. Key activities at this stage according to Miles *et al* (1987) are:

- an emphasis on 'embedding' the change within the school's structures, its organisation and resources
- the elimination of *competing* or contradictory *practices*
- strong and purposeful *links to other change efforts*, the curriculum and classroom teaching
- *widespread use* in the school and local area
- an adequate *bank of local facilitators*, (e.g., advisory teachers) for skills training.

This study was best informed by the second stage which is implementation. According to Marris (1975) the challenges of implementation differ according to the level of social change, ranging from incremental change, change requiring growth on the part of those undertaking change and change that represents loss for the implementing agent. Fullan (2007), identified nine critical factors that affect the implementation of education policy. They vary from characteristics of change (such as need, clarity, complexity and quality/practicality), local characteristics (e.g. district, community, principal and teacher) to external factors (in this case the government and other agencies). Thus educational change is a dynamic process which involves interacting variables over time. This knowledge will be useful in the process of understanding and comparing how the school discipline policy is implemented in a public secondary school (government secondary school) and private secondary school (mission secondary school).

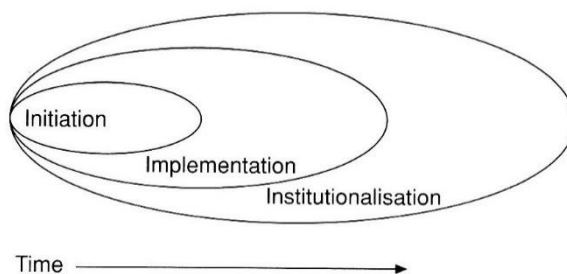


Figure 2: The three overlapping phases of the change process (Miles et al., 1987)

The two theories used in this study were used in a complimentary manner to inform the study process and enhance understanding of the results. Viennet and Pont (2017) theory

emphasized the importance of the context in understanding discipline issues in specific schools. This relates very well to this study which was comparing between secondary schools in mission and public schools with different contexts. The *three overlapping phases theory of change process* by Miles (1986) and Fullan (1991) focuses on policy implementation. Policy implementation is the focus of this study of the secondary school discipline policy.

2.9 Chapter summary

The section has reviewed literature related to the discipline in schools. It started by providing an understanding of discipline problems in schools. Literature on the causative factors of student indiscipline in secondary schools has also been reviewed. The other component that the section has focused on are strategies used by schools in curbing indiscipline. Studies on the implementation of discipline policies in schools have also been reviewed. Lastly, the section has provided the two theoretical framework that guided the research process. The next chapter presents the research design and methodologies used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Chapter overview

The previous chapter presented the literature related to this study and the theoretical frameworks that informed the research process. This chapter gives details of how the research was conducted. Explanations and justifications for the choice of the research design and methodology that was followed are also provided. This is followed by sections on trustworthiness of the study, ethical consideration and the limitations of the study.

3.1 Theoretical perspectives of the study (Ontology and Epistemology)

All research, is based on theory (Flynn, Sakakibara, Schroeder, Bates, & Flynn, 1990), which in turn underpins the ontological (beliefs about the nature of reality) and epistemological perspectives (beliefs about the nature of knowledge) of the study (Van de Ven, 2007). O'Brien *et al.* (2014) argue that one should take note of the guiding theory to ensure that it is appropriate and that it is important that the theoretical stance underpinning the research is made explicit. The research question in this study suggests that there are multiple realities and that the nature and that meaning is culturally defined. Therefore, in exploring the implementation of discipline policies in public and mission schools, the study took a qualitative interpretive approach.

The interpretive paradigm focusses on understanding the meaning and interpretation of social phenomena (Dezin and Lincoln 2000). In this paradigm, reality is socially constructed: peoples' experiences and interpretations shape reality. Therefore, reality is

complex and multifaceted. Knowledge in the interpretive paradigm is subjective. Understanding is contextual (Guba and Lincoln 1994). The ontological and epistemological perspective of the interpretive paradigm are therefore ideal for this study which intend to explore the implementation of the discipline policy in two types of secondary schools: public and mission schools.

3.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology is concerned with the relationships between various parts of the study and the production of findings (Guba, 1990). Research methodology presents the logic and flow of the systematic processes followed in conducting a research study, so as to gain knowledge about the research problem. It includes assumptions made, limitations encountered and how they can be mitigated or minimized. This study used a case study methodology.

Creswell (2009, p13) states that “case studies are strategies of inquiry in which the researcher explores in-depth a program, event activity of one or more individuals” A case study is ‘the study of an instance in action’ (Adelman et al., 1980 in Cohen et.al 2000). Hughes (1995:322 in Cohen et. al 2000) further suggest that the case study methodology is particularly valuable when the researcher has little control over events. A case study has several characteristics:

- It is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case.
- It provides a chronological narrative of events relevant to the case.
- It blends a description of events with the analysis of them.
- It focuses on individual actors or groups of actors, and seeks to understand their perceptions of events.
- It highlights specific events that are relevant to the case.
- The researcher is integrally involved in the case.
- An attempt is made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report.

Based on the above description, the case study methodology was deemed the most ideal methodology for answering the research question in this study.

3.2.1 Study sites

The sample for this study was four schools which comprised two case studies as follows: case (1) was two government secondary schools, representing a public school. Case (2) was two mission secondary schools. All four secondary schools were from the same district where the researcher resides. Convenience sampling was used in the selection of the schools as it provided proximity to the researcher. Proximity was important in this study to make it possible for the researcher to make as many follow-up visits as possible.

3.2.3 Characteristics of sampled schools and participants

The study research question in this study was *‘how does the implementation of the discipline policy compare between public schools and private secondary schools?’* The characteristics of the schools in the study are mainly public schools and mission schools. The public schools in this study are labelled as school 1 and school 2. The mission schools are labelled as school 3 and school 4. There was a total of 14, 15, 13 and 17 participants respectively, in each of the four schools. In each school, the participants comprised of Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, Head of Department, PTA members, Boarding master/mistress and students.

3.2.4 Study participants and sampling methods

According to Silverman (2005), the sample size in qualitative research tends to be relatively a small number of cases. Silverman (2005) argues that qualitative researchers *‘are prepared to sacrifice scope for detail’*. The detail in qualitative research is found in the precise particulars of such matters as people’s understandings and interactions. Qualitative research lends itself to describing *what is going on* with specific topic, as well as presenting a detailed view of the topic as it takes place in its natural setting (Creswell, 2002).

Convenience sampling was used to select the four secondary schools. Convenience sampling allowed the researcher to select the two public and two mission secondary schools which

were within reach for easy follow up during data collection. Participants from each of the four sampled schools comprised of the following: Head teacher, deputy headteacher, 2 teachers, 2 discipline committee members, 2 prefects, 2 parent teacher association (PTA) members, 2 class monitors and 4 students (2 boys and 2 girls). Purposive sampling was used to select all participants in order to have an information rich sample (Cohen et. al., 2000). Purposive sampling aimed at selecting participants who are involved with the school discipline issues because they had the relevant knowledge for the study. However, simple random sampling was used for selection of class monitors for face to face interviews; and for students to be included in the sample for FGDs.

