

**TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING THE POLICY PROHIBITING
THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN MALAWI SCHOOLS**

M.ED. (POLICY, PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP) THESIS

BY

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted for any other awards at the University of Malawi or any other University for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used acknowledgements have been made in the text.

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DEDICATION

To my wife Chisomo for the multidimensional support, inspiration and love. You are a blessing beyond description. May God bless you.

To Treasure and Rachel our girls, thanks for the sweet and refreshing jokes. You are wonderful Gifts from above; herald of an inspiration and pleasure.

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ABSTRACT

Corporal punishment is the use of physical force intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort for discipline, correction, and control, changing behaviour or in the belief of educating or bringing up the child. The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' perspectives regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi primary schools. Specifically, the study sought to explore teachers' perspectives on the policy, identify reasons for such views and discuss the effects that the identified teachers' perspectives might have on the policy implementation and continued prevalence of corporal punishment in Malawi schools. The study targeted public primary school teachers. Data for the study were generated through qualitative research methods using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The main finding of the study is that there are mixed perspectives regarding the policy in question. Minority of the teachers had positive perspectives while the majority had negative views. The main argument is that the findings reflected a variety of teachers' perspectives such as ignorance of the policy, resistance of the policy, adoption of the policy, and adaption of the policy. These views are consistent with issues discussed in the literature review and the conceptual framework of the study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
DEM	District Education Manager
PEAs	Primary Education Advisors
TPR	Teacher Pupil Ratio
FDGs	Focus Group Discussion
Pro-ban	Teachers who support the policy
Anti-ban	Teachers who are against the policy
CFSC	Centre for Social Concern

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces a phenomenological study on teachers' perspectives of the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools. The term perspective is used here to refer to the teachers' views of the policy. Thus, the chapter starts with the background to the study and then moves to history of corporal punishment in Malawi and rationale for the research. This is followed by statement of research problem, purpose statement and critical research questions. The significance of the study and researcher's role in the study are then described. Finally, chapter summary concludes the chapter.

1.2 Background to the Study

Historically, corporal punishment is the oldest and commonest means of punishment in schools as well as at home. It has been a classic method of administering punishment since ancient civilizations (Lambert, 2010). History of corporal punishment can be traced back to the middle ages till the 19th Century. From 19th Century, corporal punishment was subjected to heavy criticism to the extent that in the late 20th century public opinion turned against its use in schools (Lambert, 2010). The use of corporal punishment in schools has been banned in several countries in recent times in line with the demand to

promote human rights and child rights (Newell, 2010). Following the dawn of democracy and the constitutional change, Malawi constitutionally outlawed the use of corporal punishment in 1995 (The Malawi Constitution 1995; section 4 subsection 5). This study, therefore, sought to explore teachers' perspectives on the policy that prohibits the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The existing research on corporal punishment in Malawi schools has focused on several areas. For instance, the study by Malawi Human Rights Commission done in Malawi aimed at establishing the existence and prevalence of corporal punishment in schools after prohibition. The study found out that corporal punishment in Malawi primary schools is still existent and prevalent in spite of prohibition (Malawi Human Rights Commission, 2007).

Furthermore, in his study on Malawi's progress on abolishment corporal punishment, Newell (2010) observes that corporal punishment in Malawi is only prohibited at school but not at home. He argues that such a scenario compromises the respect of rights of a child at home and is used by some teachers to justify its use at school. In addition, Burton (2005) found out that of more than 4,500 children who experienced violence at school, one fifth had experienced something which made them afraid to go to school, including violent corporal punishment (10.9%). From teachers' own reports, the study found corporal punishment to be the most common form of "discipline" (36.3%), despite its prohibition. Thus the study confirms the prevalence of corporal punishment.

Based on the above discussion, it can therefore be argued that there is generally little focus on the general subject of corporal punishment in Malawi thereby creating a research gap which needs to be filled.

1.4 Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the prohibition of corporal punishment in Malawi schools, research continues to show that the use of corporal punishment in schools is still prevalent (Malawi Human Rights Commission, 2007; Burton, 2005; CFSC, 2010). At the time of this study, the researcher did not find any study which was done to explore teachers' perspectives of the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi Schools.

Generally, many studies have been conducted on, and related to, the subject of corporal punishment. Areas of corporal punishment that have been researched worldwide (as discussed under literature review in chapter two) include the origin and definitions of corporal punishment; effects of corporal punishment; teachers' perspective on corporal punishment; prohibition of corporal punishment in schools; and teachers' attitudes towards prohibition of corporal punishment. Out of the above cited areas, the study by Cicognani (2004) focused on teachers' attitudes towards the abolition of corporal punishment in Republic of South Africa using mixed approach. Therefore, the studies are different in their context and approach.

Firstly, Malawi is a different context from South Africa and other contexts where studies on corporal punishment have been done. Doing this study in Malawi would, therefore, help to unearth peculiar perspective of teachers that would assist to explain the continued use of corporal punishment in Malawi in spite of the prohibition.

Secondly, Cicognani (2004) study used mixed approach which combines both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The study, however, was biased towards quantitative thereby limiting qualitative depth. Being qualitative in nature, this study aims at exploring the views of Malawian teachers on the policy in question. Finally, Cicognani (2004) focused on the teachers' attitudes towards banning of corporal punishment while this study focuses on teachers' views regarding the prohibition of corporal punishment.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives of teachers regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools using the perspectives of public primary teachers in Blantyre district in the South West Education Division.

1.6 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following critical research question: "How do teachers view the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools?" In order to answer this question deeply, the study was guided by the following sub-research questions:

1. What are teachers' perspectives regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools?
2. Why do teachers have such views regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools?
3. How do teachers' views affect the implementation of the policy banning the use of corporal punishment?

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study makes a contribution to the discussion of prohibition of corporal punishment in Malawi by drawing attention to the significance of teachers' perspectives regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools. This is important because it shades light on how teachers view this policy change and the role that their views play in the implementation process of the policy. The study also contributes to the discussion of the role that teachers' views play in the prevalence of the use of corporal punishment in spite of the ban. Therefore, the above cited contributions of the study add to the body of knowledge on the topic under discussion.

1.8 Researcher's Position

The researcher's role was to record the realities from each participant without any bias or distorting its meaning. Besides recording, the researcher's role was to describe, interpret, and do a critical reflection of the phenomena as viewed and given by participants while maintaining confidentiality and neutrality. As a phenomenological qualitative study, the researcher engaged participants in the study to express their views on the policy in

question. Views of each participant represented a subjective reality as seen by that participant. In this way, the study was ontological because it embraced the idea of multiple realities (Creswell, 2007).

Secondly, the researcher conducted the study in schools where participants live and work to appreciate the contexts of their views and lessen the distance between them and the researcher. The researcher visited the teachers at the schools and interviewed them right there because as argued by Creswell (2007) epistemologically, qualitative study embraces the practice in which the researcher attempts to lessen distance between himself and that which is being researched (Creswell (2007)).

1.9 Outline of Thesis Chapters

The first chapter of this thesis provides general introduction and analysis of the problem under investigation. Chapter two covers review of literature on corporal punishment and the conceptual framework used in the study. This is followed by chapter three which zeroes in the methodology implied in the study. Chapter four centres on a discussion of the findings of the study. Chapter Five contains a conclusion, implications and recommendations of the study.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided general introduction to the study focusing on the problem. The problem arises in historical setting where it has been noted that the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools has been one of the commonest and oldest practices since

time immemorial. The coming in of democracy has been one of the major influences for the prohibition of corporal punishment in many countries including Malawi. The study's rationale was the absence of literature on the subject under study and its contribution to the discussion of the role that teachers' views play in the prevalence of the use of corporal punishment in spite of the ban. The study's findings, therefore, attempt to fill the literature gap but also add to the body of literature on the subject in question especially in Malawi schools.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter Overview

This section discusses what literature has highlighted on the subject of corporal punishment, first at a global level and then at national level. Due to limited research and limited documents in Malawi on corporal punishment much of the reviewed literature is from other countries which cover origin and conceptualisation of corporal punishment, effects of corporal punishment, perspectives on effects of corporal punishments, policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools and teachers' attitudes of prohibition of corporal punishment. The chapter concludes by looking at the conceptual framework that guided the study.

2.1 Conceptualisation of Corporal Punishment

Corporal Punishment has been conceptualised widely by several people (Save the Children, 2003; Straus, 1994; Hyman, 1990; Cohen, 1984). According to Save the Children (2003), corporal punishment is the use of physical force intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort for discipline, correction, and control, changing behaviour or in the belief of educating or bringing up the child. Save the Children (2003 p. 1) further contends that "Physical pain can be caused by different means such as hitting the

child with a hand or other object, kicking, shaking or throwing the child, pinching or pulling the hair, caning or whipping”. The conceptualisation contains many notable details that are common in many conceptualisations of corporal punishment by different authors. However, Save the Children’s conceptualisation is unique in the sense that it exceptionally points out that corporal punishment is done in the belief of educating the child.

Not differing much from Save the Children, Straus (1994 p. 4) defines corporal punishment against a child as “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child’s behaviour”. Focusing on the intent, Straus seems to assert that though injury may result from corporal punishment, it is not the intended goal. Straus (1994 p. 5) further states that “the most frequent forms of corporal punishment are spanking, slapping, grabbing or shoving a child roughly (with more force than is needed to move the child), and hitting with certain objects such as a hair brush, belt, or paddle”.

Supporting this definition, Cohen (1984) identified specific forms of corporal punishment such as paddling, flogging and beating. Reflecting on practices in school situations, and contextualising the definition of corporal punishment in schools, Hyman (1990 p. 10) states that “corporal punishment in schools is the infliction of pain or confinement (detention for a period of time) as a penalty for an offense committed by a student”. Notwithstanding what others have said on corporal punishment, Hyman’s definition explicitly conceptualises corporal punishment in a school context thereby making it more

specific and relevant to this discussion. In general, these definitions point out that corporal punishment is the use of physical force to cause pain on a learner.

For this study, the working definition is that corporal punishment is the use of physical force to cause a child experience pain for the purposes of discipline, correction or control of child's behaviour. Considering the Malawian context, the use of physical force in the study shall mean, hitting the child with a hand or other object, kicking, shaking or throwing the child, pinching or pulling the hair/ears, caning or whipping, slapping and grabbing.

2.2 Effects of Corporal Punishment

Many researchers have studied effects of corporal punishment (Bitensky, 1998; Save the Children, 2003; Human Rights Watch Kenya, 1999; Straus, 2001; Straus, 1994; MacMillan, *et al*, 1999; Hyman, 1990; Tharps, 2003). Research conducted by different researchers including some from the above mentioned list reveals the severity of harm that can be inflicted on children when adults try to manage their behaviour (Save the Children, 2003). Besides being harmful, effects of corporal punishment affect many areas of the life of the child and can be lasting, reaching well into adulthood (Bitensky, 1998). In general terms, the effects can be categorised as physical, psychological or emotional, personal, social and behavioural as well as academic.

Firstly, corporal punishment has been associated with causing physical effects. These are effects caused by corporal punishment on the body and life of the victim. According to

Save the Children the Children (2003) children suffer injuries arising from corporal punishments that need medical attention, leave permanent damage and even cause their death. This includes children being knocked unconscious, bleeding, broken limbs, damaged eyes and stitches; being beaten with implements such as canes, belts, or thorns; being whipped or lapped, punched or kicked. In some countries, reported punishment in schools has included being forced to stand for hours in the sun, smoke red pepper, which causes coughing and vomiting, being made to contort the body into shapes which cause fainting and nose bleeding, pulling hair and ears, forcing pupils into humiliating and painful contortions (Save the Children, 2003). Thus, children on whom corporal punishment is administered are often left with physical evidence of the abuse. UNICEF (2001) report of a study done in Asia indicates that in Asia children's eardrums have burst as a result of corporal punishment.

Human Rights Watch Kenya (1999) report of a study done in Kenya indicates that minor injuries such as bruising and swelling are common; more severe injuries such as "large cuts, sprains, broken fingers" as well as teeth being knocked out, broken wrists and collar bones and internal injuries requiring surgery do occur from corporal punishment.

Second effect of corporal punishment is that it causes psychological effects. These are effects that affect the mental or emotional aspects of the learner. Straus (2001 p. 53) further explains that "...the psychologically harmful effects of corporal punishment are parallel to the harmful effects of physical abuse, except that the magnitude of the effect is less". Firstly, corporal punishment results not only in the child exhibiting "externalising

behaviours” such as hitting others but can also lead to the child internalising his or her feelings about being physically punished. Such internalising often results in depression, low self-esteem and negative psychological adjustment (Straus, 1994). Research has shown that a correlation does exist between corporal punishment and depressive symptoms (Straus, 1994). In their study, Straus et.al. (1994) found that adolescents who were subjected to corporal punishment displayed an increased risk of developing depressive symptoms as adults. Furthermore, the frequency of suicidal ideation (thoughts and plans about suicide) also increases with the frequency of corporal punishment experienced as an adolescent (Straus, et.al., 1994). This is further associated with a high frequency of suicidal thoughts as an adult (Straus, et.al., 1994). There have been reported cases of children committing suicide as a result of the humiliation and shame they feel due to physical and mental punishment (UNICEF Asian Report, 2001). Holden (in Straus, 1994) argues that repeated corporal punishment leads to chemical and structural changes in the brain which result in depression. Other psychiatric disorders have also been found to correlate with corporal punishment. MacMillan, *et.al.* (1999) studied the effects of slapping and spanking during childhood and found out that there is a linear relationship between the frequency of slapping and spanking and the lifetime prevalence of other psychiatric disorders. In particular, “the association is weak for major depression and anxiety, and stronger for alcohol abuse or dependence and externalising problems,” (MacMillan, *et.al.*, 1999, p. 808). Besides, Hyman (1990) contends that children who experience psychological abuse because of corporal punishment or other forms of abuse may suffer from sleep disturbances, including the reappearance of bedwetting, nightmares, sleepwalking, and fear of falling asleep in a darkened room.

