THE INFLUENCE OF THE HEADTEACHERS' ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES ON RETENTION OF GIRLS IN COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MCHINJI DISTRICT, MALAWI

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has never been presented to any other institution or university for the award of any degree.

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This thesis is dedicated to the Sisters of Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus for their support in the course of my studies. I am sincerely grateful for their prayers.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the influences of the headteachers' administrative strategies on the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district in Malawi. The study was triggered by the concerns emanating from the teachers on increase of school dropouts among girls in community day secondary schools in Malawi. The study was guided by the following research objectives: (i) To investigate whether provision of security measures by the headteachers influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools. (ii) To find out whether provision of school sanitation facilities as a strategy employed by the headteachers influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools. (iii) To investigate if provision of guiding and counseling services as a strategy influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools. (iv) To examine whether community involvement as a strategy influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi. The study was anchored on Tinto's theory of retention and System theory. The study employed explanatory sequential mixed method research design. The target population included: the students, teachers, headteachers, education officer and chief elders. The study purposively sampled 15 headteachers, one education officer and five chief elders. The researcher sampled 80 teachers and used simple random to sample 315 girls with a total sample size of 416 (12.4%) of the target population. The study instruments used were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Experts in the field of education from Tangaza University College were given the questionnaires to assess for content validity. Test- retest was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software Version 21. The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of the tools. A score of 0.81 for the teachers and 0.78 for the students were determined and were above 0.7 which showed that the tools were reliable. The study used descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages to summarize the data and present it in form of tables. Qualitative data were manually analyzed by organizing into themes and interpreted in a narrative form and direct quotes. The findings showed that the strategies headteachers employed do not influence the retention of girls due to lack of school facilities, security measures, women role models, experts in providing guiding and counseling and cooperation between the headteachers and the community members. The study recommends that headteachers should improve the security measures and sanitation facilities in order to retain girls in Community Day Secondary Schools in Mchinji. Further studies should be carried out in the following areas: Strategies employed to retain boys in community day secondary schools in Malawi. Challenges faced by community members when participating in school activities.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

BOM	Board of Management
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CEP	Center on Education Policy
CSEC	Civil Society Education Coalition
DEM	District Education Manager
EFA	Educational for All
FAWEMA	Forum for African Women Educationalists in Malawi
FISD	Federal Investigative Services Division
HR	Human Rights
ILCA	International Law Commission in Africa
MED	Masters in Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
N EP	National Education Policy
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SEAs	State of Education Agencies
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TUCREC	Tangaza University College Research Ethics Committee
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WEF	World Education Forum

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

Chapter one focused on the background, the problem statement, the objectives, the research questions, the scope and delimitation, and the significance of the study. The chapter further explained the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and operational definition of terms.

1.2 Background to the Study

Leadership is the life blood of the school as an institution, therefore its role cannot be undermined (Abidlahi, 2016). Albert (2010) asserts that the retention of students in schools depends on the leadership or administration of the headteacher. This indicates that there is a link between education administrators and the retention of students in schools. The intervention of the headteacher is highly recommendable because they are considered both experts and custodians in schools as they influence students' retention (Hanover, 2014). Hanover mentioned that the head teachers are sources of encouragement to students to achieve their goals through their support, provision of safety environment, guidance and counseling. Albert (2010) explains that school administrators always identify the risk areas impacting student academic success and intervene through provision of security, teaching and learning materials, school facilities, guidance and counseling, curricular and co-curricular, and role models.

Wallace Foundation (2011) also noted that the headteachers as administrators of schools play a key role in retaining learners and creating a conducive environment, security for learning, and cooperative spirit between teachers and students.They are agents for the success of all activities about teaching and learning (Alkarni, 2014). Therefore the administrative strategies used in schools determine students' retention (Wallance Foundation, 2011).

The headteachers' administrative strategies mainly contribute towards the retention of students and creation of the effective schools (Mbuwawa, 2011). Therefore headteachers must have personal, administrative, and professional competencies, for the development of the school (Wilkey, 2013). Priva (2017) explains that school leaders are responsible of organizing and controlling everything at the school like learning environment, programs and resources, which assist learners to achieve their educational goals. Mbuwawa (2011) states that in order to enhance retention of students, headteacher should focus on providing their needs like; fees, learning materials, sanitation facilities and creation of supportive atmosphere with the staff. Students do not concentrate in school activities if they feel insecure. Therefore school leaders should learn to provide safe and secured school atmosphere especially among student–teacher and community relationships (Victoria State Government, 2018).