3.2.5 Data collection methods and instruments

Willig (2008) argues that in qualitative research, the objective of data collection is to create comprehensive record of participants' words and actions. Willig (2008) further states that qualitative data collection instruments need to be participant-led, or bottom up, in the sense that they allow participant-generated meanings to be heard. This method was ideal since it promoted participants to freely express themselves during the data collection period. The specific data collection methods were as follows:

(i) In-depth face to face interviews:

McMillan (1996) defines an interview as a form of data collection method in which questions are asked orally and the participants' responses are recorded. In this study in-depth face to face interviews were used to collect data from Head teachers, deputy head teachers, teachers and class monitors. An interview guide with semi-structured research questions was used during the interviews. In-depth face to face interviews were ideal for this study because they allowed for probes and follow-up questions in a relaxed manner. All interviews were audio-recorded to ensure that all information was captured accurately. All interviews were conducted within the school setting. A follow-up interview was conducted depending on the need, and to ensure saturation of issues under investigation. A total of twenty-one (21) in-depth face to face interviews were conducted in this study. The interviews lasted between 20 to 30 minutes. A copy of the in-depth face to face interview guide is attached in Appendix 1.

(ii) Key informant interviews (KII)

Key informant interviews were conducted with members of PTA. An interview guide with both structured and unstructured questions was used during the interviews. KII interviews were ideal for this study because they allowed for members of PTA to provide information on their roles in the implementation of the school discipline policy. The nature of the KII allowed for probes and follow-up questions in a relaxed manner. All KIIs were audio-recorded to ensure that all information was captured accurately. KII interviews in this study lasted between 15 to 20 minutes. A copy of the key informant guide is attached in Appendix 2.

(iii) Focus group discussion (FGD)

FGDs were conducted with students (boys and girls) in each school. FGDs aimed at triangulating information obtained from interviews with the school heads, teachers and PTAs. An FGD guide with both structured and unstructured questions was used during the interviews. FGDs were ideal because they allowed students to provide information on issues in the study in a free and relaxed manner. FGDs in this study lasted between 25 to 30 minutes. A copy of the FGD guide is attached in Appendix 3.

(iv) Document analysis

The study also collected data from key school documents where discipline issues are recorded. These documents included: School discipline file, Black book, minutes of discipline committee and Punishment book. These documents provided more details on how the discipline policy was implemented in the four schools (two case studies). It was also possible to compare the two types of schools based on an analysis of these documents. A copy of the document analysis guide is attached in Appendix 4.

3.2.6 Data management and analysis

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) contend that data analysis is the process of bringing order and meaning to the mass of information generated. Data analysis started during data collection period. During all in-depth face to face interviews, key informant interviews, FGDs and document analysis, data was continuously being examined for saturation of ideas

and recurrent patterns of different meanings, structural forms and interpretations related to the three research questions in the study.

When all data had been collected, the researcher transcribed all interviews, FGDs, and field notes into a data files. This data file was then typed into a word document and saved on the researcher's computer. The researcher's computer has a password to protect files.

The researcher read and re-read the data file before beginning to assign codes to the data. This was done systematically, section by section. This process led to assignment of codes. Codes were written in the margins of a printed file, manually. In order to derive meaning from the data, the researcher next organized the codes into categories to make meaning to the data. This was done by identifying any similarities, differences or patterns. This process resulted in emergence of categories and later into themes (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Data from case study 1 schools was handled separately from data from case study 2 schools. This separation of the data allowed the researcher to compare between the two cases (public schools and mission schools) and to be able to answer the research questions.

3.2.7 Credibility and trustworthiness of the study

Lincoln and Guba (1985) use the terms credibility and transferability to offer alternative terms to validity and reliability in positivist concepts. In this study, to ensure trustworthiness of the results, credibility and trustworthiness were observed.

Credibility establishes that the representation constructed through research is indeed valid and believable. More time was spent during interviews to probe the participants for more information and cross check the information. Triangulation of data from various data sources also enhanced the credibility of the data. This study used four research instruments in order to triangulate the data. Consequently, in this study, there was data triangulation, methods triangulation and also triangulation of data sources (ie collecting data from different participants and sources- Head teacher, deputy heads, PTA members, Class monitors, students and discipline documents).

Transfer-ability is the natural inquirer's response to external validity. This study produced thick descriptions of how the discipline policy is implemented in the four schools. These thick descriptions are important data that promote transfer-ability of the findings, should someone want to follow the 'research trail' of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Finally, member checks used in the study helped to enhance credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Member check were conducted throughout the study. This was done by reading out what was recorded after a meeting to the participants and asking them to confirm if that was a true reflection of the interview or FGD that had taken place.

3.2.8 Pilot study

Prior to main data collection commencement, a pilot study was conducted. The purpose of the pilot study was to check that the instruments developed were working well. The pilot study allowed for making some changes mostly by rephrasing some of the questions so that they are clear to the respondent. After the pilot study, there are some questions that were rephrased for clarity. There were also some questions that were broken down into two or three questions to provide more clarity on what was being asked. Furthermore, some questions were removed to avoid repetition. This process of clarifying the questions was done across all the three instruments used: ie in-depth face to face guide, key informant guide and FGD guided.

3.3 Ethical issues

In educational research, ethics is concerned with ensuring that the interests and the well-being of research participants are not harmed as a result of research being conducted (Lankshear and knobel,2004). At the beginning of the study, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Malawi Research Committee (UNIMAREC). A copy of the clearance letter is attached as appendix 1. The researcher next obtained permission to conduct the study in schools from both the EDM and DEMs offices (see copy of letter in Appendix 2). The researcher visited the sampled schools and introduced herself to the headteachers of the four sampled schools and explain the reason of the visit. Informed consent forms (see appendix 3) were obtained from all participants sampled in the schools.

The researcher assured all respondents of anonymity and confidentiality (Fraenkel, 2000). Participants were assured that their names and the names of the schools in the study will be protected. The researcher has assigned pseudo names to all study schools and participants. All data generated in this study is considered confidential and solely used for the purposes of this research study. No data generated shall be disclosed to any party. All data is being stored in a locked up drawer accessible to the researcher only. The researcher's computer is password protected to ensure that no one else can access the data stored on the computer.

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the qualitative research design used in this study. The chapter has also provided details of the case study methodology that was used in the study. The chapter has provided details of the research instruments, methods and data analysis methods that were used to collect data from two government secondary schools and two mission secondary schools in order to answer the research question that sought to understand how the discipline policy is implemented in the two types of secondary schools. The next chapter presents the research findings and the discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of this study that set out to explore discipline practices in mission and public secondary schools. It presents data that was generated through In-depth face to face interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The findings have been presented based on the study research questions and the themes that emerged. Code names are used to protect the identity of the participants and schools that provided data for the study. Interpretation and discussion of study findings follow immediately after presentation of each theme. In some cases, data extracts are used findings of the study. The Chichewa versions of data extracts are indicated in italics and brackets after the English versions in some sections. The findings of this study are based on data from four secondary schools: two Mission Secondary Schools and two Public Secondary Schools. The results are presented along the three specific research questions of the study.