Furthermore, somatic symptoms such as stomach-aches, headaches, fatigue, and bowel disturbances, accompanied by a refusal to go to school, can also occur (Hyman, 1990 p. 19). Research by Hyman (1990) also confirms that experience of corporal punishment in schools is a critical traumatic experience for children and the symptoms experienced as a result are comparable to symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This area of post traumatic stress has been termed Educator-Induced Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and it explores a child's reaction to traumatic stresses in the learning environment. Furthermore, according to Hyman (1990) though limited, but studies have indicated that symptoms learners experience as a result of trauma in the classroom include problems in school; aggressive behaviour; avoidance behaviours; changes in personality; re-experiencing the trauma; fearful reactions; somatic complaints; withdrawal; memory and concentration problems; dependency and regression; habit disorders and sleep disturbances" (Hyman, 1990 p 100-101 in Cicognani, 2004). Finally, the effects can reach beyond school going years and well into adulthood with more severe psychiatric conditions resulting from harsh corporal punishment practices (Hyman, 1990).

The third effect of corporal punishment is that it violates the rights of a child/learner. Hitting children breaches human rights, in particular, to respect for every person's human dignity and physical integrity and to equal protection under the law, upheld in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (Newell, 2010). The UN convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) explicitly protects children from all forms of physical violence (Article 19) and from inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment (Article 37). It requires school

discipline to be “consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention” (Article 28 (2)). In view of the damage that corporal punishment can do to children’s attendance and learning experience, it can also breach Article 28, which stipulates children’s right to receive primary education (Article 28.1.a) and requires States to take measures to encourage regular attendance at school and reduce drop-out rates (Article 28 (1.e)). The General Principles of the CRC, which also inform this position, provide that in all actions concerning children the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration (Article 3); the inherent right of every child to life and to survival and development (Article 6); the right to non-discrimination (Article 2) and the right of children to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and these views be given due weight (Article 12) (Save the Children, 2003).

The fourth effect of corporal punishment is that it causes social and behavioural effects. Corporal punishment also affects the social and behaviour dimensions of life of the victimised learner. Surely, the aim of compliance is often reached through use of corporal punishment; however, research has shown that the child does not understand and learn the incorrectness of their behaviour (Tharps, 2003). Thus, the child stops the behaviour fearing corporal punishment but not the reason why the behaviour should be stopped. Consequently corporal punishment causes the child to fail make a link between their behaviour and the punishment. As such, corporal punishment does not promote lessons about right and wrong but rather emphasises fear and violence (Tharps, 2003). According to the Harvard Mental Health Letter (2002 p. 1):-

Children whose parents hit them feel pain, anger, and fear that lead them to ignore the disciplinary message and to resent the parent instead. Some lose their incentive to internalize social values and develop self-control. They concentrate on their own grievance instead of thinking about the act for which they were punished and the harm it caused or might have caused.

Emphasising and expounding the idea cited above, Cicognani (2004) states that although compliance is often obtained, the effect of the punishment leaves children feeling more resentful as opposed to having learnt correct behaviours. They are left focusing on the hurt they feel and not the lesson they could learn”.

Furthermore, studies show that “children who are spanked have a less trusting and affectionate relationship with their parents and feel less remorse about misbehaviour, as opposed to being caught” (Harvard Mental Health Letter 2002 p. 1). Correspondingly, research by Straus (1994) indicates that children who are disciplined through corporal punishment have a greater probability of developing delinquent tendencies.

Additionally, studies by Straus and Yodanis (1996) point out that those adolescents who are punished through frequent corporal punishment are at a greater risk of assaulting spouses later in life. Concurring with Straus and Yodanis, studies by Greydanus, *et al*, (2003) found that children who have been subjected to violence are more likely to use violence in their own families later in life. Thus corporal punishment perpetuates the cycle of abuse, violence and hostility.

Apart from that, UNICEF's Asian Report (2001 p. 6) on corporal punishment states, "punishment reinforces uncertainty and an identity of failure. It reinforces rebellion, resistance, revenge and resentment". Consequently, children interpret people's actions as aggressive and they learn that similar situations require hostile responses (Harvard Mental Health Letter, 2002). To that end, the use of corporal punishment or violence as a disciplinary measure does not set the appropriate example, because children learn that acts of violence are a means of solving problems (Tharps 2003). Related to that, research conducted by Hyman (1990), found that learners who are physically punished are more likely to bully their peers and can develop into adults who display little or no empathy, and will hurt without conviction (Human Rights Watch, 1999). In connection to that Brezina (1999) discovered that through corporal punishment children learn aggression as an effective means of problem solving, as corporal punishment intimidates other children. This display of aggression has wider implications because, as Brezina (1999 p. 418) suggests, "...such behaviour is likely to possess self-reinforcing properties" and has "implications for the control of teenage violence".

According to Brezina (1999) the use of corporal punishment also reinforces the message that force can be used to control those weaker than oneself. In this way, according to studies done by Save the Children (2003) the strongest, usually unintended, message that corporal punishment sends to the mind of a child is that violence is acceptable behaviour, that it is right for a stronger person to use force to coerce a weaker one. This helps to perpetuate a cycle of violence in the family and in society (Save the Children, 2003). Thus confirming what Straus (1996 p. 838) states that "...cross-cultural evidence

suggests ... that corporal punishment is associated with an increased probability of societal violence”.

Besides behavioural effects, corporal punishment is also seen to cause academic or educational effects. According to Straus (2003), the relationship between academic achievement and success later in adult life indicates that corporal punishment early in life affects cognitive development. Corporal punishment experienced during adolescence is inversely related to graduation from college and is associated with lower economic and occupational achievement in adulthood (Straus, 2003). Corporal punishment decreases a child's motivation and increases his or her anxiety. As a consequence the ability to concentrate is inhibited and learning is poor (UNICEF Asian Report, 2001). The use of corporal punishment also influences children's school attendance, in that the learning environment is not perceived as safe and school is avoided.

Corresponding and substantiating to UNICEF Asian report, Save the Children (2003) consultations with children in over 15 countries show that Children also frequently cite corporal punishment as a reason for dropping out of school. For example, 14 per cent of Nepalese children interviewed had dropped out of school because they were afraid of the teachers. Kenyan Children, left with little remedy against corporal punishment, have responded to injuries and severe punishment by transferring from abusive schools, or by dropping out of school altogether. In Malawi, Burton (2005) found out that corporal punishment was one of the factors that is contributing to school drop out.

2.3 Perspectives on Effects of Corporal Punishment

Although we have delineated enormous studies on effects of corporal punishment, studies on corporal punishment reveal that not all researchers are of the opinion that corporal punishment is a harmful and destructive act that causes emotional, physical and psychological damage to a child. Researchers such as Hyman (1990), Straus (1994, 1996, 2003), and Gershoff (2002) explore the harmful and less desirable effects of corporal punishment such as somatic complaints, increased anxiety, changes in personality and depression. They view corporal punishment as not only maltreatment but also psychological abuse of the child. On the other hand, researchers such as Baumrind (1996) view the use of corporal punishment as a valid means of discipline. Baumrind (1996) claims that current research methods are not able to determine accurately the negative effects of corporal punishment. Baumrind, further, states that although there is a strong correlation between corporal punishment and psychological consequences, it is difficult to determine the exact causal relationship and the effects that may result. However, studies done by researchers such as Straus (1994) and Hyman (1990) remain primarily correlational and significant. Consequently, the effects of corporal punishment are viewed on a continuum ranging from “not harmful” to “abusive” (Cicognani, 2004). There is a belief among some researchers that other acts of corporal punishment are not intended to cause harm and should therefore not be classified as abuse. Straus and Yodanis (1996) see spanking as part of a range leading to abuse. Endorsing this perspective is Hyman (1990) who views the use of corporal punishment as psychological maltreatment. He further argues that “the symptoms of psychological maltreatment are identical to those that occur from physical abuse” (Hyman, 1990 p. 19). Therefore

discussion in this section indisputably indicates the disagreement among researchers about the harmful effects of corporal punishment. It would therefore be concluded that acts of corporal punishment are viewed on a continuum ranging from mild to severe (Cicognani, 2004). For the purposes of this study, nonetheless, all acts of corporal punishment are regarded as multidimensionally harmful on children. This is based on the observation that although Baumrind (1996) questions the research methods adopted by researchers such as Straus (1994) and Hyman (1990), the studies (Straus, 1994; Hyman, 1990) do reflect the intense, insightful and indisputable effects that corporal punishment can have on children both in raising them and within the school environment.

2.4 The Prohibition of Corporal Punishment on the International level

The prohibition of corporal punishment started in Europe particularly in Sweden and spread to other countries and continents (Newell, 2010). The international movement to ban corporal punishment was greatly triggered by the democratic dispensation. The embracement of democratic system of governance necessitated the formulation, adoption and implementation of the constitution that provides, respects and protects human rights (Newell, 2010). Therefore, mostly, where democracy has prevailed, the use of corporal punishment has been faulted, condemned and abolished because it violates human rights (Newell, 2010). However, even in some of the countries where democracy prevail implementation of policy prohibiting use of corporal punishment has not been and is not always easy (Durrant, 1996; Greydanus, *et al*, 2003). On one hand democracy facilitates and promotes constitutional abolishment of corporal punishment but on the other implementation or enforcement of the ban remains a challenge in many cases (Cicognani,

2004). In United States of America, for example, corporal punishment had been abolished in many states by 2003 however by the same year 2003 approximately 2 to 3 million cases of physical punishment were being reported each year with 10000 to 20000 pupils requiring subsequent medical treatment as a result of the punishment (Greydanus, *et al*, 2003). In South Africa corporal punishment was also abolished in 1996 but its use is still reported in schools (Cicognani, 2004). One wonders why implementation of anti-corporal punishment policy is a problem even in countries where democracy has prevailed. One possible reason according to UNICEF Asian Report (2001) is that it is difficult to enforce prohibition of corporal punishment in some countries where it has been banned because many teachers still consider it necessary.

In South Asia, for instance, corporal punishment is “often considered necessary to children’s upbringing, to facilitate learning and to instil discipline” (UNICEF Asian Report, 2001). It can therefore be noted that some challenges to implement the prohibition of corporal punishment are fuelled by the view that if corporal punishment is not used to punish children they will develop into unruly and uncontrollable citizens.

Newell (2010) further argues that condoning the use of corporal punishment at home when it was abolished at school undermines the successful implementation of the policy at school. He argues that influenced by a belief that corporal punishment is necessary, some parents even encourage teachers to use corporal punishment against their children. This practice promotes the violation of the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment.

Failure of Education System (MoE) to adequately enforce the prohibition of corporal punishment is seen as another contribution. Morrel (2000) for instance, explains that the Department of Education in South Africa failed to do enough to enforce the prohibition of corporal punishment. The department could not stop or punish perpetrators of corporal punishment especially in South African schools which were traditionally headed by authoritarian figures where students were expected to be respectful.

2.5 The Prohibition of Corporal Punishment in Malawi

In Malawi, history of corporal punishment can be traced back since time immemorial. Its presence during the period of colonialism is evident (Kuthemba-Mwale, 1996). As a British colony, Malawi adopted colonial educational elements, practices and styles. The 1962 Malawi Education Act which has been in use till the time of this study was one of the significant colonial educational elements which was adopted. One of the documented practices in the Act relates to use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools. It stipulates, “The minister may from time to time make rules prescribing the conditions for administration of corporal punishment” (Malawi Government 1962, sect 65(t). This confirms that corporal punishment in Malawi had been in use under the guidance of the minister in schools during the colonial era. Surprisingly, this education act has been in use till at the writing of this paper. As a result of this, the conflict between this old act and the current constitution has been somewhat a source of debate and dilemma among some quarters.

According to Newell (2010) when Malawi became independent under the leadership of Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the education act formulated by the colonialist government permitting corporal punishment was inherited. Corporal punishment was an approved form of disciplining learners in schools. In fact, the United Nations human rights report (2010), states that, the 1964 Constitution had a Bill of Rights which guaranteed human rights. However at the attainment of a Republican status in 1966, when Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda became President, the new Constitution removed the Bill of Rights. Among the removed ingredients of the Bill of Rights were the right to life, the prohibition of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or corporal punishment and a cluster of fair trial. The elimination of Bill of Rights compromised provision, protection and respect of concerned human rights by the Kamuzu Banda's regime (United Nations, 2010). Consequently, Dr Banda's regime was associated with torture, cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment and corporal punishment. Corporal punishment was practised in schools, prisons and other settings (United Nations, 2010; Newell, 2010).

In 1993, through a referendum, the people of Malawi voted for a change from one party system of government to a multiparty system of government leading to the general elections in 1994 which ended the three decade rule of Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda. Malawi's political transformation also entailed the adoption of a new constitution. The new political system transferred the supreme authority from the presidency to the constitution. Hence the constitution became and remains the supreme authority in Malawi (Matenje & Forsyth, 2007). The supremacy of the constitution implies that it is the constitution that binds all executive, legislative and judicial organs of the State at all

levels of Government and all the people in Malawi. This supremacy further implies that any act of Government or any law that is inconsistent with the provisions of this constitution shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be invalid (The Malawi Constitution 1995; section 4, 5).

The new constitution was adopted with a fully-fledged Bill of Rights. One of the prominent elements in the Bill of Rights is the prohibition of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or corporal punishment (United Nations, 2010). This means prohibition of corporal punishment in Malawi emanates from the constitution. Of particular interest and relevance to the discussion is section 19(5) of the 1995 constitution of Malawi which stipulates, “No person shall be subject to corporal punishment in connection with any judicial proceedings or in any other proceedings before any organ of the State”. Related to the treatment of primary school children, the constitution further states:

All children, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, are entitled to equal treatment before the law. Children are entitled to be protected from... any treatment, work or punishment that is, or is likely to – be hazardous; interfere with their education; or be harmful to their health or to their physical, mental or spiritual or social development (Malawi Constitution, 1995; section 23 (2), (4a,b,c, 5).

This means corporal punishment (in form of treatment, work and punishment) in Malawi is unlawful in schools. Although the old educational act empowers the minister to determine the conditions of corporal punishments; the minister cannot make any directive/rule/decision against the provisions of the constitution (Matenje, and Forsyth

2007). Thus, the adoption and operationalisation of the 1994 constitution legally and technically implied the ban of corporal punishment in schools.