Balyer and Gündüz (2013) explain that heateachers have positive effects on students' education by being role models and establishing supportive teacher-student relationships and cooperation to enhance their retention. They can achieve this by being friendly, providing sanitary materials to the girl child, exposing the girl child to female role models to enhance their positive attitude towards education. Gondwe (2016) explains that many girls dropout of the school due to lack of fees and culture. The culture favours marriage to education. Headteachers have a responsibility to influence the community to adjust some social and cultural practices that lead to dropout among girls (Matanana & Gusav, 2016).

UNESCO (2015) explains that secondary school fees has been abolished in some countries to enhance retention especially of the girl child but Chimombo (2013) points out that there are still many other barriers hindering girls to finish their education in the sub-Saharan countries. In Malawi, only primary school education is free and uniform is optional. This does not favor the

poor girls in secondary school in male-dominated society where many parents prefer to send the boy child to school than the girl child. Although some organizations in Malawi support girls in education, accessibility is not so easy because of the high population of needy girls (Chimombo, 2013; Gondwe, 2016). In this case, needy girls opt to dropout of the school or rely on the initiatives of the headteachers in sourcing funds from organizations to pay their fees.

A study carried out by World Bank (2010) explains that managing and retaining students especially girls in secondary schools has been a concerning challenge to school administrators and the entire society. This is due to the cultural practices that encourage early marriages, shortage of skilled teachers, lack of teaching and learning materials and facilities which demotivate students and lead to the increase of dropout in schools.

In India, Education Statistics of 2016 shows that the dropout rate has been reduced by 1.36 %. The dropout rate decreased after the government distributed enough teaching and learning materials in schools. This shows that there is a connection between students learning interests and the availability of resources in schools. Li and Qui (2018) point out that the quality of the school in terms of administration is seen by the availability of facilities that motivate and retain students. Therefore the ministry of education together with headteachers should be resourceful to provide enough learning resources and facilities to support learners in schools.

In Australia, Griffith (2014) conducted a study on students' retention strategies in universities. Griffin discovered that advice and the creation of a supportive environment for learning are some of the strategies used to retain students at school. Therefore, headteachers must make sure that security and learning facilities are available to assist students to finish their courses (Kapur, 2018). In this regard, headteachers must be responsible enough in providing a supportive environment for the girls to complete their secondary education.

The study conducted by Ioanaa, Andaa, Corneliaa, and Marianaa (2015) in Romania showed that there is a high school drop-out rate, especially at the secondary level. The statistics indicate that in urban secondary schools, the drop-out rate is 1.8 % for boys and 1.3% for girls, while in rural secondary schools is 1.8% for each gender. The investigations discovered that lack of motivation from school, influence from parents and family members lead many girls to drop out of school. For example, in Bangladesh, many families prefer money more than education, such that parents encourage their girls to drop out from secondary school due to inflation of dowry in the marriage market (Shahidul, 2012). Parents with poor socio-economic status have problems paying fees, learning materials, and groceries, and these influence some girls to drop out of school.

Hanover (2014) investigated the strategies for improving students' retention in higher education in the United States and Canada. The study focused on the strategies employed by the institution on the retention of students at the university level. The study revealed that: support to students, academic advice, staff member and student relations, school-community cooperation are some of the strategies institutions employ to retain students at school. School community cooperation assists in monitoring and advising girls to control reckless behavior such as quarreling, riot, and class absenteeism which affect their retention (Susan, 2010).

Cheneket (2017) carried out a study on the factors that influence dropout among boys in public primary schools in Saboti sub-county in Kenya. The findings revealed that 7.5% of boys dropped out of school compared to 5.6 % of girls in Trans- Nzoia County. This indicates that some parts of Kenya manage to retain girls more than boys in schools. However, Kenya must work hard to reduce boy child school dropout to bring parity in education. Deducing from this study, Kenya is trying to empower the girl child education compared to Malawi.

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Teresiana, Timothy, and Ongoti (2015) conducted a study on administrative strategies used by the administrator to retain students in public secondary schools in Aldai Sub-County in Kenya. The research discovered that motivation of students, communication of teachers and parents, bursaries, grants, and school culture are some of the administrative strategies which retain students in secondary schools. The conclusion was that students are easily retained if they also feel supported by the school and interact well with staff members and peers. In Malawi strategies such as bursaries, grants are also employed but are yielding very minimal results on school dropout among girls especially in rural areas (Kunje, 2012).