4.1 Findings on How the Discipline Policy is Contextualized

The study findings first presents the findings of the characteristics of the participants in the study provided in Table 1. Members who are directly involved in dealing with the discipline issues of the students were selected as participants in the in-depth face to face interviews from each of the four sampled secondary schools. The school members interviewed for in-depth face to face interview were; head teacher, deputy head teacher, heads of departments, boarding master / mistress, class teacher and class monitor. The

second phase of interviews were key informant interviews which involved two PTA members each sampled school. The third phase were focus group discussions of eight school prefects from the four sampled schools. The last phase of the interviews was with the deputy head teacher from each of the sampled secondary schools. The deputy head teacher also guided on checking the discipline documents. In two schools, face to face interviews were conducted with the Boarding master and Boarding mistress because of their involvement with discipline issues in the schools.

4.1.1 The study cases

Based on the research questions and the sample in this study, the two case studies are case 1: two public secondary schools named secondary school 1 and Secondary school 2; and case 2: two mission secondary schools named secondary school 3 and secondary school 4. All cases are in the same district under the Central West Education Division (CWED).

Case 1 is public secondary schools: secondary school 1 is a government co-education boarding secondary school with a total enrolment of 659 students. Secondary school 2 is a Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) with a total enrolment of 215 students. Both schools have classes running from forms 1 to 4.

Case 2 is mission secondary schools: secondary school 3 is governed under the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Nkhoma synod. It is an all-girls secondary school with a total enrolment of 331 students. Secondary school 4 is governed under the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church with a total enrolment of 384 students. Both schools have classes running from forms 1 to 4.

Table 1: Sampled secondary schools and participants

		School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
		Public secondary school				Mission secondary school			
Gender		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
	Male	9	18	10	67	2	15	6	35
	Female	5	19	5	33	11	85	11	65
Total		14		15		13		17	
Age	<18	0		0		0		0	
	18-29	9		9		9		9	
	30-49	0		0		0		0	
	50-60	5		2		6		3	
	>60								
Educational	Primary	0		0		0		0	
	JCE	1		1		2		2	
	MSCE	1		1				1	
	Certificate	1							
	Diploma	1		1		2			
	Degree and above	4		3		1		1	
Position	PTA member	2		2		1		2	
	Students	9		9		9		9	
	Head of Department	0		1		1		0	
	Head/Deputy Head	2		2		2		2	
	Boarding Master/Mistress	1		0		0		1	

4.2 How the discipline policy is contextualized

The first specific research question in this study was: *‘How is the discipline policy contextualized in public and in mission secondary schools?’* School discipline in the schools studied is contextualized through school activities and the use of documentation in books and files.

4.2.1 Contextualization through school-based practices

When asked the question of what is in the secondary school discipline policy, all participants showed some doubt of ever seeing a documented discipline policy from ministry of education.

If you have seen the discipline policy, share me a copy (Head teacher, Public secondary school 1)

During my stay at this school, I have never seen the discipline policy, but we do follow the MoE discipline policy (Head teacher of Public secondary school 2)

However, the participants pointed out that their school rules and regulations are made in line with the discipline policy. Each secondary school formulates their own school rules and regulations. The rules and regulations shared a lot of similarities in all the sampled schools. All deputy head teachers shared the rules and regulations that were followed and they had a lot of similarities within them and a true reflection of conformity to the MoEST 2013 discipline policy. What was missing was the actual discipline policy document from the Ministry of Education. This section presents results from the two case studies on how the policy was contextualized in the schools.

Public secondary schools

The Head teacher of secondary school 2 cited the following as school-based practices that support the implementation of the discipline policy in the school:

- Holding school meetings: when there are new discipline related problems, staff meetings are held in the form of a *‘caucus meeting’*. This helps to come up with a

collective strategy for curbing misbehavior. After the *caucus meeting*, a school assembly is conducted to inform the students.

- Form period assembly conducted by the form teacher. Once every week, form teachers hold a class assembly at which discipline is a key topic.
- Stakeholder involvement: PTA and mothers' groups are considered key members in ensuring discipline in the school
- Guidance and counselling meetings. The school has a guidance and counseling committee that looks into all school discipline cases. The committee is chaired by the Deputy head teacher.
- The schools have a Discipline committee that implements the rules established by the school to maintain school discipline
- Providing incentives to students at the end of each term. Incentives are not only in academic performance but also in behaviour. These are announced during the final school assembly and outstanding students receive rewards.
- School prefects are empowered to check and report cases of indiscipline of other students for action, in this way, discipline is maintained

In Secondary school 1 and 2, the discipline policy is written in notice boards of the school, school whatsapp groups, leaflets, and handouts for students, staff and visitors to read. Sometimes, Ministry of Education officials visit the secondary schools to explain about discipline policy.

Mission secondary schools

According to the boarding mistress of secondary school 4, Mission secondary schools have additional discipline policy guidelines from their churches (*tilinso ndi ndondomeko yathu yamalamulo atchalichi yomwe timatsata*). However, the faith-based guidelines are also in line with the discipline policy from Ministry of Education. This is how the outline was explained at Secondary school 4 by the Deputy head teacher:

- Every weekend church members come to advise the students
- When there is a discipline case, the school cannot conclude the case in the absence of a church member

- Church members also come to give some guidance and counselling to the students, depending on the need, but Fridays are reserved for counselling and spiritual teachings
- The Church members observe teachers' behaviors. If there are bad behaviors noted (bad role models/ bad influence), they act faster than government schools. They are removed from the school immediately
- Generally there is very close observation on student behaviour and school participation based the Christian faith and this reinforces implementation of the discipline policy in the school.

Similarly, at Secondary school 3, this is how the procedure for dealing with discipline cases was described: (Source DHT, secondary school 3)

- DHT is the chair of the Discipline committee.
- Class teacher or boarding mistress comes to the DHT with the offender to report on an issue.
- The offender is given a piece of paper to write what happened, and append her name and signature
- Parents of the offender are called to the school
- The church officials are also informed of the case and asked to give their advice.

The Deputy head teacher of mission secondary school 3 and 4 also explained that Pastors and church elders visit their secondary schools very often and they teach learners to be disciplined, to have good morals and spiritual life based on Christian beliefs and teachings. During focus group discussions, school prefects from Mission secondary school 3 and 4 confirmed this:

Church members come to preach to us, but they also teach us about the discipline policy (School prefects FGD School 3)

Apart from visiting and talking to the students, it was also learnt that church members also help teachers to be good role models and to be well disciplined as a way of supporting the school culture and the student discipline.

PTA member of Mission secondary school 4 said the following about the discipline policy:

“The visiting of the church members to the secondary schools has helped a lot the discipline of students. It brings the idea that the church is assisting in educating the students”.

The head of department of mission secondary school 3 stated as follows:

“The other school practices that support the implementation of the discipline policy are the mother groups they teach the girls good manners; church officials also teach the students spiritual life and good manners”.

In addition to the faith-based support, Secondary school 3 and 4 also engage in school-based practices similar to public schools 1 and 2 such as holding discipline assemblies, posting on school notice boards, working with PTA and mothers’ groups.

The ways in which the discipline policy was implemented in the two public schools and the two mission schools reflected the nature of the culture of the two types of the schools. This is in line with the contention in the first theoretical framework used in this study which contends that discipline policy is *contextualized in the institution’s and societal shocks and trends –in culture, demography, politics and economy* (Viennet and Pont, 2017).