Following the constitutional prohibition of corporal punishment (Malawi Constitution, 1995, sections 19 (5); 23 (2), (4a,b c) (5) and the global wind of change sweeping in the educational system advocating for abolishment of corporal punishment, the Malawi's Ministry of Education prohibited the use of corporal punishment in schools in 1999 (Centre For Social Concern, 2009; MoEST 2008). Confirming and communicating the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, the Ministry of Education in 2008 released guidelines for school discipline. In the guidelines, the Ministry provided alternatives to corporal punishment as follows:-

- (a) Sending a child out of the class for a short time
- (b) Making a child stand on one leg for some time
- (c) Making a child run round the school if he/she is late for school
- (d) Giving a child a piece of work to do after normal school
- (e) For coming late, a child may be asked to do the part of the lesson which he/she missed. This should be done after normal school hours
- (f) Paying for the damage done
- (g) Public repentance: a child who commits an offence is asked to repent in front of the class or school
- (i) Reprimand: The Head invites the offending child to the office and talks to him/her strongly to make the child realize his/her mistake (MoEST, 2008).

Banning of corporal punishment, however, appears to be a difficult policy change for some teachers to accept. At present, there are still reported cases of corporal punishment being used in schools in Malawi (Zuberi, 2005; Burton 2005).

Malawi Human Rights Commission (2007) wrote about corporal punishment in Malawi. The article on corporal punishment is written as part of the report on the gender based violence in schools. As a consequence of this, the content on corporal punishment is brief. It does not provide a wide and adequate discussion on the topic in question. Besides, the article does not base its discussion on any theory.

Burton (2005) also did a study in Malawi on violence in school. He found out that of more than 4,500 children's experiences of violence at school found that one fifth had experienced something which made them afraid to go to school, including violent corporal punishment (10.9%). From teachers' own reports, the study found corporal punishment to be the most common form of "discipline" (36.3%), despite its prohibition. The strength of the study was that it revealed the prevalence of corporal punishment after the ban. It also shed light on the impact of corporal punishment especially on drop out. However, corporal punishment was not the main focus of the study as a result no much details are provided. Besides, the study used no theory to guide it.

Global Initiative to End All Forms of Corporal Punishment (2010) and Newell (2010) have discussed corporal punishment only as part of Malawi's constitutional progress on the abolishment of corporal punishment at home, not the actual perspectives of teachers

towards the ban of corporal punishment. As a result, the significance of the teachers' perspectives on the ban of corporal punishment is overlooked or at least not revealed. Hence need for a study focusing on the teachers' perspectives on prohibition of corporal punishment in Malawi.

2.6 Teachers' Attitudes towards the Ban of Corporal Punishment

There are different teachers' attitudes towards prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. Some teachers support the policy while others condemn it. In Australia, corporal punishment is banned. However most teachers still support the use of corporal punishment and this view has not changed much since corporal punishment was first banned in schools. Research conducted in Australia found that most teachers view the use of corporal punishment as necessary and many would like to use the cane as a last resort (www.education.qld.gov.au/corporate/professional_exchange/edhistory/edhistopics/corporal/union.html).

In an American poll conducted by ABC news titled "Support for Spanking" it was found that "sixty-five percent of Americans approve of spanking", although only "26 percent say that grade-school teachers should be allowed to spank kids at school" (www.search.abcnews.go.com/query.html). According to Flynn (1994) southern residents of the USA, have favourable attitudes towards corporal punishment and 81.1% support its use. This is reflective of southern educators being the strongest proponents of corporal punishment in schools (Boser, 2001).

Corporal punishment in Pakistan has existed in schools for nearly 143 years (Iqbal, 2003). Recently, efforts have been made to ban corporal punishment. Teacher's opinions supporting this ban are growing. Some teachers, however, still feel that those who use corporal punishment should not be punished, as corporal punishment is seen as part of doing the job. Teachers who support the ban, feel that corporal punishment is a lazy means of control (Iqbal, 2003).

In Trinidad, where corporal punishment has been banned for nearly three years, teachers and parents are requesting its reinstatement. It is felt that children are becoming increasingly unruly and corporal punishment would assist in reinstating order in schools (Richards, 2003).

Teachers in Bangkok are unhappy about the ban on corporal punishment and fear that it will result in students becoming more aggressive (Bangkok Post, 13 September 2000). A secondary school executive association member in Bangkok felt that the "ban would infringe on the rights of teachers", and a teacher further stated "...if I cannot control them. I have to hit them in these cases" (The Nation, 14 September 2000). In some countries, the use of corporal punishment by teachers is reinforced by its use in the home or from teacher's experiences of their own schooling. In Botswana and Kenya (Unicef Asian Report, 2001 and Human Rights Watch Kenya, 1999) teachers use corporal punishment because it is expected by parents. Parents endorse the use of corporal punishment, as it is the method they themselves use to discipline their own children.

Students entering training colleges bring with them their own discipline experiences and ideas of how to discipline. According to Tafa (2002:19) “trainees brought strong beliefs about caning to colleges of education primarily from their schools rather than their homes”. This is then coupled with the poor training of teachers in classroom management and as a result teachers drawing on their own experiences of being disciplined with the cane (Unicef Asia Report, 2001 and Human Rights Watch Kenya, 1999).

According to Hyman (1990) there are conflicting studies about which teachers are more likely to use paddling. It appears that as students get older, teachers administer less corporal punishment possibly as a result of being afraid of retaliation (Hyman, 1990). In a Gallup poll conducted in 1988 in the United States “56 percent of elementary school teachers and 55 percent of high school teachers approved of corporal punishment in lower grades” (Hyman, 1990 p. 62). In a study in Tennessee it was also found that teachers with emotional problems are more likely to use corporal punishment (Hyman, 1990).

In South African, a study by Rice (1987) before the ban on corporal punishment, found that male teachers tend to favour corporal punishment, as do younger teachers under the age of 25 years. She also found that experience did not have an impact on the use of corporal punishment. That is, teachers teaching for less than 5 years and those with more experience are almost equally likely to use corporal punishment. More recently, and post the ban on corporal punishment in South Africa, Cohen (1996) conducted a study on teachers’ and pupils’ attitudes towards corporal punishment. According to Cohen (1996

p. 47) “teachers are ambivalent towards corporal punishment, their views are still not totally in line with the literature, nor with the aims of the new education policy”. Furthermore, the majority of the teachers in the study felt that corporal punishment was necessary in order to maintain discipline.

Cicognani (2004) conducted a study in Gauteng area in Republic of South Africa on Teachers’ attitudes towards the ban of corporal punishment. Results of this study suggest that teachers still view corporal punishment as having a place in education. Teachers are concerned amongst others about their personal safety and feel the administering of corporal punishment will ensure their safety. Teachers’ do report that they have found alternatives that do work, however, they still feel that the training that is provided is not able to meet their needs in the classroom situation.

Hyman (1990), however, argue that there are conflicting views about which teachers are more likely to use paddling. It appears that as students get older, teachers administer less corporal punishment possibly as a result of being afraid of retaliation (Hyman, 1990). In a poll conducted by Hyman in 1988 “56 per cent of elementary school teachers and 55 per cent of high school teachers approved of corporal punishment in lower grades” (Hyman, 1990 p. 62). In another study Hyman (1990) found that teachers with emotional problems are more likely to use corporal punishment. A study by Rice (1987) found that male teachers tend to favour corporal punishment, as do younger teachers under the age of 25 years. She also found that experience did not have an impact on the use of corporal punishment. That is, teachers teaching for less than 5 years and those with more

experience are almost equally likely to use corporal punishment. But according to Cohen (1996 p. 47) “teachers are ambivalent towards corporal punishment, their views are still not totally in line with the literature, nor with the aims of the new education policy”. Furthermore, the majority of the teachers in the study felt that corporal punishment was necessary in order to maintain discipline.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

This study has employed a conceptual framework based on four concepts reflecting teachers’ attitudes to policy change, namely, ignorance of the policy, resistance of the policy, adoption of the policy, and adaptation of the policy. These concepts were proposed by Lindblad (1990), as shown in the table1:

Table 1: Concepts of conceptual framework: Teachers’ Attitudes towards Change

Attitudes towards change				
		Negative	Positive	
Knowledge & skill	High	Resist	Adapt	High
	Low	Ignore	Adopt	Low

As table 1 indicates, teachers’ attitudes towards policy change can either be positive or negative. Positive attitude constitute two concepts namely; adoption and adaptation of the policy. On the other hand negative attitude on policy change entails ignorance and resistance of the policy change (Clasquin-Johnson, 2011, Lindblad, 1990; Richardson & Placier, 2002). These teachers’ attitudes are shaped by different factors such as knowledge, context, characteristics, beliefs and practices of teachers. Besides, the

framework also holds that the positioning (and their ability to move from one position to another) on the matrix depends on the level of knowledge and skills. The belief is that teachers with no knowledge of change are more likely to have negative perspective and ignore the policy where as teachers with little knowledge and negative attitude to change are more likely to resist. Teachers with adequate knowledge and positive attitude but with limited skills may adopt the policy. On the other hand, teachers with high levels of knowledge and a positive attitude to change are more likely to adapt the policy change.

This study, therefore, used ignorance, resistance, adoption and adaption as concepts to guide the explanation. These concepts were chosen because they provide important ideas on policy change and teachers' perspectives on the same. So they act as bedrock of explanations for this study. The concepts are discussed below:

2.7.1 Ignorance of the Policy Change

Generally, ignorance of policy refers to paying no attention to new changes by policy implementers (Wolf, et.al., 1999). According to Wolf, et.al. (1999) ignorance entails lack of knowledge of something. Therefore, to the teachers, ignorance entails doing nothing about the policy because they do not know it. Thus teachers do not implement policies they have not been communicated to. Wolf, et.al. (1999) assert that teachers who do not know policy reforms cannot implement required changes and it would be unfair to expect change from them on something they do not know. According to Clasquin-Johnson (2011) teachers may ignore policy changes if their knowledge is shallow. In this situation, teachers' beliefs, attitudes and personality are not adequately challenged by

shallow knowledge of the merits of the change. This leaves teachers with nothing but the belief in the old policy and practices.

In terms of the nature of policy ignorance, Clasquin-Johnson (2011) states that some teachers ignore the whole policy while others just ignore some of the policy requirements that they do not believe.

2.7.2 Resistance of the Policy Change

Resistance of policy change refers to refusing to accept or implement a new policy change (Johnson, 1969). Contrary to ignorance of policy, here teachers have knowledge of the policy but do not implement it by choice due to different reasons.

Reasons for resistance to policy change abound. Firstly, Johnson (1969) argues that some teachers just hate directives. Thus, top-down policy approaches which do not involve and consult teachers adequately face resistance because teachers are uncomfortable just to being commanded to change. Johnson (1969) also notes that such resistance to directives on policy change and the low visibility of teachers' classroom behaviour makes it possible for teachers to avoid implementing desirable change.

Secondly, it is also argued by Bailey (2000) that teachers believe that mandated change implies a criticism of what they are currently doing as such they respond by resisting the change. Apart from that, misinformation influences resistance. If incorrect information is given about a change, the teachers' view of the change will be unclear; hence the

usefulness of the change will not be perceived (Ncube & Kajengo, 2000). Additionally, Gitlin and Margonis (1995) argue that resistance to change could represent a quest for stability. A change may mean adopting new ways of doing things. Old ways that teachers are used to or are competent in are now useless. If there is no training to develop new skills to cope with the change, then the change will be resisted. Other teachers resist change because of the uncertainty about causes and effects of the change. While to some, changes can reduce the influence one has in a school. Such a change will be resisted by the affected persons. In other words teachers resist change if they feel it is a threat to their stability, status and comfort.

Furthermore, timing of policy can influence resistance. Rowan and Miller (2007) argue that teachers who resist change often have insufficient time or energy. It is also observed that teachers need time to change their thinking, preparing for, and getting used to the change before administrators can realistically expect them to implement it (Fink and Stoll, 2005). Teachers who are constantly forced by an unrelenting plethora of changes over a short time period tend to be exhausted. This causes teachers to find it too hard to keep up their energy, enthusiasm and ultimately willingness for change (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008).

In addition, teachers “resist change when the rhetoric of the change does not match the realities of their experiences” (Datnow & Castellano, 2000, p. 778; Gitlin & Margonis, 1995). If teachers see that educational reform will not bring their expected result or if the

benefits of the change are not clear, the change is seen as a threat to the already established routine hence they will resist the change (Hargreaves, 2005).

Besides above reasons, studies conducted by Chirume (2007) in Zimbabwe, Mweemba and Chilala (2001) in Zambia, and Samuel (2004) in India, Khaniya and Williams (2004), indicate that limited resources, inadequate professional development, poor supervision and poor policy enforcement constitute significant barriers to effective policy implementation. With such barriers, many teachers are forced to resist implementation of necessary policy changes.

2.7.3 Adoption of the Policy Change

Adoption of policy refers to implementation of the policy without any modifications. The teachers' implementation of the policy is supposed to exactly conform to policy makers' view. One of the criteria for successful implementation relates to the degree to which teachers' adoption of the new policy conforms to policy makers' views of what it should look like (Richardson & Placier 2002). Squire, et.al (2003) note that teachers are expected to preserve the integrity of externally developed education innovation through "whole cloth adoption" (Adoption without alteration). In other words teachers are expected to render total compliance to the policy. In this way the adoption approach constitutes implementation fidelity in which teachers are viewed as too faithful and loyal to alter the policy implementation (Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi & Gallagher, 2007).

Datnow and Castellano (2000, p. 778) argue that a series of imposed changes creates a "culture of compliance" leading teachers to want to know how to implement the required

change “as painlessly as possible”. According to Day (2008), performance agendas coupled with continuing monitoring of teachers’ effectiveness, implicitly encourage teachers to comply uncritically with policy change. Policy makers want teachers to be faithful to the goals of policy reforms (Drake & Sherin, 2006). Although implementation fidelity is seen as a useful goal, when it is accompanied by tight restrictions on teacher autonomy and a corresponding narrow focus on teaching practices, there are many negative side-effects, such as: (i) decreased motivation among teachers whose professionalism would be undermined; (ii) a possible misfit between a change programme's narrowly prescribed teaching regime and the larger goals of teaching and learning (Rowan & Miller, 2007). Consequently, although adoption of policy may please many policy makers, only very few teachers afford it especially where there is forced compliance and strict supervision. Therefore allowing teachers to (buy-in) participate in re-designing correct reforms would be far stronger than forcing them to adopt (Datnow & Castellano, 2000).