Mutanana and Gasva (2016) explored the challenges affecting the retention of the girl child in the Hurungwe district in Zimbabwe. The research stated that school fees, pregnancies, marriages, sanitation facilities and home distance affect the retention of the girl child in secondary schools. The researcher recommends the use of awareness campaigns on the importance of educating the girl-child and punishment of parents supporting early marriage. Most parents contribute to school dropout due to their cultural regressive practices and beliefs which degrade girl child education.

Malawi like any other country in Africa, experiences challenges in retaining girls in schools. United Nations Joint Programme on Girl Child Education (JPGE) (2018) revealed that 5.5% of girls dropped out of school in the year 2016 to 2017 in Malawi. According to Robertson, Cassity, and Kunkhwenzu (2017), 161,787 girls who enrolled in 2014, 8898 (5.5%) dropout school in the 2014 to 2015 school year. The percentage is higher than boys' dropout rate which is 3.3% only. This shows that the girl child school dropout rate is constant at 5.5% from the year 2014 to 2017.

According to the research by Phiri (2018), on headteachers' administrative role in reducing school dropout in public secondary schools in Zomba district school, it portrays that a leader controls everything in an institution. Phiri suggests that headteachers must make sure that students are receiving guidance and counseling, a conducive-environment for learning, and are to value education. Phiri also recommended that headteachers must make sure that they maintain strong cordial relationships with the parents and the community to retain them at the secondary school level.

Studies on administrative strategies in education have not adequately addressed the administrative strategies employed by headteachers to retain girls in community day secondary schools in the Mchinji district. The current study filled the gap by focusing on the administrative strategies employed by the headteachers on the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in the Mchinji district.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In Mchinji district, the Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) (2014) pointed that out of 77,111 girls registering for school, 4,234 (5.5%) girls drop out every year. Similarly, the head teachers' statistics report of 2018 shows that in the year 2015-2016, the total dropout rate of school among girls was 7.1% while in 2016-2017, the dropout rate increased to 7.2 %. Banda (2018) pointed out that 37% of girls who enrolled in Community Day Secondary School in Mchinji district drop out school every year.

Despite some favorable laws and policies put in place to boost education and ensure retention of girls in schools such as laws on marriageable age and bursaries, the efforts made by governmental and non-governmental organizations such as Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) and United Nation Children Fund (UNICEF) (Civil Society Education Coalition,

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2014; Dream Weaver Foundation, 2018). The Forum for African Women Educationalists in Malawi (FAWEMA) (2012) and the Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) (2014) state that the dropout rate of girls keep increasing every year specifically in the Community day secondary schools in Mchinji district. This persistent and worrying trend of the high rate of girl dropout called for a study on administrative strategies that the headteachers are using to retain, promote and support the girl child education in community day secondary in Mchinji district.

1. 4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current research was to investigate the administrative strategies that are employed by the headteachers to retain girls in community day schools to achieve their education. By investigating the administrative strategies used by headteachers, it identified the most effective strategies that if implemented would yield the girls retention in schools in Mchinji District, Malawi.

1. 5 Research Objectives

This research was guided by one general objective and other three specific objectives. The main objective guided the researcher on area of focus throughout the study.

1.5.1 General Objective

The general objective aimed to determine the headteachers' administrative strategies on retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

This research was guided by the following specific objectives:

i.   To investigate whether provision of security measures by the headteachers influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

ii.   To find out whether provision of school sanitation facilities as a strategy employed by the headteachers influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools.

iii.   To investigate if provision of guiding and counseling services as a strategy influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi.

iv.   To examine whether community involvement as a strategy influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi.

1.6   Research Questions

i.   How do provision of security measures by the headteachers influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district?

ii.   How does provision of school sanitation facilities as a strategy employed by the headteachers influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools?

iii.   How does provision of guiding and counseling services as a strategy influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi?

iv.   How does community involvement as a strategy influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will help the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop policies that can assist to retain girls in schools. The findings will also assist them in prioritizing the distribution of materials to all students.

The findings will further assist the headteachers to improve on their administrative techniques on how to reduce the rate of girl drop out in their schools. Headteachers after reading the document they will discover the effective ways to employ in order to retention of girls in schools

The research findings will assist School Board and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to discover the strategies the head teachers can use in order to assist girls to complete their secondary school education. The knowledge will assist them to cooperate with headteachers to find out ways of encouraging girls to finish secondary school education. It will also help them deal with some factors which encourage girls to drop out of school.

The investigations will assist parents to play their rightful roles in the education of their girls and collaborate with headteachers and teachers to encourage the girls to complete their education.