4.2.2 Contextualization through documentation of discipline cases

The findings of this study show that in all four secondary schools visited, the discipline policy is mostly contextualized through documentation of various discipline cases in different documents/books. This study analyzed four (4) documents that are used to keep record of discipline cases, namely: Punishment sheet (punishment book), Suspension book, Guidance and cancelling file, Russification book.

Table 2: Documentation of discipline cases of term 3 year 2022 / 2023 academic year in Public secondary schools

Secondary School 1				Secondary school 2			
<i>Discipline document</i>	<i>Offenses</i>	<i>Class and gender</i>	<i>Type of punishment received</i>	<i>Discipline document</i>	<i>Offenses</i>	<i>Class and gender</i>	<i>Type of punishment received</i>
Punishment sheet	Open defiance	Form 1 / 4 males	Clearing the grounds	Punishment book	Disturbing classes by making a lot of noise	Form 1 / 10 males. Form2 / 4 female 4	Slashing the school grounds
Punishment sheet	Out of bounce	Form 2 / 4 males 3 females	Clearing the grounds	Punishment book	Open defiance	Form 2 / 10 males 5 females	Slashing the school grounds
Suspension book	Spending a night outside the school.	Form 2 / 2 females	Suspension 6 weeks	Suspension book	Stealing	Form 3 / a male	Suspension for 6 weeks
Guidance and canceling file	Pairing	Form 3 / a male and a female	Canceling, clearing the school grounds. Suspension for 6 weeks.	Russification book Suspension book	Teasing form ones Absconding classes	Form 3 / 4 males Form 4 / 10 males 8 females	Russification on Suspension for 6 weeks Cancelling, clearing the school grounds
Suspension book	Vandalism	Form 4 / 4 males.	3 Weeks suspension	Guidance and canceling file	Open defiance	Form 4 / 10 males	Russification on
Punishment book	Absconding classes	Form 4 / 10 males and 5 females	Clearing the school grounds	Russification book	Smoking and drunkenness	Form 4/ a male	
Suspension book	Fighting	Form 4 / 2 males	Suspension for 6 weeks.				

Russification n book	Teasing and bullying	Form 3 / a male	Russificati on - to wait for Ministry of education decision.				
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**Table 3: Documentation of recorded discipline cases of term 3 year 2022 / 2023 academic year
in Mission secondary schools**

Secondary school 3				Secondary school 4			
<i>Discipline document</i>	<i>offenses</i>	<i>Class, gender and no of students</i>	<i>Type of punishment received</i>	<i>Discipline document</i>	<i>Offenses</i>	<i>Class, gender and no of students</i>	<i>Type of punishment received</i>
Russification file	Wedding case (homo sexuality)	Form 3 / 2 females	Russification.	Punishment book	Out of bounce	Form 2 / 4 males	Local punishments
Punishment file	Open defiance	Form 3 / 10 females	Canceling and clearing the school grounds				

According to the 2022 / 2023 term 3 disciplinary documents, Public Secondary Schools had many offenders than the offenders in the Mission Secondary Schools, as summarized in Table 2 and Table 3. Public Secondary School 1 showed the following; punishment document had 8 students with issues of out of bounce; 15 students with records of absconding classes. The suspension document had 8 students with offenses of sleeping outside school premises, vandalism and fighting. The canceling and guidance document had a record of 2 students with the issue of pairing (boy and girl relationship). The russification record had a student with a record of teasing and bullying a form 1 student.

Public Secondary School 2 had the following in the punishment record book; there were 32 students with various offenses such as open defiance and noise making. Suspension book had a record of 18 students with offenses such as teasing form ones and stealing. Guidance and cancelling had a record of 10 students and the russification book had a record of one form 4 student who were found with offence of drinking and smoking.

From Mission Secondary School 3, two students were recorded in the russification book due to homosexual activities; 2 students were recorded in the punishment book due to open defiance to authority and 10 students were recorded in the guidance and cancelling due to open defiance to authority.

Mission Secondary School 4 had the following; 4 students due to out of bounce. Discipline documents showed that Mission Secondary schools had 16 offenders in the 2022 / 2023 term 3 discipline documents. Public Secondary Schools had 89 offenders in the disciplinary documents.

The results show that there were more documented cases of discipline cases in public secondary schools than in mission secondary schools. A total of 18 students suspended from secondary school 2 is quiet high. This shows that the trend that Kamwachale and Mwenegamba (2017) noted that indiscipline is one of the major reasons why many children fail to access and complete education, is still an issue of concern to date.

According to the second theoretical framework of this study by Miles et al (1987), the final phase of the theoretical framework is institutionalization. Institutionalization is the phase when innovation and change stop being regarded as something new and become part of the school's usual way of doing things – a norm. The increased incident of indiscipline cases shows that the discipline policy had not yet been institutionalized to create the expected behaviors and school culture. Based on this, the public schools in this study were in the implementation phase, but needed to work towards putting in place strategies that would help to institutionalize the discipline policy in the schools' culture and practices.

4.3 Roles of Stakeholders in Public and Mission Secondary Schools on School discipline

The second research question in this study was '*What are the specific roles of stakeholders in public, and in mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?*' In general, the roles of stakeholders across the four schools were similar. The roles were also very closely related to the suggested roles in the MoEST 2013 discipline policy document.

4.3.1 Roles of stakeholders in public secondary school

In both public secondary schools 1 and 2, the head teachers, deputy head teachers, class teachers, boarding masters /mistress handle the responsibility of informing the learners, parents, stake holders, PTA members about the discipline policy by themselves

PTA chair of Public secondary school 1 said their role as follows:

PTA committee is doing a lot in Secondary Schools. They convene meetings that enforce rules and regulations in schools, they also give civic education to parents to make them know the discipline policy, parent's role of discipline to their children.

In explaining their role, the PTA member at Secondary school 1 argued that the role of PTA goes beyond establishing rules and regulations. As parents themselves, they have responsibilities over the students and the community:

To achieve discipline, looking at the weaknesses of a child, parents are there to advise them... looking at the teachers, observing them how they do their things. How are teachers conducting themselves, are they following the school rules and regulations? (Secondary school 1 PTA member)

Deputy head teacher of public school 2 indicated that the school management is responsible for enforcing school rules and regulations to the students. The PTA need to check if the management is doing their job well.

All the stakeholders and their roles discussed in the two schools were all in line with the provisions stated in the policy in MoST 2013.

4.3.2 Roles of stakeholders in mission secondary schools

The head of department from Mission secondary school 3 emphasized that the community has a role of reporting to the management the behavior of students around the school for management to find suitable ways of helping the students. Otherwise, the roles that were expressed in the two mission schools were similar to those of the public schools.

Head teachers of public secondary school 1 and Mission secondary school 4 said *put more emphasis on the role of Ministry of Education*. They stated that *'the ministry of education in Malawi has a role to bring to schools' discipline policy which is suitable and has to be updated and available to all secondary schools* (Head teacher secondary school 4).

Table 4: Summary of the stakeholders and their roles in the four study schools.

Table 4: Summary of roles of stake holders in the four schools.