2.7.4 Adaptation of the Policy Change

Adaptation of policy change involves teachers being actively involved in reproducing, interpreting and transforming policy through individual action or agency (Osgood, 2006). “Teachers interpret, filter and modify policy in order to safeguard their sense of professional autonomy” (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008, p. 54). Policy makers therefore need to recognize that teachers develop, define and reinterpret the policy instead of merely delivering it (Hargreaves, 2005). For this reason, Smylie and Perry (2005) regard teachers as active agents when they adapt elements of policy change to their classrooms

because when working with a complex, conceptually rich policy, different teachers make different choices and adaptations (Drake & Sherin, 2006). They do this to balance multiple issues, including their own ideologies and past pedagogical practices, with a host of new demands as they attempt to incorporate policy change. Top-down policy change disregards this power of teachers to mediate the changes (Fink & Stoll, 2005; Priestley & Sime, 2005).

Successful innovation is better achieved through a process of adaptation, which combines central impetus with active engagement by teachers. Change must reflect the dynamic two-way relationship between the initiative and the context for enactment, and therefore local change agents must be included in every step of the process.

Teachers are also bound by what they feel they must do to practically respond to their learners' needs and so they tend to adapt policies accordingly (Datnow & Castellano, 2000). Adaptive approaches seek to create innovations that accommodate local settings by encouraging teachers to discover and disseminate locally effective teaching practices, while simultaneously giving them sufficient discretion and autonomy to adapt their practices to their own classroom strategies (Rowan & Miller, 2007). Therefore, successful reform of both policy and practice requires mutual adaptation (Drake & Sherin 2006).

Nevertheless, Leander and Osborne (2008) note that policy makers often misinterpret how teachers respond to change. In particular, policy makers may often view teachers' modifications or adaptations of externally-driven change as corrupting the change effort.

However, only partial change is achieved if the teacher is construed as a “thoughtless and rationalless appropriator of materials” (Leander & Osborne, 2008). Leander and Osborne (2008) argue that teachers are not just responsive to their learners; their work is also highly responsive to many different audiences.

In addition, as teachers respond to change, they borrow and redevelop “best ideas”. According to Drake and Sherin (2006), teachers’ narrative identities frame the ways in which they use, alter or adapt the policy, before, during and after instruction. Teachers’ past experiences, their current identities, and their desire to re-create intergenerational learning found in their own homes, lead them to develop different ideas about how to reach policy goals (Drake & Sherin 2006).

The role of adaptation is complex since teaching requires improvisation and adaptation on the one hand, while being faithful to the goals of policy and curriculum change on the other. Teachers adapt the policy to meet local constraints, match their pedagogical goals or fulfil the needs of their learners (Squire, et.al. 2003).

However, teachers' necessity to adapt policy ultimately presumes “one best way” of implementing policy. Squire, et.al. (2003) view teachers' adaptations as policy innovations created in response to their contexts: Teachers’ adaptations of innovations are not phenomena to be avoided, but rather an ongoing process to be supported. As such, the goal of policy makers should not be how to create policy that teachers may not be able to adapt it by modifications. Instead, policy designers might reconceptualise

“implementation” as supporting teachers in contextualizing policy to meet their local needs (Squire et al. 2003).

This framework, therefore, has been used as an analysis tool on teachers’ views on the policy in question. Teachers’ views were related to the framework to guide the understanding and explanation. The framework provided a basis on which participants’ responses were examined and understood.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This section has first reviewed literature related to the subject of corporal punishment. It has mainly highlighted what scholars have found on the conceptualization, effects of the corporal punishment, prohibition of corporal punishment and teachers’ attitudes towards the ban of corporal punishment. A brief section has also been dedicated to review of Malawi literature on the topic under study. A discussion on the conceptual framework concludes the chapter. From the discussion, therefore, it is notable that literature reveals that teachers’ perspectives to policy change vary due to a number of factors. Some teachers view policy change positively while others view the same change negatively. As a policy change, the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools is viewed differently by different teachers for different reasons. While some might negatively view it, others look at it positively. They either adopt it or adapt it.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter describes and justifies the research design and the methodology employed in the study to show how the research questions were operationalised. It first situates the study approach within the Phenomenological Methodology and interpretive paradigm. It then presents the sampling procedures of the sources of information. This is followed by an account of data collection techniques that were used during the study and how this data was analysed. The section concludes with a statement of ethical considerations taken care of in the study.

3.1 Phenomenology

This qualitative study used phenomenology as its approach. The choice for this approach was made because phenomenology describes, interprets, and does a critical reflection of the meaning of the phenomena as viewed and given by participants (Creswell, 2007). In research, the phenomenon or concept is the topic studied by the researcher and is the topic described by the participants in the study (Giffiths, 2009). In this study, therefore, the phenomenon was “Teachers’ perspectives of the policy prohibiting the use of corporal

punishment in Malawi schools”. Thus, the choice for the approach was based on its suitability to the purpose of the study.

On the question of the type of phenomenology, this study subscribed to the Existential type of phenomenology because other types of phenomenology seem to focus on essence of experience, conscious and intentionality but Existential phenomenology extend to other issues of life including, the study of perspectives (Wadham, 2009).

On sample size, the study involved 32 teachers. Often authors contradict one another on phenomenological study sample size (Groenewald, 2004). Boyd (2001) regards two to ten participants as sufficient to reach saturation. Creswell (1998, pp. 65 & 113) recommends “long interviews with up to ten people” for a phenomenological study. Polkinghorne (1989) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. But in his list of well acknowledged phenomenological study models, Creswell (2007) included a study by Anderson & Spencer (2002). In their study, Anderson & Spencer (2002) used a purposive sample of 58 participants. With this controversy, Groenewald (2004) argues that researchers need to exercise well informed choices, make their choice known and substantiate it (Groenewald, 2004). Consequently, the sample size of this research was 32 teachers in which sixteen were interviewed through in-depth interviews while the sixteen participated through Focus Group Discussion.

The number of participants for in-depth interviews (16) was mainly influenced by the research decision to interview one participant from junior/infant section and one participant from senior section per each of the 8 schools. This was meant to capture details or experiences across the sections. This is important because certain issues which affect classroom management such as enrolment and TPR vary from section to section (MoEST, 2008).

On the other hand, the number for FGD (16) was influenced by two reasons. First, it was necessary to organise two groups. One in the urban and one in the rural since Blantyre district comprises urban and rural areas. Second, the participating schools have standard one to eight so the researcher wanted to give opportunity to one teacher per class; from standard 1 to 8 to participate as their experiences were deemed crucial to the discussion. In terms of gender, efforts were made to achieve equal representation of both males and females. However the use of convenience sampling left participant availability and willingness to participate as the decisive factors. Consequently, out of the sixteen participants who participated in the In-depth interviews ten were females and six males. On the other hand, the Urban FGD comprised five females and three males while the Rural FGD had four females and four males.

3.2 Interpretive Paradigm

This study subscribed to interpretive paradigm of the qualitative approach. The topic entailed interpreting subjective views (realities) from participants to explore the richness, depth, and complexity of teachers' perspectives on the policy under discussion (Myers, 2002; Neil, 2006). As Carballo (2003) argues, participants' perspectives influence them to make decisions and act in accordance with their subjective

understandings and interpretations of the situations in which they find themselves in; hence engagement of an interpretive qualitative approach.

3.3. Sampling Techniques

Convenience sampling was predominantly used in this study. This sampling was used to identify research site, schools of the research participants and sample size. The researcher lives in Blantyre and conducting a research in Blantyre was therefore, quite convenient to him. The choice of the 8 schools from which participants were drawn was also based on convenience to the researcher. 32 teachers who participated in the study were also conveniently sampled by ensuring that only those available and those who volunteered to participate were given chance (Babbie, 1995; Greig & Taylor, 1999). However during interviews teachers mentioned issues that required verification with other authorities. Hence, triangulation was employed. As a result, two Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) were purposively sampled as key informants for being rich sources of the required data. The PEAS participated through the In-depth interviews.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

In this study, data was collected using In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussion. According to Creswell (2007) qualitative research employs different methods rather than relying on a single method. The use of multiple methods in this study enriched the data as participants provided data using methods that they were most flexible to and most comfortable with.

Table 2: Showing Data Collecting Methods

SCHOOL	A	D	G	H	B	C	E	F	TOTAL
Location	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban	Rural	Rural	Rural	Rural	8
In-depth participants	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	16
FGD Participants		8						8	16
PEAs	1 (Through In-depth interview)				1 (Through In-depth interview)				2

3.5.1 In-Depth Interviews

The study used in-depth interviews as one of the methods because as argued by Creswell, (2007, P. 131) “For a phenomenological study, the process of collecting information involves primarily in-depth interviews”. Besides, Krauss (2005 p. 764) also adds that,

face-to-face interaction is the fullest condition of participation in the mind of another human being, understanding not only their words but the meanings of those words as used by the individuals...allows us a glimpse into how and why and the meaning behind individual’s behaviour.

Sixteen out of the 32 participants provided data through in-depth interviews. For this type of interview to be effective, participants were asked to be free to speak and share ideas (Creswell, 2007). This was done to ensure that rich and quality data could be collected. Thus the in-depth interviews provided deep and enriched exploration of the topic as it allowed probing. The interviews were semi structured, audio taped and transcribed.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion

This study also used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). This was a form of group interview, though not in the sense of a backwards and forwards between the interviewer and the group. In these discussions, the reliance was on the interaction within the group discussing a topic supplied by the researcher (Morgan, 1988). Hence the participants interacted with each other rather than with the interviewer. It is from the *interaction* of the group that the data emerged (Morgan, 1988). This method was chosen because of its many benefits. The discussion helped in developing themes, topic, and schedules for subsequent interviews (Morgan, 1988; Krueger, 1988). Secondly, FGDs helped in generating suggestions that derived from the insights and data from the group (Morgan, 1988; Krueger, 1988).

There were two FGDs in total. One of these was conducted in Blantyre rural at school F and another in Blantyre Urban at school D. Each group had 8 members from the same school to enhance openness and participation. Besides, it was also easy to organise members within the school. In principle, out of the eight members, 4 were supposed to come from senior section (STD 5 to 8) while 4 from junior section (STD 1 to 4). In practice, however, in the rural FGD there was a shortfall of one member from senior section who was then replaced by a member from junior section. Chairing the meeting was done in a way that struck a balance between being too directive and veering off the point, i.e. keeping the meeting open-ended but to the point (Morgan, 1988).

3.4 Pilot Testing

To ascertain the worthiness and clarity of the interview protocols were developed. They were subjected to an expert's analysis and advice. In that regard, my course supervisor was consulted. Belt, et al (1984) persuade researchers to pass on their interview schedules to experienced people for comment. Besides expert analysis, instruments were also pilot tested at one of the primary schools in Zomba urban. Permission was sought from the head teacher of the school and eight teachers were involved in the pilot testing. Two teachers did in-depth interviews while six participated in focus group discussion. The pilot testing was done to verify clarity of questions. It also enabled the researcher to engage with the real situation and to assess the feasibility of what was proposed in terms of time, effort and resources (Robson, 1993; Blaxter et al 2001; Gay, 1987). Following the pilot testing of instruments problems of terms, interview time or duration and interpretation were identified. Consequently instruments were refined.

3.6 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis method was used to analyse the data from all the methods. In thematic analysis the researcher identified patterns found in the data and categorised the data by theme (Aronson, 1994; Gibson, 2006; Tere, 2006). So this thematic qualitative analysis was based on participants' conceptions of actual communication episodes; a theme was identified based on recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Andretta, 2008, Tere, 2006). Since the study was exploratory and involved getting the different views through in-depth interviews and FGDs, the thematic analysis was deemed appropriate. The study based its analysis on six steps developed by Braun and Clarke (2008) as table 5 displays.

Table 3: Showing Steps for Data Analysis

Thematic Procedure Proposed by Braun and Clarke
Familiarising with data
Generating initial codes
Searching for themes
Reviewing themes
Defining and Naming themes
Producing the report

The first step was familiarisation with data. This step is similar to what Marshall and Rossman (2006) call organising the data. At this level, the researcher organised and read the data. Recorded data was organised and transcribed. The master copy of the data was kept. Three working copies were prepared for back up. The work was double-spaced and had wide margins. Paragraphs were numbered for neatness and easy correction. The working data copies were kept until the dissertation is approved, in case of revisions or questions. At this stage the entire master transcript was read for meaning and sense. The entire transcript was re-read more than once until the researcher became confident of overall meaning of the text (Andretta, 2008).

The second step was to generate the initial codes. Marshall and Rossman (2006) call this step coding the data. The process involved identifying meaning units of teachers' perspectives. Meaning came from the transcript. The original text was divided into meaning units-single thought units, using a simple method (e.g. underlining alternate

meaning units, italicizing,). A meaning unit is a string of text that is expressing a single coherent thought, up to the point at which the coherent thought changes (Andretti, 2008). Each meaning unit was numbered or otherwise coded for later tracking and organization. Thereafter, the meaning units were checked (Andretti, 2008; Aronson, 1994; Gibson, 2006).

The third step was searching for themes. This is similar to what Marshall and Rossman (2006) call generating categories and themes. The researcher grouped patterned meaning units of teachers' perspectives on the policy in question. This entailed identifying recurring meaning units of teachers' perspectives. Then recurring meaning units were grouped together to generate category or theme. The checking of the groupings of meaning units was done by returning to master transcript and re-reading for sense. Meaning units were reviewed and revised as needed (Andretta, 2008 Aronson, 1994; Gibson, 2006).

The fourth step was reviewing themes, a step which Marshall and Rossman (2006) call offering interpretations through analytical memos. This involved re-reading the master transcript with themes in mind to ensure accuracy and revising any theme word or phrase to fit the overall meaning of the original meaning units (Andretta, 2008 Aronson, 1994; Gibson, 2006).

The fifth step was defining and naming themes. Marshall and Rossman (2006) call this step searching for alternative understandings. Creating tables of themes and meaning

units (instances or themes) of perspectives of teachers of corporal punishment policy. A table for each theme, showing all the related meaning units which exemplify the theme was created. The tables of teachers' perspectives were checked through evaluating each meaning unit to ensure that the theme adequately and accurately captures its meaning of the topic under study.

Step six was producing the report, a step that Marshall and Rossman (2006) call writing the thesis. This involved writing out a summary of the main issues being investigated. The discussion on themes and results of teachers' perspectives was checked by comparing each theme statement with the theme words or phrases generated in step four to ensure that the theme expresses their original meanings. A comparison of each theme statement with all instances (meaning units) in step five matrices was also done to ensure that the theme statement adequately and accurately expresses their meanings (Aronson, 1994; Gibson, 2006)

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought consent of the participants and gate-keepers (the Head teachers and District Education Managers) in consideration of ethical implications of the study. Apart from that, the background information of the study was provided to the participants to avoid the conundrum of deception. To maintain confidentiality and protect the anonymity of participants, the paper does not reveal names and identities of the informants. For example, the respondents are identified as "A teacher, participants, "Blantyre Urban" or

“A Blantyre Rural. Besides, participants reserved the right not to undertake the study or to withdraw if they did not feel comfortable to participate.