The community around the school will realize their role in the girl child education and encourage them by creating a conducive environment for learning.The community can assist the headteachers and staff members to be aware of what happens outside school campuses that contribute to school dropout and give their advice. The findings of the study will help the girls to complete their secondary education because of the support which they will receive from the headteachers, teachers and other education stake holders.

Finally, the study will be used as a reference to researchers on the influences of the headteachers' administrative strategies on the retention of girls in schools. Specifically, the research has opened new avenues for further research in the domain of administrative strategies employed by headteachers to retain girls in schools.

1.8 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The research was conducted in Seventeen Community Day Secondary Schools in Mchinji district. Specifically, the research concentrated on the administrative strategies of the headteachers to retain girls in schools in Mchinji because they registered high dropout rates.

The study was delimited to the community day secondary schools as they are prone to girls'

drop. The researcher could not conduct the study in all the secondary schools in the country due to

the rising cost brought about by the current pandemic of Covid 19 rampaging the world.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a general set of assumptions about the nature of

phenomenon that clarifies why things are the way they are based on the chosen theory (Kombo &

Tromp, 2018). Therefore this research was based on Tinto's theory of students Departure (Tinto,

1987 and 1993) and system theory developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy 1968.

1.9.1 Tinto's Theory of Student Departure

The theory was developed by professor Tinto in 1987 and 1993 (Seidman, 2012; Braxton,

Shaw Sullivan & Johnson, 1997). The theory states that interaction between students and school

institution contribute to their departure. Various aspects such as institutional organizational

structure goals, resources, student formal and informal interaction with the institution environment

all contribute to retention of the students. Tinto's theory emphasizes that students' retention is

dependent on the experiences of the students at school. The theory explains that students who are

satisfied with the administrative mechanisms in formal and informal academic and social systems

of the school tend to stay (Hanover 2010). On the contrary, those with negative experiences tend to

withdraw and drop out from the school institution. Students also join school institutions with

determination to succeed; therefore they set the goals which they want to achieve. School

administrators and the institution also set their standards, requirements, and goals. When the two

goals crush, mostly, students suffer their school interests begin to decline, and finally, they drop

out (Rizkallah & Seitz, 2017). Therefore, for students to be retained at school need to be integrated

into the college community, separate themselves from their past community, and be incorporated

into the school as an institution.

According to Adoyo (2014), for the students to persist they need integration into institutional

systems, have staff interactions and encouragement, participate in extra-curricular activities, and

have peer-group interactions. In this case, the integration process cannot be successful unless, the

school has good policies, an enabling environment, and enough resources to sustain the students in

their secondary level. The interaction between the college and the students should aim at creating a

supportive environment for them to survive at school. According to Mahan, Wilson, and Luthy

(2014), school administrators, staff members, and school community relationships play a role in

the retention of students at school. In this case, the school administrator as a leader of the

institution plays a big role in integrating students at schools for them to survive until completion of

their study period.

1.9.1.1 Application of Tinto's Theory to the Study

In one way or another, headteachers as leaders and staff members influence the retention of

girls in schools. Girls need much support from the school administrator as well as from an

institution to encourage and empower them to complete their secondary education. The failure of

the students to integrate themselves into the school environment portrays a failure of the

administrator to use appropriate administrative strategies in retaining them in schools (Teresiana,

Timothy & Ongoti, 2015) Therefore, it is the responsibility of the headteachers to support and

empower them to survive until completion of their secondary school level. However, it all depends

on the resources and facilities provided by the school for girls to survive at school. Clark, (1996)

explains that commitment of the institution members reflects the effectiveness of the institutional

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leadership and its effort to invest resources, facilities to support student retention. As such, the administrative strategies employed by a headteacher determine the success of the school.

The successful school administration is determined by the supportive relationship between staff members and students; availability of resources, facilities, organization structure in terms of policies; discipline, and the general performance of the school whereby all these moralize and retain girls at school. Headteachers must therefore be aware of the challenges girls face in schools and use the strategies which can retain them until completion of their secondary school level.

The theory is important since it has a notion of how students integrate themselves at school therefore it applies to the retention of the girls in community day secondary school. Tinto's theory helps explain why students depart from school early before completion of their course, especially those on four years program. The emphasis on a four-year program is similar to the secondary school program which many girls drop out before its completion.