Stakeholder	Responsibility
PTA	Convene meetings Enforcing of rules and regulations Civic education on rules and regulations to parents, teachers and students
School management	Enforcing of rules and regulations to students Convene staff meetings to ensure all staff are aware of the rules and regulations Civic education on rules and regulations to parents, teachers and students Ensure that school rules are in line with the Ministry of Education
Community	Reporting cases Supervising learners making sure that they follow school rules and regulations Overseeing the school needs including infrastructure Working with existing structures eg mother groups Involved in formulation of rules and regulations
Mothers group	Advising female girls to work hard in schools Guidance and counselling to female students on behaviour Teaching female students to be responsible students
Boarding master/ Mistress	Receiving complaints from other prefects Advising learners on their responsibilities Reporting discipline cases to the administration and discipline committee
Students	Being responsible and open to learning Attend school assembly meetings that inform them of the school rules Interface meetings with their form teachers They are encouraged to read notices posted on the notice board Reporting issues using correct procedures Unanimous suggestion box (encouraging whistle blowers)
Mission	Making a final judgement on discipline issues Teaching learners' spiritual life Teaching members to be aware of the discipline policy Making a church discipline policy
Ministry of education	Ensuring that all schools have a discipline policy Convene school discipline policy workshops for all schools

The MoEST 2013 policy calls for involvement of various stakeholders in the implementation of the discipline policy. The results of this study show that this was being followed by all the four schools in this study. There was no difference in the types of stakeholder not the roles that they played in all four schools (public and mission schools). The only difference was in one of the public secondary schools where instead of meeting

with the deputy head, the researcher was directed to interview the boarding master. In this school, the boarding master was perceived as a key person when dealing with school discipline.

The results of this study confirm the importance of multiple and various stakeholders for effective school policy implementation as indicated in the study's theoretical framework (Viennet and Pont 2017). Furthermore, Viennet and Point (2017) emphasize the importance of inclusive stakeholder engagement in policy implementation. They stated that how key stakeholders are recognized and included in the implementation process is crucial to its effectiveness.

4.4 Challenges in the implementation of the discipline policy

The third research question in this study was: *‘What school-based practices support implementation of the discipline policy in mission and public secondary schools?’* This section presents the challenges as expressed by the public and mission schools in the study.

4.4.1 Challenges from public secondary schools

According to PTA member of Public secondary school 1, many students and parents do not know or understand the discipline policy. Some of the reason is the lack of a reading culture). People do not like to read handouts, they don't read the information of the discipline policy, hence they are ignorant about the discipline policy (PTA secondary school 1).

The PTA of Public secondary school 2 pointed out the idea of lack of civic education about the discipline policy to parents, stake holders, students in schools and also lack of encouragement from ministry of education to secondary school to educate and remind their officials on the discipline policy. Secondary schools need up dates of the discipline policy,

All the head teachers from all the sampled schools head teachers complained of seeing an up dated discipline policy (*sitinayiwoneko yaposachedwa discipline policy*).

The PTA chairperson of public secondary school 1 pointed out a challenge of the discipline policy, (*the discipline policy has some irrelevant things to Africans such as mentioning about sexuality in public*). These things make some students and parents, community to stop reading and understanding more about the discipline policy.

Another challenges of discipline policy as pointed out by the head of department in Public secondary school 2 is the lack of an up dated discipline policy from ministry of education.

The other challenge mentioned by head teacher of Public secondary school was lack of encouragement and follow ups of the discipline policy in secondary schools. The deputy head teacher of Public secondary school 1 mentioned a challenge of misunderstanding of human rights, some teachers and students and parents do not want to follow the discipline policy because they misunderstand the human rights.

PTA member from public secondary school 1 noted that sometimes students' indiscipline results from genuine concerns:

From example when school does not have the relevant equipment for school activities. Or when the school serves students bad food. The challenge is that the school is aware of their problem but it can not deal with it due to financial challenges. Instead, the school goes on to punish the students which is a form of oppression (PTA Secondary school 1).

Below is a summary of the challenges identified by various stakeholders in the two public secondary schools (secondary school 1 and 2)

- drug and substance abuse amongst students.
- Human rights: students and parents do not understand what human rights entail. They are fast at claiming their rights without realizing that rights come with

responsibilities (*There is a big need to sensitive communities on this issue if schools will run with sanity – Head teacher Secondary school 2*).

- Lack of a reading culture on the part of students, parents and even teachers. This causes people to not be aware of important things communicated to them in writing- posters leaflets and letters.
- People are not ready for change
- Lack of sensitization: Students and teachers do not understand the discipline policy

Among other things, the results support Rossouw (2003) who observed that over emphasis on human rights especially children's rights has led to indiscipline cases in schools. Furthermore, there is misunderstanding of true meaning of human rights, which was echoed in many interviews.

In Malawi the problem of conflict between human rights claims and school discipline is now a becoming frequent observation. Namphande (2016) observed that human rights and school discipline lead to the introduction of a discipline policy in secondary schools. The controversial part is that it took away teachers' powers to discipline accused students. There is need for strategies that support policy implementation without attracting unwarranted claims of human rights.

4.4.2 Challenges from Mission secondary schools

The following are the challenges expressed by the two mission schools in the study:

- Human rights: students do not want to be told what to do, claiming that it is their human right.
- Parents misleading their children about their human rights.
- A general lack of civic education on the importance and benefits of being a well disciplined person that respects rules and regulations of the institutions where you belong to.

- Currently, the discipline measures by government are not stiff enough. Students actually know that teachers have no powers to give them stringent punishment. This weakens the powers of the teacher/ school.

4.5 Discussion of the findings

This section discusses the findings of the study from the two case studies. These are the findings of how discipline policy is implemented in Public secondary schools and Mission secondary schools. The study participants were those who deal with the discipline of students and discipline documents.

The first research question was *‘How is the discipline policy contextualized in public and in mission secondary schools?’* The findings show that the discipline policy is contextualized in two ways: through school-based practices and through documentation of discipline cases. The findings show that there are many similarities in how the discipline policy is contextualized in two Public secondary schools and the two Mission secondary schools. All school rules and regulations in the four sampled secondary schools were in line with the discipline policy from ministry of Education in Malawi. However, the Mission Secondary schools demonstrated a greater awareness of the discipline policy than the Public secondary schools because their church structures put more emphasis in educating their schools about the discipline policy. They even provided additional discipline policy support through their Christian practices and by sending pastors and other faith-based persons from their churches to support the schools. This helped their teachers, students and parents to be aware of the discipline policy. It was an additional support for the effective implementation of the policy. Such support was missing in the public schools.

The results have demonstrated that policy implementation can be affected by the context. The mission secondary school context had fewer discipline cases to deal with than the public secondary school context. The factors that made the difference were the use of the christian faith to support behaviour change in students; additionally, mission schools were able to provide additional support of church personnel to visit schools and support effective

discipline mechanisms in the schools. Such support was lacking in the public schools which mostly resorted in punitive punishment strategies. This finding shows importance of providing policy support during the implementation stage.