To establish credibility, the perspectives of research participants are presented in a way that does not alter the original views articulated by participants themselves. In this way, the findings in this study represent participants’ views and not the researcher’s view of the phenomenon.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has described and justified the research design employed in the study to show how the research questions were operationalised. It has first located the study qualitative design within the phenomenological approach and interpretive paradigm. It then presented the sampling procedures of the sources of information. This is followed by an account of data collection techniques that were used during the study and how this data was analysed. Next, the discussion highlighted statement of ethical considerations taken care of in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study on teachers' perspectives regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools. It starts with the teachers' perspectives and reasons regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment. This is followed by a presentation on how teachers' perspectives affect the implementation of the policy in question. A chapter summary concludes this chapter.

4.1 Positive Perspectives on the Policy Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment

Two major categories of teachers' perspectives emerged from the study findings: the Positive and Negative perspectives. Positive perspectives are perspectives of the participants in favour of the policy in question. In total, 6 out of 16 participants of in-depth interviews had positive perspective of the policy. Generally, the pro-ban participants viewed the policy as good, useful and necessary.

4.1.1 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Creates a Good Relationship between the Teacher and Learner

The relationship of the teacher and the learners has influence over the teaching and learning process (Bandura, & Walters, 1963). It affects quality and level of learning (Cicognani, 2004). The relationship can be good or bad, hostile or peaceful.

Responding to what was their perspective on the prohibition of corporal punishment, all the pro-ban teachers (6 out of 6) from the In-depth interviews felt that the policy ensures good relationship between the teacher and the learner. One respondent said, *“The policy creates a good relationship between the teacher and learners which is destroyed when a teacher uses corporal punishment....”* (In-depth Interview, School C, Blantyre rural). Concurring with this view, a participant in a FGD admitted that *“learners who are beaten do not relate well with a teacher as they consider him/her as an enemy and they label him/her as Saddam, Savimbih, Osama Bin laden”* (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre Rural). Thus participants who supported the ban felt that the use of corporal punishment affects teacher-learner relationship because it causes the victimised learner to hate the teacher. In such a case, hatred destroys teacher-pupil relationship. Consequently the ban is viewed to be good because it removes hostility that develops when the teacher uses corporal punishment. These views agree with literature. Tharps (2003) argued that corporal punishment perpetuates the cycle of hostility between teachers and learners. Prohibition of corporal punishment is, therefore, considered a positive step towards eradication of things that threaten and negatively affect the relationship between teachers and learners.

4.1.2 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Preserves and Increases

Learner's Interest in School

Learner's interest in school is important for each learner's attendance, continuity and performance (Burton, 2005). For learners to have interest in school, a conducive environment must be available and maintained. Conducive environment include an environment which is safe and violent-free. A place where learners do not feel ill-treated and threatened. All pro-ban teachers that participated in the in-depth interviews indicated the policy was promoting learners interest in school. Providing more details on the point, in contrasting the policy and corporal punishment, one respondent said:

Yeah! Corporal punishment is bad especially when it's used beyond the limit. I recall when I was in standard 8 my teacher severely whipped me in the buttocks. I stopped going to that school. I nearly stopped school had it not been for the teachers' effort to call me back and apologise after noticing my absence for some days. So this policy helps to increase learners' interest in school especially those learners who were being affected by corporal punishment like me (In-depth Interview, School B, Blantyre rural).

This increased interest in school after the ban of corporal punishment may help to minimise rate of absenteeism, failure, and repetition which come about when a learner has lost interest in school because of corporal punishment. This position concurs with Burton's (2005) findings. In his study in Malawi schools, Burton found out that corporal punishment is indeed a problem that contributes to absenteeism, failure and repetition in Malawi because it makes learners dislike going to school where they are beaten. Hence

the prohibition of corporal punishment is, to the proponents for the ban, viewed as positive towards reducing learning hindrances that a learner faces at school.

4.1.3 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Reduces Absentism and Drop-out

Absenteeism and drop-out are major challenges in Malawi education system (World Bank Report, 2010). Many reasons are attributed to these challenges. However respondents felt that forms of punishments are one of the contributors. A record of testimony from FGD states:

Use of corporal punishment in schools was a source of fear to some learners. They [learners] feared teachers more than necessary and they feared going to school which promoted drop-out rate and illiteracy....”
(FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

They claimed that such fears do not help the learner to concentrate on learning. Some learners are just put-off while other learners do not go to school regularly because of fearing corporal punishment. According to Burton (2005) corporal punishment in Malawi causes some learners to be too terrified to go to school thereby contributing to school drop out. The prohibition is, therefore, necessary to reduce drop-out which is contributed by fear of corporal punishment.

4.1.4 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Upholds and Respects Human Rights

Children are human beings entitled to rights and freedom (Newel, 2010). Five out of the six pro-ban teachers felt that the policy is human rights centred. It preserves, promotes and respects rights of the child. Another participant claimed that:

As our country observes several human rights and has human rights activists, the banning is just good to follow suit with the current situation... Teachers should observe the international human rights for the child (In-depth Interview, School A, Blantyre urban)

These views are in tandem with Newell's (2010) views which contend that hitting children breaches human rights, in particular, respect for every person's human dignity and physical integrity and to equal protection under the law, upheld in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights. The pro-ban participants felt it is a sharp contradiction and great injustice not to prohibit corporal punishment in schools when the country claims to be democratic, constitutionally-governed and strives to provide, promote and respect human rights as enshrined in the constitution.

4.1.5 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Builds and Enhances

Communication between a Teacher and a Learner

Communication is a fundamental activity between the teacher and the learners (Cicognani, 2004). Teachers need to share ideas to learners through communication and learners provide the feedback to teachers through communication. 5 of the 6 pro-ban teachers indicated that the policy promotes communication between a teacher and a learner. Some pro-ban teachers said,

Corporal punishment blocks good communication between the teacher and the learner as the victimised learner concentrates on the pain than anything else (FGD participant, school D, Blantyre urban).

Corporal punishment acts as a communication barrier between the teacher and learners in class,” (In-depth Interview participant, School B).

Resounding to this point, Harvard Mental Health Letter (2002 p. 1) contends that learners on whom corporal punishment is administered “concentrate on their own grievance instead of thinking about the act for which they were punished and the harm it caused or might have caused”. Thus by prohibiting corporal punishment in schools it means some communication barriers are removed and communication link between the teacher and learner is cultivated and enhanced.

4.1.6 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Controls Teachers' Choice of Type of Punishment

When learners misbehave teachers respond by administering a punishment. Where corporal punishment is prohibited, teachers are compelled to find alternatives (Cicognani, 2004). Five out of six of the pro-ban respondents, viewed the policy as controlling instrument. From School E, one teacher argued, *“some teachers are by nature cruel and such individuals hide behind corporal punishment”*.

Expressing similar sentiments some teacher stressed that:

It's good that corporal punishment is banned in schools because teachers are forced not to use it..... (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

You know what, some teachers take advantage of corporal punishment and really ill-treat learners but since its ban teachers are encouraged to use other forms of punishment (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban)

The ban, therefore, obligates and guides teachers' to use the other forms of punishments rather than corporal punishment.

4.1.7 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Facilitates Learning

Eighty three percent of the pro-ban in the In-depth interviews indicated that the policy enhances both academic and behavioural learning. One respondent explained that, academically, the policy ensures that learners' attention is focused on the lesson. The teacher argued that:

The policy ensures that learners remain focused contrary to corporal punishment which disturbed learning because once beaten the learner focused on the pain (In-depth Interview, School G).

Another teacher said; *“use of corporal punishment slows down the learning process since the punished learner takes time to switch back to the lesson”* (In-depth, School B, Blantyre rural). Adding on the effects of the policy on the learning process, group discussions revealed that:

Corporal punishment was not solving learners’ problems in class, it is impossible for the child to learn after being beaten (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban).

The pain also causes him/her to quickly forget what they learnt (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural)

These views agree with Harvard Mental Health Letter (2002) which found that use of corporal punishment inhibits learning because the victimised learner focuses on the pain than the lesson. Echoing and stressing on the effect of corporal punishment on learning, UNICEF (2001) reports that corporal punishment decreases a child’s motivation to learn and increases his/her anxiety. As a consequence the ability to concentrate on learning is inhibited and learning is poor. Hence the ban is a big step towards enhancement of learning in class.

Besides academic learning, other pro-ban participants argued that at school learning is beyond academics. Learners learn behaviours by emulating teachers’ behaviour. Whatever teachers do is what learners follow. If teachers use corporal punishment to

correct behaviour, learners will also employ violence for behavioural change. Narrating the argument one teacher had this to say,

Once upon a time there was a duck. One day she told her children to walk for her to see how they do it. To her surprise all the children were walking poorly (potopoto! potopoto). She beat all of them. While crying, the children told their mother, “Why are you beating us, when we are walking exactly as you do?” So in the same way, learners emulate us teachers. You know what! We, teachers, are models (In-depth Interview, School A, Blantyre urban).

Resonating with this point, Brezina (1999) argues that through corporal punishment, children learn aggression as an effective means of problem solving as it intimidates other children. It reinforces the message that force can be used to control those weaker than one. This helps to perpetuate a cycle of violence in the family and in society (Save the Children, 2003). Based on this perspective, it would not be incorrect to suggest that the high cases of societal violence in Malawi could be partly results of corporal punishment in schools. Therefore as stated in the German saying that “what you want in society, put it first into schools,” prohibition of corporal punishment is one way of dealing with issues of violence in society since learners tend to do what they have learnt or confirmed at school.

4.2 Negative Perspectives on the Policy Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment

Besides themes reflecting positive perspectives, some participants expressed perspectives against the policy under discussion. Generally, they described the policy as bad, ineffective, not instantaneous, unrealistic, bias, useless, confusing, unnecessary directive, inappropriate, irritating and irrelevant, unbiblical, unrealistic and oppressive to teachers.

4.2.1 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Promotes Excessive Indiscipline

Indiscipline is one of the major challenges that schools are experiencing (Kuthemba-Mwale et al, 1996). Wilson (1981) refers to indiscipline as disobedience, disrespect and bad behaviour. In schools, pupils are expected to obey and respect heads of their schools, teachers and support staff. They are supposed to avoid bad language and inappropriate clothing. According to Kuthemba-Mwale, et al (1996) forms of indiscipline are manifested in disobedience to teachers' orders, rudeness and bad language, noise; unnecessary movements in classrooms, lack of punctuality, defiance of authority and not writing assignments.

All anti-ban participants blamed the policy as one of the main influences of excessive indiscipline in schools. One respondent said *"Today's learners are disobedient and unruly because they know that they will not be given corporal punishment," (In-depth Interview, School C, Blantyre rural)*. Besides, disobedience and unruliness, one teacher added *"the policy encourages learners to be naughty and use bad language," (In-depth Interview, School H, Blantyre urban)*. Echoing and emphasising the point on naughtiness, one teacher reported that one standard eight pupil even told her that, *"Madam, I can*

marry you”. Reverberating naughtiness and bad language among learners, it was reported that:-

Imagine. Some female pupils in my class were discussing and pointing at their male teacher, “taona chokodzera cha Aphunzitsi chadzuka.”(Look, the teacher is horny”. So what can you do to such learners? (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban)

Besides bad language, late-coming was also mentioned under indiscipline. Learners are not obedient to school rules hence they often do not observe punctuality. Some anti-ban teachers felt the ban is responsible for the increase of this problem. They said:

Coming late to school is common these days. Truly, the school has gone down with this policy (In-depth Interview, School A, Blantyre urban)

The ban has promoted late-coming to learners in many schools as learners don’t fear these other punishments (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

In addition to late-coming, the anti-ban respondents felt that absenteeism and drop-out are disciplinary problems that the policy is promoting. One teacher argued,

Absenteeism and drop-out are high because they [learners] don’t fear anything. They know they won’t be beaten....” (In-depth Interview, School H, Blantyre urban).

The above citations indicate that the anti-ban teachers consider disobedience, unruliness, noise, naughtiness, use of bad language, late-coming, absenteeism and drop-out as forms of indiscipline as they are violations or non-compliance to school rules and regulations. This augurs well with Wilson’s (1981) definition of indiscipline.

The study done by Kuthemba-Mwale et al (1996) indicate that indiscipline cases have been on the rise since democracy was realized in Malawi, citing misunderstanding, misconception, and misinterpretation of the newly gained political pluralism-especially human rights, freedom, and democracy as the root cause of indiscipline in schools. The study, however, does not clearly point out the role of the policy in question in the much touted indiscipline. In contradiction, anti-ban teachers believe that the rising cases of indiscipline are also made worse by the prohibition of corporal punishment. These views, however, contradict with the views of the pro-ban views and literature (Burton 2005; Save the Children, 2003) which contend that use of corporal punishment has more harmful effects than the than effects of policy in question. Such contradictions probably indicate that anti-ban respondents do not deeply and adequately understand the harmful effects of corporal punishments and merits of the policy in question. Such lack of understanding influences some teachers to base their views on emotions and attitudes which are not supported by literature or the new education policy.

4.2.2 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy is not more Effective than Corporal Punishment

Teachers' choice of a particular punishment is influenced by the belief that it is effective enough (Cicognani, 2004). Related to the policy, the majority of the anti-ban teachers claimed the policy is ineffective. They argue that the proposed policy alternatives are not effective enough to address indiscipline cases:-

Alternatives are not effective. In fact some of them bring fun for learners. You know what they do, when you make them stand, they do funny things once the teacher faces the chalkboard. This causes other learners to laugh and make noise thereby disturbing the lesson even further. Worse still when this is done during Tikwere radio programme the effects are more critical as the radio program does not wait for you to silence them. A lot is missed in that lesson. So standing on one leg isn't a punishment but "an acrobatic fun". They like it. It disturbs the class further. When you send them out, that's what many of them look for. Others will ask to go to the toilet when they want just to play with those sent out. Besides, sending them out causes the learner to miss the lesson which is double punishment (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban).

After-class punishments are worse to us teachers. We need to go home and do other things then why should we remain behind (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban).