Secondly, the theory exposes ways in which institutions affect students' integration and retention at school. Mostly, Girls tend to drop out of school prematurely because of failure to endure the challenges they face at school. The theory emphasizes the importance of the support students receive from the school and how it encourages them to survive. Generally, the theory directs the headteachers on what to do to reduce girl child school dropout. The theory also recognizes the influence of the school as an institution on the retention of students. Tinto's theory recognizes that interaction between students and school institution, contribute to students' retention. It also emphasizes the point that students' retention is dependent on the experiences of the students at school. Hence for the school institution to function properly it needs guidance from the headteacher. The theory is an eye-opener to headteachers to be aware that school

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organizational structures, goals, resources, student formal and informal interaction with the environment contribute to retention of girls if used properly at the institution.

Secondly, the theory exposes students as rational and social beings that need to be attended to, supported, and empowered according to their particular needs and circumstances at school. Mostly, girls who are satisfied with the formal and informal academic and social systems of the school tend to stay until the end of their education level.

Many studies from other parts of the world such as; Rizkallah and Seitz, (2017), Adoyo (2014) and Mahan, et al (2014) have used Tinto's theory of students' departure but none of them connect it to the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Malawi. Other theories of retention of students have focused on the cultural background and influence of the community where students come from. However, in this study, Tinto's theory of student departure reflects well on the impact of the school administrator and the whole institution on school dropout of students including girls.

1.9.1.2 Weakness of Tinto's Theory

The theory is focusing on the retention of students in colleges or universities. As such, it is silent on the retention of students at the secondary school level. Furthermore, the theory is generally for retention of all students despite gender which is unique from this current study focusing on girls only.

Secondly, the theory has not specifically addressed what the headteachers can do to retain students in schools. It also lacks a detailed explanation on how people can apply it effectively, to minimize the dropout rate in schools. Tinto's theory is more applicable to the retention of students than to the administrative strategies of the headteachers. Therefore there is a need to support Tinto's theory with another theory to support the objectives of the study in the literature review.

1.9.2 The System Theory

The theory was developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1968. The theory was formulated in 1950 and was developed further by Ross Ashby in 1964 and modified in 1968 (Chance, 2013; Bertalanffy, 1968). According to Koontz and Weihrich (1988), the system theory claims that any organization relies on the environment in which it is established. The organization receives support from the environment which it transforms into output (Chukwudi, Boniface & Chukwudi, 2017). The system theory views an organization as an organism made up of many subsystems parts that harmoniously work together to support the larger organization to achieve its goal. The subsystems include input, processes, output, and feedback (Chelanga, 2016). The subsystems contribute to the effectiveness of the school. Chance (2013) specifies the input as all information from the external environment which includes: laws, policies, regulations, financial and human resources, parents and community that influence the school to achieve the goal. The processes include all internal organization structures such as teachers, administrators, students, school facilities skills, operation plans, all activities, and dialogue in solving problems affecting the school (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Output and feedback are the results such as the learning of students and its quality observed by stakeholders. These series of subsystems are interconnected and codependent in such a way that the failure of one part affects the whole system to achieve its goal. As such it is the responsibility of the school administrator to coordinate and manage these external and internal operations which ideally transform students into educated graduates.

Schunk (2012) explains that the life of a learner is greatly influenced by whatever is within the environment. That means all activities taking place in the family and the community affect the life and decision of learners within that environment. Students' development, perceptions, and social interactions are greatly influenced by the environment of their schooling. The level of

education of family members, cultural and religious beliefs, policies, relation with teachers, learning facilities influence retention of students at school. There is much variability and richness in the school- home and general environment to the life of the student (Schunk, 2012). In general, the theoretical analysis is that the environment surrounding students, whether internal or external plays a big role in influencing their retention in schools. Therefore administrators must make sure that there is unity between school and environment, meaning that people in the society must be involved and understand the benefits of retaining girls to support them.

According to Kelechukwu (2011), system theory is relevant to education because school is a system that relies on the interaction and interdependence of different parts to achieve its goal. As such, the headteacher as the administrator represents a crucial component of the school as a social system on the retention of students. In this way, the institution is compelled to explore its relationship with the environment. Environment plays a critical role in boosting the schools' administration thus improving retention of students, especially girls in the school system (FAWEMA, 2012). This implies that headteachers as the chief executives of the school cannot sideline the contribution of other stakeholders in dealing with issues affecting the retention of learners in schools. The headteacher is bound to get along with teachers, parents, Board of Management, and supporting staff members to retain students effectively at school. Students are brought up in a family that means in one way or another, parents contribute to dropout of girls.

Studies such as Chukwudi, et al (2017), Chelanga (2016) and Kelechukwu (2011), have used systems theory but none of them connect it to strategies headteachers use to retain girls in community day secondary schools in Malawi. For example, Chukwudi, et al (2017) used the system theory in connection with the influence of financial status of parents and academic performance of their children in Nigeria; in Kenya, Chelanga (2016) used system theory on

administrative strategies to improve students' performance. This current study is employing system theory on head teacher's administrative strategies on retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi.