The results also point towards the need for revisiting wide use of punitive approaches as means of enforcing the school discipline policy. There is need to find ways of establishing policy strategies focusing on reforming behaviour and not always resorting to use of punitive action (Kamwachale and Mwenegamba, 2017). Furthermore, the findings show that use of punishment is a key feature in dealing with discipline issues in schools. This has been demonstrated by the results in Tables 1 and 2. Van Wyk (2001) expressed concern over the increased use of reactive and punitive strategies. Van Wyk (2001) argues that these strategies are not educationally effective. Other literature cited in chapter two also shows that use of positive approaches to discipline teaches and reinforce positive behaviors (Bear, 2008; Jackson, 2017). The wide use of punitive approaches, inconsistent policies, and practices that students perceive as unfair have often been identified as barriers to effective implementation of discipline policy in schools (Ehiane, 2014; Keating and Rossouw, 2009; Bodovski *et al.*, 2013; Duckworth and Seligman, 2006; Ning, Van-Dammme, Yang, and Gielen, 2013). There is need to find ways of establishing policy strategies focusing on reforming behaviour and not always using punitive action.

The theoretical framework by Miles *et al* (1987) identifies the key activities occurring during implementation as the carrying out of action plans, the developing and sustaining of commitment, the checking of progress and overcoming problems. These are the activities that the four schools were engaged with during the study. However, it sometimes seemed as though the schools were working towards the institutionalization stage, which is stage three of the theoretical framework. According to Miles *et al* (1987), the move from implementation to institutionalization often involves the transformation of a pilot project, to a school-wide initiative. This was reflected in the way all the four schools emphasized on '*embedding*' the discipline policy rules and regulations within the school's structures, and putting in place local mechanisms and personnel to contextualize the discipline policy. Nonetheless, the increased incidence of discipline cases in the Public schools shows that

the two public schools were still in the implementation stage and had not yet *institutionalized* the school discipline policy.

The second research question was: *What are the specific roles of stakeholders in public, and in mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?* This study was guided by two theoretical frameworks. The theory by Viennet and Pont (2017) puts emphasis on the roles played by various stakeholders. The results of this study support this view. All the four schools in the study commended the roles of the various stakeholders in the school. Furthermore, the framework identifies three important factors for effective policy implementation namely, Inclusive stakeholder engagement, a conducive institutional, policy and societal context and a coherent implementation strategy to reach schools. These factors were observed in all the four schools in this study.

The third research question was: *What challenges are experienced in public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?* The challenges in the Public secondary schools have been summarized into five points. The challenges in the mission secondary school are summarized in four points (see pages 44 to 45). There were close similarities in the challenges experienced. A common challenge that was mentioned was that students have a misconception of human rights and do not want to be told what to-do. They claim that it is their human rights to do some of those things that school prohibits. Furthermore, schools also complained that this wrong conception of human rights is also held by some parents. This finding echoes what Namphande (2016) observed that there is a clash between human rights and school discipline. Namphande (2016) proposed that there is need for negotiation between the two sides when there is such differences in opinion.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented and discussed the findings of the study. The findings and discussions have been presented based on the three research questions presented in chapter one. The first research question was ‘*How is the discipline policy contextualized in public*

and in mission secondary schools? The findings in this chapter show that the discipline policy is contextualized through school-based practices and through documentation of discipline cases. The second research question was: *What are the specific roles of stakeholders in public, and in mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?* The results of this study, from all four schools, show the significant roles played by different stakeholders in ensuring discipline in the schools. The third research question was: *What challenges are experienced in public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy?* The results show that both types of schools, public and private, experience similar problems related to the discipline policy. A significant finding from both type of schools was the observation that students had a misconception of human rights and did not want to be told what to-do. They claimed that it was their human right to do some of those things that schools prohibited.

The two theoretical frameworks presented in chapter 2 have been used in this chapter as analytical frameworks, alongside the literature reviewed, in order to make sense of what was happening. The next chapter presents conclusion to the findings and implications of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents conclusion to this study. The purpose of this study was to compare the implementation of the discipline policy between public and mission secondary schools. The main study objective was to explore the implementation of the discipline policy between public and mission secondary schools. The specific objectives of this study were to compare the implementation of the discipline policy in public and mission secondary school contexts; analyse the specific roles of stakeholders in public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy and finally, to examine challenges experienced by public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy. This chapter presents conclusions from the study based on these specific research questions. The chapter also presents the implications of the study and makes suggestions for further study in the area.

5.1 Conclusions from the study

This study has explored and compared the implementation of the discipline policy in public and mission secondary schools. The results show that both types of schools implement the policy based on the Ministry of Education guidelines. However, the results also show the importance of the context in policy implementation. The Public secondary school case study schools reported a high incidence of discipline cases than the Mission case study schools. The difference has been attributed to the faith based (christian) culture that mission secondary schools use in order to create school discipline. In addition, mission

secondary schools were able to provide additional support to the schools to ensure effective implementation of the discipline policy.

The results of this study support literature that argue for the importance of participation of various stakeholders in the implementation of discipline policy in schools. Both public and mission secondary schools benefited from the roles that the various stakeholders played in the schools.

Finally, this study has identified challenges experienced by public and mission secondary schools in the implementation of the discipline policy. There are very close similarities in the challenges experienced by the schools including issues of misunderstanding of the true meaning of human rights in relation to implementation of the discipline policy, and the need to sensitive students, parents and community on the importance of the school discipline policy.

5.2 Implications of the study

Based on the findings and discussions presented in chapter four, the following are implications of the study:

- For effective implementation of the discipline policy in both public and mission secondary schools, students, parents and communities need to be sensitized on the importance of discipline policy in schools. Such sensitization should aim at dispelling wrong claims of human rights which currently make it difficult for schools to implement the policy and attain good student behaviour.
- Documentation of discipline issues in school is important, however, there is need to find ways of establishing policy strategies focusing on reforming behaviour and not always infringing punitive action.
- The study provides evidence of how policy implementation is enhanced by a supportive school context, as was the case of mission schools.

5.3 Areas for further study

Based on the findings in this study, the following are proposed as important areas for further research:

- Parents and community perceptions of the school discipline policy
- Students' experiences of the school discipline policy
- School based practices that improve student discipline

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: in depth face to face interview guide

(Head teachers, deputy head teachers, teachers and class monitors)

Implementation of discipline policy in mission and public secondary schools: a comparative perspective.

Participant ID Head teachers

Deputy head teachers

Teachers

Class monitors

Type of school

Date

1. How is the discipline policy contextualised in your school?
 - a. How do the staff members know of the school discipline policy?
 - b. How do the students know of the school discipline policy?
 - c. How do other stake holders come to know the school discipline policy?
 - d. Explain the procedure of making school rules from the discipline policy?
 - e. Are the school rules in line with the discipline policy?
 - f. What is the procedure for dealing with discipline issues at the school?
 - g. How easy or difficult is it to implement the school discipline policy in this school?
 - h. Are there some specific practices that the school put in place to support the implementation of the discipline policy in the school
2. What are the roles of stakeholders in implementing the discipline policy at your school?
 - a. Who are the stakeholders responsible for implementing discipline in your school?
 - b. What are the responsibilities of each of the stakeholder in implementing the discipline policy?

Stakeholders Responsibility/Role

3. What are the challenges (trends or shocks) in the implementation of the discipline policy in your schools?
 - a. What are the challenges (trends or shocks) in implementing the discipline policy in your school?
 - b. How easy or difficult is it to implement the discipline policy in your school?
 - c. How do you deal with the implementation challenges/trends or shock?

Appendix 2: key informant guide

(Members of PTA)

Implementation of discipline policy in mission and public secondary schools: a comparative perspective.