Putting more emphasis to after-class punishment while fuming another teacher said:

Chibalo poweruka!! Asa ndiye inenso ndili pa chibalotu (after-class punishment! Oh! no that is punishment for me as a teacher). You mean instead of knocking off at 1pm I should be here till 3pm because of him or her! Haa! We are supposed to operate within working hours. After which we are tired so why should I wait for them? Who is being punished there? (In-depth Interview participant, School G, Blantyre urban)

Commenting on problems of after-class punishment, some Blantyre rural teachers had this to say:

After- class punishment to us doesn't work. Many of us here come from far, so if we are to punish them after class when will we go and reach home? Sometimes because of the distances you tend to be inconsistent in administering punishment after class which later makes learners not to *take us serious when we tell them to remain behind (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural)*.

Apparently from above references, anti-ban teachers do not like after-class punishment essentially because this is like a punishment to them and not because they are ineffective. In terms of punishment and long distances there are few things to note. First, schools in the rural areas are far from each other than schools in the urban. Second, rural teachers have no or limited transport alternatives whereas as their urban counterparts sometimes benefit from the presence of buses. Thus, when a teacher in the urban is late or tired to walk buses provide relief. As per the citation, teachers feel compelled to use type of punishments which will not delay them anymore lest they reach home late. Ironically, as cited above, even teachers in the urban schools said after-class punishments are bad because they delay them. Many female teachers claimed they needed to rush home after knocking-off to prepare meals for their children.

It was, therefore, noted that teachers who claim that alternative are not effective had never tried all the alternative punishments. For this reason, their claim that alternatives are not effective is a generalisation problem. The argument of ineffectiveness, therefore, cannot be applicable on alternatives which have not been tested or practised.

4.2.3 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy has no Alternatives to replace

Corporal Punishment

The majority of anti-ban teachers argued that unlike the policy, corporal punishment is instantaneous (*zachangu*). The policy alternatives were viewed as *Sizachangu/Sipompopompo* (*Instantaneousless or it is not instantaneous/ it is gradual*). Amazingly, from all focus groups one statement that came out is “Corporal punishment is *Zachangu/ pompopompo*” (*FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban*). The perspective is comparative. Corporal punishment is easy and quick to administer. Results are instantly seen. Expressing a similar sentiment in different package, another urban teacher said, “*As a teacher, corporal punishment is a direct one so once a learner is punished in this way the teacher forgets and continues teaching as usual* (*In-depth Interview, School A, Blantyre urban*). On this basis, teachers’ choice of punishment is also determined by how fast the punishment may be administered. Undeniably, some forms of corporal punishment such as beating, whipping, kicking are instantaneous. Thus some teachers dislike the policy because some of its approved punishments are not as instant as other forms of corporal punishment.

4.2.4 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy is not Realistic in Classes with High Teacher –Pupil Ratio

Teacher Pupil Ratio (TPR) has bearing on classroom discipline. Many of the ant-ban respondents indicated that the policy is impractical in large class. Some commented that:-

As long as classes remain large, as it is now this policy can't work here in Malawi. It's not necessary ...High-Teacher pupil ratio makes teachers have no control over the learners. Imagine some of us teach classes with over 135 learners...It's difficult to control a class of over 100 learners... Can you teach a large class like mine without using corporal punishment..? It's difficult to control the class now especially with one teacher one class policy. We used to be two teachers in the past but with the change when you are facing the chalk board it means there is no one to assist you (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban)

Admitting the effects of class size, MoEST (2011) contend that:

...the very large size of classes (100 to 300 learners in one class)... makes it virtually impossible for teachers to work effectively and for children to learn what they are supposed to learn at each standard.

Teachers are therefore correct when they say that they face more problems to control large classes of playful learners. The questions, nonetheless, remains does the large class/overcrowding justify corporal punishment?

Besides class size, shortage of resources is the second reason the concerned respondents felt makes the policy to be unrealistic. Anti-ban teachers argue that it is difficult to adopt and use this policy in a resource-stricken context. It was reported that:

Economically we are very poor. We do not have enough resources such as teachers, classrooms and books. As a result our classes are crowded thereby making indiscipline cases high. Can learners be quiet when scrambling for learning materials? (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre Urban)

According to literature, shortage of resources is indeed one of the major challenges in any policy implementation process. Stressing the point, Chirume (2007); Mweemba and Chilala (2001); Samuel (2004); Khaniya and Williams (2004) argue that absence or shortage of resources for policy implementation is one of the reasons why teachers ignore and resist policy change.

Nevertheless, when ignorance and resistance of policy change entails abuse of the learner more questions than answers are raised; Is it not the nation, and not the learner, which is responsible for shortage of resources? Is it fair, therefore, for the learner to be the victim of such unavailability of the resources? Is inadequacy of resources correct and sufficient justification to use corporal punishment which further inhibits learning? By using corporal punishment in a resource –stricken situation is it not adding another barrier to the learning process?

Reflection of the above questions reveals that teachers have serious and frustrating problems to teach and handle classes without enough materials. However, directing the frustration on the learner is no justification.

4.2.5 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Favours Learners' Rights and Freedoms against those of the Teachers and School

As human beings, learners have rights and freedoms. Many of the anti-ban participants felt the policy is bias. Such a section of respondents felt that the prohibition of corporal punishment gives more freedom to learners than to teachers. Some teachers argued, “*This policy just gives too much freedom and rights to the learner (In-depth Interview, School H, Blantyre urban)*”. Sharing similar sentiments in an FGD, some teachers reported that:

Some learners take advantage of this policy to deliberately irritate teachers as they think teachers can't use corporal punishment... It is bringing disobedience and enhancing bad behaviour because learners come to school to actualise their freedom (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban).

Teachers holding these views also felt that as the policy gives more freedom to learners, it also deprives teachers of their freedom to choose on how to discipline learners. One of the respondents said:

It is biased because it over-emphasises children rights... Learners have more freedom than teachers... Teachers do not have freedom and this makes us to overlook the pupils whenever they misbehave (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

By giving more freedom to learners, some teachers feel oppressed. They claimed the policy, “*ikukhomelera aphuzitsi*” (*oppresses teachers*) (*In-depth Interview, School B, Blantyre rural*). It blocks teachers from using corporal punishment even in situation that they feel would be justifiable. They say,

Why did they abolish the use of corporal punishment? This ban unfairly blocks us from using this punishment even in situations where no any other punishment can help except corporal punishment. This is oppressing. “Anatikhomelera pakuika lamulo limeneli”Haa! Yokhomelera (they are oppressing us through this policy) (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban)

Although Kuthemba-Mwale et al (1996) argue that indiscipline cases have been on the rise since democracy in Malawi, teachers’ argument on bias may be a result of misunderstanding of sensitization as any new policy requires sensitization (Wolf, Lang, Mount, Van Belle-Prouty, 1999). Therefore, efforts to make people and learners aware of the new policy do not necessarily mean bias.

4.2.6 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Causes Learners not to Fear their Teachers

Majority of the anti-ban teachers claimed this policy removes fear in learners. Explaining on the relationship of fear and the ban of corporal punishment, few points came out clearly. Firstly, teachers who mentioned fear still believe that fear of corporal punishment causes learners to be disciplined. One respondent, “*Corporal punishment promotes fear so once they see those of us who use it, all nonsense is stopped*”, (In-depth Interview, School A, Blantyre urban). In the same vein, it was claimed during discussions that:

Without Corporal punishment learners have no fear at all”... Learners don’t fear teachers who don’t use corporal punishment. They even say, “Aja samenyatu” (That teacher does not beat. (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre Rural)

Secondly, these anti-ban teachers perceive fear as a necessary condition for learning. They said, “*Corporal punishment brings fear and this encourages fast learning in pupils*” (FGD, Blantyre Urban,). These views contradict the pro- ban views on fear as argued under positive perspectives. The pro-ban teachers argued that,

Corporal punishment promotes fear not learning...Learners could absent themselves for fear of the corporal punishment if not done homework...Corporal punishment cannot bring discipline in learners but fear (In-depth Interview, School G)

Pro-ban views are supported by literature (Tharps, 2003; Save the Children, 2003; Burton, 2005 etc.) while anti-ban views are not. This, therefore, shows that proper understanding of harmful consequences of corporal punishment propels teachers to positively perceive the ban of corporal punishment.

4.1.7 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Creates Confusion in the Schools

Many of anti-ban teachers felt the policy is confusing. Reporting on her personal experience of confusion, a teacher from school B said, “*I was reprimanded by our PEA because I had sent out one boy who was making noise in my class.*” A similar report came out in during discussions:

Confusion is experienced when PEAs have come. Alternatives allow teachers to send out learners. Yet when PEAs see learners outside they blame the teachers and force us to let them in. Then what do they implicitly imply? It’s confusing I tell you. Imagine that their alternatives don’t work, learners are provoking you. What do you do? (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban)

When asked to comment, PEAs admitted that the purpose of punishment is not to deny learners their right to education but to correct behaviour. As such, punishments that give a chance for the learners to learn are better and are encouraged. Thus, although alternatives allow sending children outside, the teachers' main aim should not be sending them out because apart from punishing, such methods deprive learners of the opportunity to learn. Once that happens it means the learner has received double punishment for one offence. He said as PEAs they encourage after-class punishment (PEA, Personal Interview).

4.2.8 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Lacked Consultation

Consultation has bearing on policy acceptability, legitimacy and implementation. Some of the respondents felt the ban was another unnecessary directive from policy makers who have no experience of challenges on the ground. Bemoaning how this policy was introduced, some respondents wondered why teachers are not consulted when they are the ones expected to implement. Commenting on consultation, some teachers argued:

If the standard of education is going down, it is because of the policy makers who don't consult us when they are making their policies. Look! It doesn't address issues satisfactorily (FGD participant, School D, Blantyre urban).

When asked to comment whether teachers were consulted on this policy, one PEA said, *"the teachers were indeed not asked whether to abolish or not to abolish the use of corporal punishment because it was constitution than banned and the policy is just complying with the constitution," (Key Informant Interview).* In terms of the supremacy,

it is true that any education policy, law or conduct is invalid if it contradicts with the constitution and its provisions (Matenje & Forsyth, 2007). This provision, however, does not prohibit or undermine policy consultation and policy dialogue. From what the PEA said, it is clear that little or no policy consultation was done to get teachers' views during the policy formulation.

Furthermore, it is also difficult to guarantee that teachers were consulted on the ban during the constitution making. In his study done in Malawi, Chunga (2009) examined the politics of constitution making in Malawi since democratization in 1994 with special focus on the constitutional review process between 2004 and 2008. The main purpose was to find out if the process had been representative. Towards this objective, the study set to find out the level of public participation and inclusiveness; and whether and how politics impacted on the process and constitutional choices that actors made.

Chunga's central argument is that Malawi's democracy rests on weak foundation for the failure of the process of making the constitution that defines the democratic system. Findings of the study show that some strides had been made in departing from the path of undemocratic constitution making but the process remained undemocratic as far as representation is concerned. Popular participation was very low and political expediency remained a dominant, if not, the motivation for constitutional choices for the actors in the process.

On the basis of these findings, teachers' complaints on lack of consultation at policy formulation level and constitution making level are valid. Teachers are a crucial policy constituency of the policy in question, they deserved to be consulted. Their views could have been crucial not only in the policy formation and implementation but also policy dialogue, policy legitimization and social learning.

4.2.9 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Contradicts Malawi's Cultural Beliefs

Culture affects how change is viewed and received. Many of the anti-ban respondents considered the policy as culturally inappropriate. One respondent stated that: *An African child grows with a whip (In-depth Interview, School B, Blantyre rural)*. According to some concerned anti-ban respondents,

... it is not good to ban corporal punishment...If their parents beat them at home why not at school ...We are also parents and we beat our children at home so why not at school... (FDG participant, School F, Blantyre rural)

The above citations reveal how cultural beliefs and attitudes influence people's perspective towards the policy. According to Datnow and Castellano, (2000) "*teachers are strongly influenced by what they believe is required to practically respond to their students' needs....*" Newell (2010) argues that progress in abolishing corporal punishment in schools also depends on progress made on the abolishment of corporal punishment at home coupled with abolishment of cultural elements that support the use of corporal punishment.

4.2.10 The Banning of Corporal Punishment Policy Contradicts the Bible's Teaching

Religion has bearing on change and people's attitudes, perspectives and beliefs. Some of the anti-ban respondents claimed the ban as unscriptural/unbiblical. They claimed the Bible does not support the ban. One respondent argued, "*Whipping children need to be there because it is biblical we cannot run away from it*", (In-depth interview, School F, Blantyre rural). Another teacher, just said, "*Even the Bible says so,*" (In-depth interview, School E, Blantyre rural). In an FGD at School D, reference was made to the book of Proverbs which says:

He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him...Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die... Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell (Proverbs 13:24; 23:13 -14).

Basing on these views, anti-ban teachers view the policy as unscriptural because it clashes with their religious beliefs. Thus they use religion as another justification against the prohibition of corporal punishment. However, the use of religion to crash with the policy at school may be a defensive measure which is not compatible with professionalism and learner-centred teaching approaches. Teaching is a profession based on approaches that are supported by research not just personal beliefs. The current research shows that proper learning takes place in a conducive and learner friendly or violent free environment (Burton, 2005). It is, therefore, required of teachers as professionals to adopt most recent research-based approved approaches which enhance the learning process.

The foregoing discussions on teachers' perspectives regarding the policy indicate that responses of pro-ban are in line with literature while responses from anti-ban teachers lack support from literature especially on learner centred approaches. Views from anti-ban teachers are therefore influenced much by beliefs, attitude, personality and lack of consultation.

4.3. How Teachers' Perspectives May Affect Implementation of the Policy

Perspectives are crucial in policy change. Hence, the researcher wanted to find out whether the perspectives of teachers had any effect on the implementation of the policy in question. The results on this question are mainly teachers' claims and they reveal that:

4.3.1 Teachers with Positive Perspectives Implemented the Policy

Majority of teachers with positive perspectives said that they implemented the policy.

Responses on why they implemented attracted the same answers as those stated in the fore going section under positive perspectives.

Majority of the pro-ban who claimed to implement the policy said they use alternative punishments such as asking the learner to stand, manual work and counselling. This implies that out of the participants who complied with the policy, a good number of them adopted the alternatives stated above. On the other hand, only one participant claimed that he uses touch assignment as a punishment. He reported that: *"I sometimes give learners 'educative punishments' like giving offenders tough academic work to do especially in senior classes"* (In-depth Interview, School B, Blantyre rural). Such a

punishment is not on the list of proposed alternatives and shows that instead of just limiting himself to the given list of alternatives, the teacher designs and uses something different. According to Hargreaves (2005) during policy adaptation, teachers develop, define and reinterpret the policy instead of merely delivering it. Such innovation can therefore be considered a form of adaption of policy change.