1.9.2.1 Strength of System Theory

The strength of the system theory is that it defines the influence of the relationship between external and external environment surrounding students in schools. Systems theory also focuses its attention on the influence of the headteacher in coordinating whatever surrounds students, in a manner in which can assist to retain them and achieve their goals at school. The theory will enable the school administrators (headteachers) in identifying the required administrative strategies for achieving their objectives; school stability which will assist to retain girls in schools. Mostly, girls tend to drop out of school prematurely because of failure to endure the challenges they face at school as well as in society. Therefore the theory emphasizes on proper coordination of internal and external systems for the schools to achieve their goals which relies much on the administrative strategies of the headteachers.

1.9.2.2 Weaknesses of the System Theory

Despite the strength of the system theory, it has its weakness. The theory is silent on the challenges school administrators face in the process of involving the environment in an institution. As such the researcher will also investigate the challenges headteachers face in the process of retaining girls in community day secondary schools. The administrative strategies exposed in theory are too general which need the effort of the headteacher to apply them to retain students at school. Therefore the study will concentrate on the input of the school and home environment on retention of girls in schools.

The researcher has opted for system theory despite its criticisms because it addresses administrative matters which are related to school management which can enhance retention of students in schools through collaborative work in the system. System theory reflects well on the impact of the school administrator is coordinating the internal and external environment on school dropout of students. The theory also recognizes the influence of the school as an institution and the home environment on the retention of students particularly the girl child whose dropout rate is the main focus in this study.

1. 10 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework explains diagrammatically the key variables and their assumed relationships (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The conceptual framework in Figure 1 explains the administrative strategies the headteacher employs to retain girls in community day secondary schools. The independent variables included security measures, guiding and counseling, school sanitation facilities and community involvement.

The school policies such as teaching and learning policies, re-entry policy, and marriageable age limit for the girl were the intervening variable because they promoted retention of girls in schools. And in the conceptual framework, they were supporting independent variables to retain the girls in schools.

Retention of girls in schools was the dependent variable because its response depended on the influence of the, security measures, school sanitation facilities, guiding and counseling, and community involvement.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables   -   Intervening variables   -   Dependent Variable

Administrative Strategies

- Security measures

- Guiding and counseling

- School sanitary facilities

- Community involvement

Retention of girls:

-Completion rate

-Dropout rate

School Policies:
-Re-entry of girls in schools.
 -Marriageable age of girls
-Teaching and learning policies
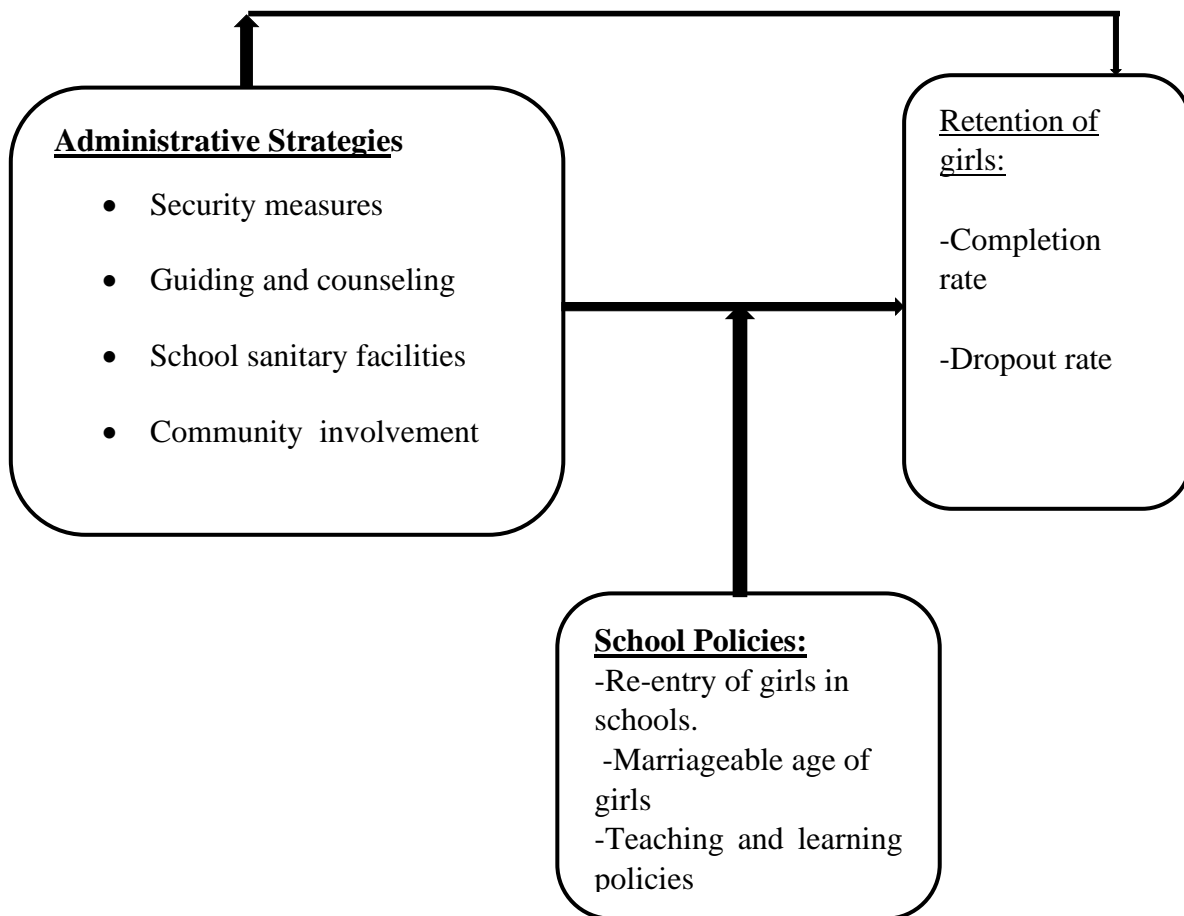
Source: Author (2021)