Participant ID Members of PTA

Type of school

Date

1. How is the discipline policy contextualised in your school?
 - a. How do they (PTA) know the discipline policy of the school?
 - b. How are they (PTA) involved in the implementation of the discipline policy of the school?
 - c. Explain the procedure for making the school rules from the discipline policy
 - d. Is the discipline policy relevant to deal with the discipline challenges of the school? (If yes, explain your answer. If no, why?)
 - e. If no, what do you do?
2. What roles do you perform in maintaining school discipline?

PTA Responsibilities/ Roles
3. What are the challenges (trends or shocks) in implementing the discipline policy in your school?
 - a. Mention the challenges (trends or shocks) in implementing the discipline policy at the school?
 - b. How do you deal with the implementation challenges (trends or shocks) of the discipline policy?

Appendix 3: FGD guide

(boys and girls in each school)

Implementation of discipline policy in mission and public Schools: a comparative perspective.

No of FGD participants

(students) M:

F:

Type of school

Date

1. What do you know about the school discipline policy?
 - a. What is a school discipline policy?
 - b. Explain how school rules are made from the discipline policy
 - c. Is the discipline policy relevant to deal with the school discipline issues?
 - d. Are there some specific practices that the school put in place to support the implementation of the discipline policy in the school

2. What are your roles as students in the implementation of the discipline policy of your school?

Students' responsibilities/ roles

- c. How are the students involved in the implementation of the discipline policy?
- d. How does the discipline policy meet their needs as students?
- e. Explain the process of the implementation of the school discipline policy

Stakeholder Responsibilities/Roles

3. What are the challenges/trends or shocks of the discipline policy in your schools?
 - a. How are you dealing with the challenges in the implementation of the discipline policy?

Appendix 4: UNIMAREC Ethics clearance letter



VICE-CHANCELLOR
Prof. Samson Sajldu, BSc Mlw, MPhU Cantab, PhD Mlw

Our Ref: P.04123/243

Your Ref.:

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE
P.O. Box 280, Zomba, Malawi

Telephone: (265) I 526 622
Fax: (265) I 524 031
E-mail: vc@cc.nc.mw

21st August 2023

Ms. Janet Dembo Education Department
University of Malawi
P.O. Box 280 Zomba

Dear Ms. Dembo

RESEARCH ETHICS AND REGULATORY APPROVAL AND PERMIT FOR PROTOCOL
NO. P.04/23/243. IMPLEMENTATION OF DISCIPLINE POLICY IN MISSION AND
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE.

Having satisfied all the relevant ethical and regulatory requirements, I am pleased to inform you that the above-referred research protocol has officially been approved. You are now permitted to proceed with its implementation. Should there be any amendments to the approved protocol in the course of implementing it, you shall be required to seek approval of such amendments before implementation of the same.

This approval is valid for one year from the date of issuance of this approval. If the study goes beyond one year, an annual approval for continuation shall be required to be sought from the University of Malawi Research Ethics Committee (UNIMAREC) in a format that is available at the Secretariat.

Once the study is finalized, you are required to furnish the Committee and the Vice Chancellor with a final report of the study. The committee reserves the right to carry out a compliance inspection of this approved protocol at any time as may be deemed by

it. As such, you are expected to properly maintain all study documents including consent forms.

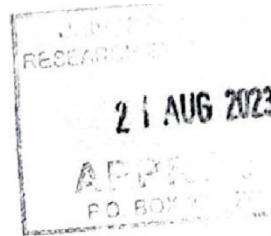
UNIMAREC wishes you a successful implementation of your study.

Yours Sincerely,

▼ — —

Dr Victoria Ndolo
CHAIRPERSON OF UNIMAREC

CC: Vice Chancellor
Registrar
Director of Finance and
Investments Acting Head of
Research UNIMAREC
Administrator UNIMAREC
Compliance Officer



Appendix 5: DEM letter of introduction and clearance

Telephone: (265) 01 235 431
(265) 01 235 519
(265) 01 235 462
Email: mt_hikosophie@gmail.com

For all correspondence should be addressed to
Director of Education Youth and Sports



NTCHEU DISTRICT COUNCIL
EDUCATION SECTOR
P.O. BOX 134
NTCHEU

MALAWI

21st February, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

IDENTIFICATION LETTER FOR JANET DEMBO

The bearer of this letter is identified as Miss Janet Dembo. She is a Teacher at Dombolo Secondary School. Currently is studying for a Masters Degree in Policy Planning and Leadership at the University of Malawi, Chancellor College, Zomba. As such, she is required to conduct a research in order to complete her studies.

It is against this background that I write to introduce her wherever she may need assistance.

For further clarification in case of doubt do not hesitate to contact the undersigned during working hours on +265999336073.

Your assistance will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully,
The Director of Education Youth
and Sports
W. M. Mthiko
Sophia M. Mthiko

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION YOUTH AND SPORTS



Appendix 6: Informed consent forms

INFORMED CONSENT FORM: Heads/Teachers/PTA members

My name is Janet Dembo. I am a postgraduate student at the university of Malawi. I am conducting a research for my thesis. The title of my research is *Implementation of discipline policy in mission and public secondary schools: a comparative perspective*. I am writing to request you to be a participant in this study.

This research study involves interviews with head teachers, teachers and PTA members; classroom observations and focus group discussions with students. The expected duration of data collection period is about two months but this will be done through day visits to schools. All effort will be made to avoid disruption of lessons in the schools. I will therefore make a prior visit to the school to agree on the best days and times for the visits.

Your voluntary participation in this study is important because you will be able to make contribution to issues that can improve the implementation of discipline in our schools. You have been chosen to take part in this study because you have useful knowledge and experiences concerning the discipline policy in secondary schools of Malawi.

Your identity will remain strictly confidential. Your name will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. Your name will only be recorded in the Assent Form, which will be kept separate from the interviews. We are asking to tape record the interview only so that we don't miss anything that you say. We will keep the audio tapes under lock and key or password-protected devices so that only the research team has access. The only exceptions and both of them are rare would be:

1. Personal information may be disclosed if required by law

2. The Human Research Ethics Committee of the University may exceptionally require personal data to respond to a formal complaint, or for a compliance audit

The interview will last about 1 hour.

Whom to Contact

In case of a need to for a contact on pertinent questions about the research and research participants rights, and/or in the event of the research related injury, you may contact the chair of the research and ethics committee (UNIMAREC): **UNIMAREC Chairperson contact details:** Dr Victoria Ndolo, Chairperson of University of Malawi Research Ethics Committee (UNIMAREC), P.O. Box 280, Zomba. +265 995 0427 60

Certificate of Assent

I have read the information above, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked and have been answered to my satisfaction. I assent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you agree that the interview will be tape recorded?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Print Name of Participant	
Signature of Participant	
DD/MM/YYYY	

If the potential participant is illiterate, or has a visual or physical disability that means they are unable to complete the above form, a witness may respond to the following two statements, as directed by the potential participant:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the assent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given assent freely.

I have witnessed that the potential participant has agreed that the interview will be tape recorded.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Participant	
Thumb print of Participant	
Signature of Witness	
DD/MM/YYYY	

Statement by the researcher/person taking assent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the details of his/her participation

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving assent, and the assent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Name of Researcher/person taking the assent	
---	--

Signature of Researcher/person taking the assent	
DD/MM/YYYY	

Informed consent form – parent/caregivers of interview participants below 18 years

Study Title: Implementation of the discipline policy in mission and public secondary school; a comparative perspective.