4.3.2 Some Teachers with Positive Perspectives did not implement the Policy

Minority of teachers with positive perspectives said they did not implement the policy. Such respondents indicated that they were not implementing the policy mainly because of time and pressure. For them change takes time. They believed that they needed more time to adjust and get used to alternatives. For example, one teacher observed that:

I stopped beating them but occasionally I just find that I have beaten a pupil unintentionally after he or she has irritated me so much. But with time I know I will completely stop, (In-depth Interview, School C, Blantyre rural)

The above citation supports Ballet & Kelchtermans (2008) who argue that for some teachers it is difficult to change overnight when they have been used to a particular practice for a long time.

In terms of pressure, it was mainly from junior section teachers with more numbers of learners per class.

They claimed:

...for us in the junior section with big classes sometimes there is too much indiscipline which irritates and gives you pressure to just punish the ring leaders there and then to teach the whole class a lesson,” (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

The foregoing discussion on teachers with positive perspective is consistent with the conceptual framework in that teachers who positively perceived the policy were those who had knowledge of the policy. Teachers who adopted and adapted the policy were mainly those who had knowledge and positive mind-set of the change. The study, however, revealed that some of the participants who had knowledge and positive mind-set of the change had not yet adopted or adapted the policy because of time and pressure. The issue of pressure reveal teachers’ struggle, lack of skill or option to address the problem.

4.3.3 Teachers with Negative Perspectives did not comply with the Policy

Majority of teachers who had negative perspectives of the ban reported that they were not implementing this policy. They were still using corporal punishment because the policy alternatives were not effective to adequately deal with the indiscipline. However, analysis of their reasons makes striking revelations. Firstly, their views are not in line with literature and aims of the policy in question. Secondly, anti-ban teachers had not tried other alternatives like after class punishment. This shows that anti-ban teachers’ perspectives were mainly influenced by beliefs about the policy in question. Consequently some of the teachers ignored the policy requirements. These two

observations substantiate the conceptual framework that teachers with low levels of knowledge and negative attitude and beliefs tend to ignore policy change while those who are not convinced of the change tend to resist.

4.3.4 Some Teachers with Negative Perspectives Complied with the Policy

Few of anti-ban teachers claimed that they were implementing the policy. Firstly in order to please policy makers, *“I comply to please policy makers; what else can I do as a teacher”* (In-depth Interview, School H, Blantyre urban). Thus although the teacher had negative attitude, the fear of unknown result or reaction from parents and other authorities influenced compliance. This reason concurs with Drake & Sherin, (2006) who argue that some teachers comply with policy change just to please their superiors. Secondly, other anti-ban teachers comply with the policy due to loyalty. *“It was prohibited; so I need to respect the law”*, (In-depth Interview, School B, Blantyre rural). This citation shows that some teachers adopt the policy just out of loyalty and not out of proper understanding and satisfaction. Thirdly, anti-ban teachers comply with the policy out of fear. *“I am afraid of consequences of violating the ban and some parents can sue you to court”* (In-depth, School G). This reference shows that some teachers adopt the policy just out of fear of the consequences. This is in agreement with Cicognani (2004) who argues that fear of penalties help to enforce compliance. With only very few teachers implementing the policy, the result is in agreement with Datnow & Castellano (2000) who argue that very few teachers adopt policy reforms especially where there is no forced compliance and strict supervision. In Malawi compliance is not strongly enforced

through punitive measures or strict supervision on the policy in question. This probably could give an explanation on the prevalence of corporal punishment in spite of the ban.

In summary, most of the pro-ban teachers claimed that they were implementing the policy while very few of the pro-ban said were not implementing the policy. Compliance with the policy was mainly through adoption of the alternatives except one participant who reported to have been (adapting by designing other alternatives) using educative punishments such as essay writing and different structured questions from different subjects besides the policy alternatives. On the other hand, the majority of teachers with negative perspectives did not implement the policy. They ignored and resisted the policy while the minority of the same group did implement it. Thus, on this basis it can be argued that teachers' perspective affect implementation of the policy in question.

4.4 Factors that Influence Teachers' Perspectives of the Policy Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment in Schools

Synthesis of participants' justifications of their views reveals that teachers' perspectives were influenced by a number of reasons. The factors include knowledge and skills, lack of continuous professional development/training, resources, beliefs, attitudes, motivation and personality.

4. 4.1 Teacher's Levels of Knowledge and Skills

Knowledge and understanding of corporal punishments, its negative effects and reasons for abolishment are imperative. They are the basis on which acceptance or rejection of banning of the corporal punishment rest and depend (Newel, 2010). The results revealed that all of the participants had knowledge on corporal punishment and the prohibition of corporal punishment. On the other hand, the results indicate that most of the pro-ban teachers demonstrated a deeper understanding on negative effects of the corporal punishment than the anti-ban teachers. This result is similar to a study by Cicognani (2004) on teachers' attitudes towards abolition of corporal punishment in South Africa who found that many teachers who had negative attitude towards banning of corporal punishment had shallow understanding on harmful effects of corporal punishment on the learner.

It is worth noting, therefore, that responses from anti-ban teachers did not only lack understanding of negative effects of corporal punishment but they were also supported by inadequate academic literature.

4.4.2 Lack of Training on the New Policy and its Alternatives

Training is a form of professional development which is an important aspect of policy change. It is the process in which individual teachers acquire new knowledge, skills and values for the constant improvement of the quality of their services (Kwakman, 1999 in Slegers et.al., 2002). It is the key to sustained teacher effectiveness and continuous growth (Chen & Chang, 2006). It is needed to change teachers' classroom practice and facilitate their understanding of the new policy change (Ryan & Ackerman, 2005). It also

provides adequate knowledge which increases ones confidence in performing and maintaining a skill (Datnow & Castellano, 2000). Contrary to these facts, this study found that no participant had been trained in the new policy and its alternatives. Teachers were just told to stop using corporal punishment but were never oriented on how best to make use of alternatives. Having received no training, participants in this study showed that although they were aware of the new policy, they had shallow knowledge and understanding of the policy, limited skills and confidence to implement it. Evidently, even some of the pro-ban respondents did not implement the policy in spite of their positive perspectives of the policy.

4.4.3 Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes

Teachers' beliefs play a major role in their decision making about policy change (Keys and Bryan, 2001). Teachers' beliefs also affect change by serving as a filter through which teachers interpret new information, including educational policies, curriculum content and recommendations for change (Collopy, 2003). Consistent to these facts, this study found out that teachers' beliefs influenced teachers' perspectives. The majority of anti-ban teachers believed that the policy is not more effective than corporal punishment. Some of anti-ban teachers argued that the policy violates their cultural beliefs and tradition. A few of anti-ban teachers claimed that the policy contravenes, contradicts and disrespects their religious doctrines. In this regard, the finding of the study is consistent with Pease (1996) who found that teaching practices and behaviours are shaped by teachers' attitudes and beliefs.

4.4. 4 Teachers' Lack of Resources

Resources are decisive to the success of any policy change. Enough classrooms, enough teachers, enough teaching and learning materials are some of the resources that teachers need for successful instruction and policy change (Mweemba and Chilala, 2001). Shortage of such resources causes many problems such as high teacher pupil ratio, classroom congestion, scrambling of materials which affect classroom management and discipline (Chirume, 2007). The study found out that majority of the participants teaching in junior classes had an average of hundred and thirty learners per class against the recommendation of 1:60 (MoEST, 2011). At school D, one teacher had an enrolment of 220. Books and other materials were also inadequate. Teachers had problems to control noise as learners scrambled for materials. Teachers seemed stressed and openly resorted to corporal punishment. These results are consistent with the MoEST (2011) who found out that very large size of classes (100 to 300 learners in one class) makes it virtually impossible for teachers to work effectively.

4.4.5 Lack of Teacher Support Groups

Teacher support groups are crucial for collegial interaction, experience sharing, enhancement of learning, transformation of practice and implementation of policy change (McLaughlin, 2002). The study found out that at the time of study no teacher support group existed to enable teachers discuss the new policy and how to apply it in most challenging situations. Paradoxically, Smylie and Perry (2005) found that teacher learning is enhanced by support groups especially opportunities to work and learn from other teachers of similar position and status. This encourages teachers to gradually

transform their practice through ongoing negotiation of meaning as they engage with one another and respond to changing conditions in their environment. Coburn and Stein (2006) are in accord that the teachers need communities of practice to develop and share practices, resources, and common perspective. Learning occurs as teachers participate in the social and cultural activities of their communities, sharing and exchange information (Coburn & Stein, 2006; McLaughlin, 2002). Lack of groups of such significance is, therefore, worrisome because as noted by Ryan (2004) absence of such groups means teachers have no regular and intensive one-on-one technical assistant, as well as opportunity to meet other teachers and talk about their efforts to change. The professional isolation of teachers limits their access to new ideal and better solutions, increases their stress level, fails to recognize and praise success, and permit incompetence. Lack of these groups is also preventing a collaborative culture (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995) which exposes teachers to new ideas about policy change and enables them to expand their knowledge and improve their practices on proper punishment of learners (Symlie & Perry, 2005).

4.4.6 Lack of Enforcement of the Policy

Enforcement has a bearing on adoption of policy change. The stronger the enforcement the more people are pressurised to adopt the policy change (Rowan & Miller, 2007). The study found out that there are no strict inspections or supervisions to enforce compliance with the policy. One respondent openly said, *“Sometimes I don’t think enough is being done to enforce this policy”*, (In-depth Interview, School B, Blantyre rural).

Besides, the policy guidelines from MoEST do not indicate any punitive measure that would be meted out on to the culprit. Consequently, teachers do not feel obliged to comply. This lack of enforcement and supportive systems do not force teachers to comply with the policy.

4.4.7 Lack of Strong Motivation

Motivation is important for policy change. Motivation to implement policy change is closely related to a teacher's personal interpretations and emotions regarding change (Sleegers *et. al.*, 2002). Issue of financial support/ incentives becomes critical to teachers for successful policy change. The study found out that low teacher' salaries, affect teachers levels of motivation to comply with the policy. The findings revealed that many of teachers who stay far from school disliked after class punishments because they made them arrive late since they could not afford boarding mini bus on daily basis due to meagre salaries. Teachers with big classes were not motivated to teach one part of the class in the morning and the other part in the afternoon as they felt their incentives were not good enough. These findings are similar to results of Bailey (2000) who noted that overarching consequence of poor financial support increases teachers' reluctance to comply with policy change. On the other hand, Torquati, Raikers and Huddleston-Cases (2007) found out that better compensated teachers are motivated to produce higher quality care and educational changes.

4.4.8 Lack of Consultation

Consultation has a bearing on policy change and implementation. It increases acceptability and eligibility of policy change (Johnson, 1969). As discussed earlier on teachers, as a key policy constituency, were supposed to be consulted both at constitution-making process as well as policy formulation level. However, this appear to have not happened. Hence, some of respondents' complained about lack of consultation as one major reason why implementation of education policies fail in Malawi. One participant angrily said, *'The policy makers don't consult us that's why these policies don't work'* (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

4.4.9 Teacher Personality

Teachers' personality has bearing on their reaction to learners' deviant behaviour. The study found out that many of the respondents admitted that their character shortfalls such as short-temperedness fuelled use of corporal punishment. One participant said:

Some of us teachers are harsh and cruel by nature and we hide behind corporal punishment to ill-treat learners" (FGD participant, School F, Blantyre rural).

These results are consistent with results of Cicognani (2004) who found out that there are cruel teachers who take advantage on the corporal punishment to abuse the learner.

4.5 Teachers' Perspectives versus Implementation of the Policy Banning the Use of Corporal Punishment

The conceptual frame work relies on the theoretical concepts of knowledge or skills, beliefs or attitudes or emotions associated with change. It believes that teachers with low

or no knowledge and negative attitude of change are more likely to have negative perspective and ignore the policy where as teachers with high levels of knowledge and a positive attitude to change are more likely to adapt the policy change (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008) .In this regard, the results augur well with the conceptual framework in a number of ways. Firstly, most of the pro-ban teachers were implementing the policy while very few of the pro-ban were not implementing. Compliance with the policy was mainly through adoption of the alternatives except one participant who reported to have been (adapting by developing other forms of alternatives) using educative punishments such as composition writing and different structured questions from different subjects. On the other hand, the majority of teachers with negative perspectives did not implement the policy. They ignored and resisted the policy while the minority of the same group did implement it.

However, the results revealed that not all teachers who had positive perspectives reported to implemented the policy. Actually a few of teachers with positive perspectives did not implement the policy but they had the willingness. On the other hand, some of anti-ban teachers who had negative perspectives complied with the policy. In this regard, therefore, the results of this study do not agree with the conceptual framework that all teachers with positive perspectives adopt or adapt policy reforms. Similarly the results do not agree with the framework that all teachers with negative perspectives do ignore or resist the policy. This calls for review and modification of the framework to accommodate the group that is willing to implement.

4. 6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reported the findings of the study and has further critically discussed these findings. In summary, the findings fall under two categories. The first is a positive category. This category constitutes perspectives and reasons that support the prohibition of corporal punishment. The second is the negative category. This category comprises views and explanations that are against the ban of corporal punishment. Few contradictions have been exposed whereby both anti- ban and pro-ban views have used some similar words to defend their view. On fear, for example, anti-ban teachers still believe that fear of corporal punishment causes learners to be disciplined. On the contrary, pro-ban teachers believe corporal punishment releases fear in learners which inhibits learning. Perspectives of pro-ban are consistent with literature while the views of the anti-ban contradict the literature and the aims of the new policy.

The chapter has also established that perspectives have an effect on teachers' implementation of the policy because most of the teachers who have a negative perspective towards the ban of corporal punishment did not implement the policy. On the other hand, the majority of those with a positive perspective implemented the policy.

Finally the chapter has shown that levels of knowledge and skills, beliefs and attitudes, lack of resources, lack of training, lack of teacher support groups, lack of enforcement, lack of motivation, misunderstanding of consultation, teacher personality are some of the factors which shaped teachers' perspectives.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter makes conclusions, implications, recommendations based on the findings of the study as presented and discussed in chapter four. It starts with conclusions of the study, followed by the implications of the study findings and recommendations. It finally suggests areas that need further research with regard to the prohibition of corporal punishment in Malawi schools.