1. 11 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Administrative strategy: Are all initiatives headteachers use to induce girls to be at school until completion of the course in community day secondary schools.

School community: Are school personnel, students, families, and members of the larger community bound by a common spirit of involvement for maximum social, emotional, intellectual and academic growth and development for all students.

Community Day Secondary Schools: These are government secondary schools built within the area in cooperation with the local community in Malawi. Only students from within that locality are selected to attain education in the Community day secondary schools.

Retention: Maintaining girls to complete their education in a given place for given period in secondary schools.

School dropout: This is when a student stops attending classes before receiving a final certificate of the school. In this study it is when a student fails to finish secondary school level which is form four in Malawi.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This section reviewed global, regional, national and contextual literatures related to the headteachers' administrative strategies on retention of girls in schools based on the research objectives. The empirical studies were critiqued by identifying the knowledge gaps inherent in the contexts, designs, and other methodological sections such as; data collections instruments and procedures, data analysis procedures as well as findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

2.2 The provision of School Security Measures and Retention of Students

Schools should be safe places where parents can send their children without worry and students can learn without fear (Hanover, 2013). Therefore it is vital that school administrators should focus on security measures as their priorities in order to achieve its aim (Partner Alliance for Safer Schools, (PASS) 2017). Tanner-Smith and Fisher (2015) explained that school security measures include security cameras, metal sensors, security personnel and fence which are provided in an effort to keep schools safe and promote students' academic success. Zais (2011) mentioned that schools should promote the safety of the students, physical and mental health fairness, and adequacy of disciplinary procedures in order to assist students to achieve their goals in life. Therefore it is the responsibility of the headteachers to provide security resources like fence, rocked gates, security guards, to improve the safety of their schools (Zais, 2011; Hanover, 2013).

The investigation conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2014) in the United States of America found that girls are more likely to continue schooling if they feel safe and secure at school. Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS)(2017) explained that from 2000 to 2015, the United States of America experienced disturbances from shooter, and schools were the

most common affected sites which resulted in the 578 deaths including 30 students at K-12 schools. The situation affected schools until the unarmed principals, teachers, other school staffs and students confronted the shooters to end the threat (Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS), 2017). PASS explained that schools face many security challenges due to the following reasons; gang activities, trespassing of the local people in school campus, bullying among students, unauthorized use of school facilities by the community members, threats before and after-school programs, disciplinary issues, vulnerability to kidnappers and sexual harassment. The reviewed study was done in the USA which has different security measures from Mchinji district in Malawi. The current study investigated if the same security measures contributed to the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district in Malawi.