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Janet Dembo, I am a student from the university of Malawi. I am conducting a study about the implementation of the discipline policy in mission and public secondary schools: a comparative perspective. To this end, we are seeking permission to interview your child.

The purpose of this study is to compare the implementation of the discipline policy between mission and public secondary schools. All questions are related to how the discipline policy is implemented in each school. The participants in the study will include the following; head teacher, deputy head teacher, PTA members, students, prefects (boys and girls) and discipline documents from each secondary school. Participants will be asked oral questions using qualitative research through the following methods: in- depth face to face, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

While your child would be given the opportunity to share their experiences, there would be no direct benefit to you or them. However, their contributions may help in bringing improvements when handling and implementing the discipline policy in secondary schools. There is no payment for taking part, nor is there any cost.

We will take around 60 minutes to talk with your child about their views may be tiresome. If at any point they wish to skip a question, they may do so.

Your child's participation in this research is entirely voluntary. If you and them have agreed that they can participate in this study, they may still decide during the interview to stop, or not answer a certain question. Whether or not you or them consent/assent to them taking part will have no effect on you or your child's access to activities or services in your community, or elsewhere.

The interview will take place in a private environment. The interviewer will conduct the interview after making sure that your child is comfortable. We will ask them questions about the implementation of the discipline policy. The discussion will be tape-recorded, but only if you and your child agree to this. The tape will be kept in a safe that can be accessed only by the researchers.

Your child's identity will remain strictly confidential. Their name will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. Their name will only be recorded in the Assent Form, which would be kept separate from the interviews. We are asking to tape record the interview only so that we don't miss anything that is said. We will keep the audio tapes under lock and key or password protected devices so that only the research team has access. The only exceptions and both of them are rare would be:

1. Personal information may be disclosed if required by law
2. The Human Research Ethics Committee of the University may exceptionally require personal data to respond to a formal complaint, or for a compliance audit

The interview will last about 1 hour.

Whom to Contact

In case of a need to for a contact on pertinent questions about the research and research participants rights, and/or in the event of the research related injury, you may contact the chair of the research and ethics committee (UNIMAREC): UNIMAREC Chairperson contact details: Dr Victoria Ndolo, Chairperson of University of Malawi Research Ethics Committee (UNIMAREC), P.O. Box 280, Zomba. +265 995 0427 60

Parent/ foster parent/court representative (“parent” hereafter) declaration:

We would like you to write your child's name and approval for that child to participate in the study by signing or writing your name in the spaces provided below:

“I have been given an opportunity to ask any questions I may have, and all such questions or inquiries have been answered to my satisfaction. I am aware that whether or not I consent, my child retains the right to refuse to participate. I have

been informed orally and in writing of whom to contact in case I have questions. I hereby consent to allow the child to participate in this study”.

Child's Name: _____

Certificate of Consent

I have read the Information Sheet, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked /have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to the participation of my child in this study.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you agree that the interview will be tape recorded?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Print Name of Parent	
Signature of Parent	
DD/MM/YYYY	

If the potential participant is illiterate, or has a visual or physical disability that means they are unable to complete the above form, a witness may respond to the following two statements, as directed by the potential participant:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant's parent, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I have witnessed that the parent has agreed that the interview will be tape recorded

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Parent	
Thumb print of Parent	
Signature of Witness	
DD/MM/YYYY	

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the parent of potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that he/she understands the details of the minor's participation

I confirm that the parent was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the parent have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Name of Researcher/person taking the consent	
Signature of Researcher/person taking the consent	
DD/MM/YYYY	

Informed assent form – Interviews with participants under the age of 18

Study Title: Implementation of discipline policy in mission and public Secondary Schools: a comparative perspective.

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Janet Dembo, I am a student at the University of Malawi. I am conducting a study *about implementation of discipline policy in mission and public Schools; a comparative perspective*. To this end, I am seeking permission to interview you.

The purpose of this study is to compare the implementation of the discipline policy between mission and public secondary schools. All questions are related to how the discipline policy is implemented in each type of school. The participants in the study will include the following: head teacher, deputy head teacher, teachers, PTA members, students, prefects, students (boys and girls) and discipline documents from each secondary school. Participants will be asked oral questions using qualitative research through the following methods; in-depth face to face interview, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

I have just been talking to your parent/ foster parent, who have agreed to let me talk to you. Now I would like to find out if you agree to participate in this project. We will take around 60 minutes to talk with you about how the discipline policy is implemented at your school. Some of the questions asked in the interview may be sensitive to you or difficult for you to talk about. If at any point you wish to skip a question, you may do so.

While you would be given the opportunity to share your experiences, there would be no direct benefit to you. However, your contributions may help in bringing improvements when handling and implementing the discipline policy in secondary schools. There is no payment for taking part, nor is there any cost.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. If you have agreed to participate in this study, you may still decide during the interview to stop, or not answer a certain question. Whether or not you agree to take part will have no effect on your access to activities or services in your community, or elsewhere.

The interview will take place in a private environment. The interviewer will conduct the interview after making sure that you are comfortable. We will ask you questions about how the discipline policy is implemented at your school. The discussion will be tape-recorded, but only if you agree to this. The tape will be kept in a safe that will be accessed only by me, the researcher.

Your identity will remain strictly confidential. Your name will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. Your name will only be recorded in the Assent Form, which will be kept separate from the interviews. We are asking to tape record

the interview only so that we don't miss anything that you say. We will keep the audio tapes under lock and key or password-protected devices so that only the research team has access. The only exceptions and both of them are rare would be:

1. Personal information may be disclosed if required by law
2. The Human Research Ethics Committee of the University may exceptionally require personal data to respond to a formal complaint, or for a compliance audit

The interview will last about 1 hour.

Whom to Contact

In case of a need to for a contact on pertinent questions about the research and research participants rights, and/or in the event of the research related injury, you may contact the chair of the research and ethics committee (UNIMAREC): UNIMAREC Chairperson contact details: Dr Victoria Ndolo, Chairperson of University of Malawi Research Ethics Committee (UNIMAREC), P.O. Box 280, Zomba. +265 995 0427 60

Certificate of Assent

I have read the information above, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I assent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you agree that the interview will be tape recorded?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Print Name of Participant	
Signature of Participant	
DD/MM/YYYY	

If the potential participant is illiterate, or has a visual or physical disability that means they are unable to complete the above form, a witness may respond to the following two statements, as directed by the potential participant:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the assent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given assent freely.

I have witnessed that the potential participant has agreed that the interview will be tape recorded.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name Participant	of	
Thumb print Participant	of	
Signature Witness	of	
DD/MM/YYYY		

Statement by the researcher/person taking assent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the details of his/her participation

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving assent, and the assent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Name of
Researcher/person
taking the assent

Signature of
Researcher/person
taking the assent

DD/MM/YYYY

Appendix 7: Document analysis guide

Black book, punishment book, minutes of discipline committee.

Implementation of discipline policy in mission and public Schools: a comparative perspective.

Type of school

Name of document

Date

List of offences

Details of offenders

Type of punishments

Frequency of offences

Common offences

Gender issues

Other observations