5.1 Conclusion of the Study

One general conclusion is that there are mixed perspectives regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools. Some perspectives are positive while others are negative. The minority of the teachers had positive perspectives while the majority of them had negative perspectives. Thus, few teachers were in favour of banning the use of corporal punishment in schools while the majority were unhappy with the policy.

On the reasons for teachers' perspectives regarding the policy, several issues were raised. Generally, the teachers' levels of knowledge and skills, lack of training on the new policy

and its alternatives, beliefs and attitudes, lack of resources, lack of teacher support groups, lack of enforcement, lack of enough motivation, and lack of consultation and teacher personality are some of the factors that influenced teachers' perspectives. Reasons from pro-ban teachers were consistent with literature and revealed deeper understanding of effects of corporal punishment. On the other hand, views from anti-ban lacked the deeper appreciation of negative effects of corporal punishment on the learners. Like Baumrind (1996) many anti-ban teachers viewed the use of corporal punishment as a valid means of discipline necessary to learners. The increase in number of teachers with negative perspectives against the policy probably indicates lack of adequate consultation at constitution-making process as well as policy formulation and implementation levels.

Finally, on how teachers' perspectives affected implementation of the policy change, participants' claims revealed that most of the teachers with positive perspectives implemented the policy. They claimed that they did not use corporal punishment as a means of disciplining learners. On the other hand, the majority of teachers with negative perspectives said that they resisted the implementation of the policy because it affected negatively the management of learners in the school, in the absence of effective alternatives ways of disciplining learners. It can, therefore, be concluded that teachers' perspectives positively or negatively affect policy implementation.

5.2. Implications of the Study

One implication for policy change to be effectively implemented is that people expected to implement the policy change should be oriented and capacitated by taking into account their concerns, fears, and anxieties as observed by Fullan (2001). So the implication is that there is need to build teachers' capacity by increasing teacher professional development with regard to managing learners in schools using the alternatives of corporal punishment. Teachers need ongoing profession support since they often struggle to maintain ideal practices when confronted with classroom reality (Nobble & Macfarlane, 2005). This will reduce disciplinary classroom problems which emanate from lack of support and shortage of resources. The reduced classroom problems will mean reduced stress and appetite for corporal punishment.

Furthermore, the study has shown that there are no strong enforcements of the policy in the education system. The policy itself does not provide for punitive measures to teachers who violate the policy. Consequently, when teachers feel that they cannot be easily taken to court by students, they continue using corporal punishment without fear. Practically, it means there is little or nothing to force teachers to comply with the policy. There is need to introduce and sensitive teachers' punitive measures for teachers who use corporal punishment. Additionally, there is also need to review the practice of one teacher per class. Common among the participating schools was such a practice of one teacher one class especially in the infancy, junior as well as standards five, six and even seven. In such a case one teacher teaches all the subjects. Pathetically, for most primary schools in Malawi, it is the junior section where teacher- pupil ratio is very high. At one

of the schools one teacher had 280 pupils. During discussion teachers complained that this increases classroom management problems “*As the teacher faces the chalkboard, pupils begin to play and disturb the class,*” (FGD participants, School D, Blantyre urban). Teachers’ views agrees with MOEST findings that

...the very large size of classes (100 to 300 learners in one class)... makes it virtually impossible for teachers to work effectively and for children to learn what they are supposed to learn at each standard (MOEST 2011).

It would, therefore, be better if classes with many learners had two teachers so that as one is teaching, the other teacher would help to control the class. Alternatively, if the Ministry has problems with two teachers per class then the idea of introducing Teaching Assistants (TAs) in schools with High TPR would be a better option. With proper training teachers should be coached on how to engage exceptional fast learners into teacher assistants. If this is implemented indiscipline cases that come from high TPR and poor classroom management can be minimised. Furthermore, the results seem to raise an important question over whether the approach being used by NGOs to sensitize teachers and students is really effective to the teachers? The policy addresses a human right issue as such the intervention of NGOs to complement the Ministry’s efforts is imperative. It is commendable that NGOs have done a lot to educate learners on their rights and prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. Their effort, however, has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by teachers. As noted in the findings of the study, many teachers feel the NGOs’ approach makes learners arrogant. It is therefore important that the NGOs’ approach should be reviewed and balanced to increase teachers’ engagement for change. NGO may help to organise trainings and establish

teacher support groups on prohibition of corporal punishment. Interventions such as these would equip teachers with knowledge and skills which could challenge their beliefs, attitude, and personality and motivate them to change.

5.3. Areas for Further Study

This study focused on the question of teachers' perspectives of the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools. There are some questions that need further research from the issues that have been presented or that were not the focus of this study. First, the observation that the approved forms of punishments are not effective means that the alternatives are not regarded as super substitutes of corporal punishment. This area needs a study to specifically find out from teachers and even learners what could be the best replacement of corporal punishment. With the observation that teachers are not consulted on policies such a study would help to gather what teachers think is the best "dose" for indiscipline to replace corporal punishment.

Another area is the assessment of factors that affect teachers' attitudes regarding the prohibition of corporal punishment. This would shed more light on dominant or most influential factors that require immediate attention if teachers' negative attitudes are to be challenged. A further study of education -stake holders' perceptions of the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment would be significant. This would help to find out from learners, parents, educational managers, rights activists, religious leaders and community leaders what they think about the prohibition of corporal punishment in Malawi.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Informed Consent Letter

Dear Research Participant,

I am currently undertaking my masters' degree in Education Policy, Planning and Leadership. In order to complete this degree I am conducting research on corporal punishment policy in schools. In this study, corporal punishment is the use of physical force to cause a child experience pain for the purposes of discipline, correction or control of child's behaviour. The use of physical force in the study shall mean, hitting the child with a hand or other objects, kicking, shaking or throwing the child, pinching or pulling the hair/ears, caning or whipping, slapping, grabbing. The Ministry of Science and Technology (2008) prohibited the use of any of the above mentioned forms of punishment. The aim of the study is to explore teachers' perspectives on the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools. The following questionnaire asks for your opinion on a number of issues relating to prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. You have been chosen for this study through a process that took cognizance of your experience and expertise in teaching. It is expected that the results of this study will address the silence of written literature, and advance understanding of teachers' perspective on the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would provide your candid opinion on all the questions contained in this questionnaire. The information collected from you will not be shown to anyone outside of this study and the analysis of reporting will not disclose your identity. You reserve the right not to undertake the study or withdraw if you do not feel comfortable to participate. Otherwise your participation and views are greatly valued.

Yours sincerely,



Moses Kasitomu

M.Ed Policy Planning and Leadership Student

Appendix 2: In-Depth Interview Guide with Primary School Teachers

The policy says that it is unlawful to use corporal punishment in schools. As such pupils are not to be hit (with a hand or other objects), kicked, shaken or thrown, pinched or pulled (pulling the hair/ears) caned or whipped, slapped, grabbed (by force to cause pain). Instead the Ministry (2008) recommended the following as approved forms of punishment.

- (a) Sending a child out of the class for a short time
- (b) Making a child stand on one leg for some time
- (c) Making a child run round the school if he/she is late for school
- (d) Giving a child a piece of work to do after normal school
- (e) For coming late, a child may be asked to do the part of the lesson which he/she missed. This should be done after normal school hours
- (f) Paying for the damage done
- (g) Public repentance: a child who commits an offence is asked to repent in front of the class or school
- (i) Reprimand: The Head invites the offending child to the office and talks to him/her strongly to make the child realize his/her mistake

1. Knowledge of the policy.

- a) Have you ever heard of the current corporal punishment policy in Malawi school before?
- b) How and where did you hear the policy?

2. Perspective of the policy

- a) What are your views about the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools?

3. Reasons for the perspective

- a) What are the reasons for each of your perspective that you have mentioned?
- b) Are there any factors that have influenced your views?

4. Ignorance

- a) Do you think you have enough information about this policy?
- b) What beliefs do you have about proper way to punishment learners?
- c) Do you have any other information or details, questions that you think you do

not know or understand?

d) Do you think you have all the details or information you need on this policy?

5. Resistance

a) Are you happy with how this policy was communicated to you? Explain?

b) Were you/ teachers consulted on this policy? If no, was this consultation necessary?

c) How much time do you think you need to comply to corporal punishment policy?

d) Do you have any fears about this policy?

e) Has the policy affected you self-esteem?

f) Are the alternatives effective?

g) Do you comply or resist the policy? Explain

h) Are you satisfied with the policy? Explain.

6. Adoption

a) Do you adopt every requirement of the policy? Explain

b) What restrictions are there to force compliance?

c) Do you feel forced to adopt this policy? Explain.

d) What is areas of the policy do you think you do not understand?

7. Adaptation

a) Which policy alternatives do you use most?

b) Do you have any other forms of punishments that you use apart from of policy alternatives?

c) Do you feel encouraged as teacher to create, discover and use other practices in addition to the approved alternatives?

e) Have ever modified any of the policy alternatives to make them more effective?

8. Effect of the perspective on policy implementation

a) Do you implement/comply with this policy?

b) What makes you comply/not comply with this policy?

c) Do you think your action for or against the policy are affected by your views

of the policy?

- e) Is there any other reason that influences your current views of the ban of Corporal punishment?

9. Perspective and Prevalence of corporal punishment

- a) Do you still use corporal punishment now?
- b) What makes you use/not use corporal punishment?
- c) Do you think and believe the proposed alternatives are helpful and effective
- d) What do you are the reasons for the continued prevalence of corporal punishment after it was banned?

Do you have any additional comments regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION.

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide With Teachers

ISSUES IN THE DISCUSSION

1. Knowledge of the policy

- a) Introduce the policy of corporal punishment; was it heard before? How they heard the policy?

2. Perspectives of the policy

- a) Discuss the policy Perspectives of the policy
- b) Debate the significance of the policy
 - ❖ Do you agree/disagree with the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools?

3. Reasons for the perspectives

- a) Discuss reasons for agreement and disagreement with the policy?
- b) Discuss other factors that have influenced your perspective of the policy?

4. Effect of teachers' perspectives on policy implementation

- a) Discuss perspectives in relation to policy implementation/compliance?
- b) Justify reasons for compliance or non-compliance with this policy?
 - ❖ Do all teachers who disagree with the policy implement/comply with the policy
 - ❖ Are all policy alternatives effective? Explain?
 - ❖ Are there any punishments used which are not on the list of the alternatives?

5. Perspectives on prevalence of corporal punishment

- a) Discuss perspectives in relation to prevalence of corporal punishment:
 - ❖ Is there any relationship between perspective and the prevalence of corporal punishment in Malawi
 - ❖ Do you have any additional comments regarding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in Malawi schools?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION.

Appendix 4: In-Depth Interview Guide with Primary Education Advisors

1. Knowledge of the policy

- a) Introduction the policy.
- b) Policy background;
- c) The policy objectives
- d) The policy alternatives

2. Policy Consultation and Communication

- a) Policy consultation; levels of consultations.
- b) Mode of policy communication
- b) Feedback mechanisms

3. Policy Enforcement

- a) Capacity building measures
- b) Enforcement measures

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION.

Appendix 5: Table of Themes the Data

QUESTION FOCUS	REFLECTING POSITIVE PERSPECTIVES	THEMES
1.Teachers' Perspectives of the policy		
	<i>Good</i>	<i>The policy creates good relationship between the teacher and learner</i>
	<i>Useful</i>	<i>The policy maintains and increase learner's interest in school</i>
	<i>Necessary</i>	<i>The policy ensures that learners have no fear</i>
	<i>Helpful</i>	<i>It minimizes absenteeism</i>
	<i>Comprehensive</i>	<i>It promotes Child rights</i>
	<i>Constructive</i>	<i>It Builds and enhances good communication between teacher and learner</i>
	<i>Protective</i>	<i>It ensures learners are protected from ill-treatment/abuse of corporal punishment</i>
	<i>Regulative</i>	<i>The policy Control Teachers' behaviour</i>
	<i>Facilitative</i>	<i>It facilitate/smoothes learning</i>
	<i>Model</i>	<i>The policy promotes and models good Behaviour</i>
	IDEAS REFLECTING NEGATIVE PERSPECTIVES	
		Themes
	<i>Bad</i>	<i>The policy promotes excessive indiscipline (disobedience, rudeness) Promotes laziness</i>
	<i>Ineffective</i>	<i>The policy proposes alternatives that are not effective enough to deal with indiscipline</i>
	<i>instantaneousless</i>	<i>The policy proposed alternatives are not instantaneous</i>
	<i>Unrealistic</i>	<i>The policy is not practical to big classes It does befit to poor countries characterized by lack of resources ie teachers.</i>
	<i>Bias</i>	<i>The policy favours learners than teachers</i>
	<i>Helpless</i>	<i>The policy causes learner to have no fear which helps them to learn</i>
	<i>Confusing</i>	<i>The policy causes misunderstanding of</i>

		<i>corporal punishment by overemphasizing on its negatives</i>
	Useless	<i>The policy is directive that is not essential to people who value discipline.</i>
	inappropriate	<i>It is culturally inappropriate</i>
	Unbiblical	<i>It contradicts what the Bible says.</i>
	Oppressive	<i>It is a burden and stress to teachers as it forces them to abandon what is effective for deviant learners</i>
2. How Teachers' Perspectives may affect the Implementation of policy	Ignore	<i>-Lack of deep knowledge to challenge their beliefs.</i> <i>- Corporal punishment proves to be the best last resort</i>
	Adopt	<i>-it is a good policy</i> <i>-To please policy makers</i> <i>-Afraid of consequences of violating it</i> <i>-Because it was prohibited</i>
	Resist	<i>- Alternatives not effective.</i> <i>-Difficult to change in a short time</i>
	Adapt	<i>-Give learners educative punishments.</i>
Teachers perspectives on reasons for Continued Use of Corporal Punishment in Some Schools in Spite of Its Abolishment	<i>Attitudes</i> <i>Training</i> <i>Resources</i> <i>Beliefs</i> <i>motivation</i> <i>Personality</i> <i>Enforcement</i>	<i>Alternatives are not effective</i> <i>Lack of proper consultation, training and communication.</i> <i>Lack of resources and large classes</i> <i>Religion and culture</i> <i>Lack of motivation</i> <i>Personality of teachers</i> <i>Lack of punitive measures by MoEST</i> <i>Change takes time</i>