Glariana and Sola (2015) conducted a study on the status of the school safety and security among elementary schools in the fifth class municipality in Philippians. The findings show that educators have come to realize that the foundation of all learning is safety and security of the school. This implies that attendance and performance of the students are closely linked to the measures safety of the school such as: site, fence, furniture and campus security guards. In this case the school authorities should try to meet the security standard of the area to ensure safety of the students (Glariana & Sola, 2015). Glariana and Sola conducted their study in elementary schools while the current study was done in community day secondary schools. Glariana and Sola focused on the status of the school safety and security. This study was different because it focused on security measures as an administrative strategy used to retain students.

In United Kingdom (UK), the use of many security measures has evidently to increase the retention of students (Hanover, 2013). Hanover explained that nearly 70 percent of middle and high school students attend a school that has at least one security guard or assigned police officer

for protection. The additional the security measures used in UK included: locking all exterior doors, except the main doors, introduction of a log to record the entry of each visitor and the use of indentification badge for the employees and the visitors (Hanover, 2013). Arul (2012) commented that students spend more hours at school therefore it is important to provide a safe, healthy, and exciting environment for their learning and general development. Arul suggested that school leaders should provide a conducive and favorable school secured atmosphere, enriched with sufficient secured learning facilities in order to retain.

The findings from the study conducted by Hanover (2013) showed that many students prefer to register to schools which are more secured in United Kingdom. However, United Kingdom has different measures from Mchinji district in Malawi. Therefore the current study, investigated if the security measures like fence and security guards are also used in community day secondary schools and whether they influence the retention of girls in Mchinji district in Malawi.

Abiodun, Olawale, Adenira and Zuberu (2017) conducted a research on students' Kidnapping and Security Brouhaha: Implications on Secondary Schools in Lagos Metropolis, Lagos State, in Negeria. The findings show that robbery business is at rampart stake and kidnapping of student have become a bullish market in secondary schools. Kidnappers have created perpetual fear among the educational stakeholders in Lagos. School administrators, teachers, parents, community leaders and other education stakeholders are facing the security challenge to deal with kidnapping system. The study recommends that Lagos State Government should insured that life of all students is secured and be responsible for the ransom payment of every abducted student. Secondly, all private and public secondary schools should redesign their security techniques. Abiodun, Olawale, Adenira and Zuberu (2017) concentrated their study on the security resources and measures Nigeria is trying to provide inoder to deal with kidnapping in

schools. However, this study concentrated whether security measures employed by the headteachers'in community day secondary schools influence retention of girls in Mchinji district, Malawi.

Komora (2014) conducted a study on challenges facing the education of the girl child in Kenya. The findngs show that students feel uncomfortable with unfriendly teachers and unsecured environment such that they drop out of the school. Furthermore insecurity due to robbery, lack of fence and security guards, hostility of the community, negative attitude of teachers towards a student also create insecure feelings in learners and they drop out of the school (Komora, 2014; Kapur, 2018). Kapur (2018) also mentioned that some teachers have a belief that academically boys are better than girls so they give them more attention in class. Teachers should play a central role in the formulation and application of the policies of the school (Kukan, 2011). Therefore teachers should avoid showing negative attitudes towards girls in schools in order to retain them.

Komora (2014) conducted a study on the challenges facing the education of the girl child in Kenya. This study investigated on security measures head teachers employ to influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi. Komora sampled both primary and secondary schools while this study sampled only community day secondary schools. Komora also sampled both boys and girls in schools while the current study sampled girls only.

Kunje (2012) looked at strategies employed by institutions and Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in enhancing students' retention in public secondary schools in Thyolo district in Malawi. The findings show that security measures such as fence, hostels within the school campus, friendly teachers and community members assist to retain students. Kunje mentioned that the availability of hostels within the school campus assists students not to walk long distances and participate in tiresome home duties. Furthermore, Campaign for Female

Education (CAMFED), (2021) revealed that in Malawi especially in rural areas, students travel long distances to school and this make them vulnerable to kidnaping and other exploitation. Kunje (2012) adopted a qualitative research design, the population comprised of seven public schools in Thyolo and three Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Data was collected through interviews. The current study adopted an explanatory sequential mixed method research design and data was collected through questionnaires, document analysis, and interviews. The previous study was done in Thyolo which has a different environment to Mchinji district which is the current study area. The study also focused on strategies employed by NGOs as such there was a need to investigate strategies employed by head teachers' to retain girls in community day secondary.

2. 3   Provision of School Sanitation Facilities as a Strategy for Retention of Students

Sanitation facilities are amenities that are likely to ensure hygienic separation of excreta from human contact which includes safe water and latrines (Kabange & Mkansah, 2015). Adukia (2018) did a study on how sanitation facilities in schools can improve educational outcomes in India. The study discovered that sanitation facilities such as latrines, enough water, provision of pads in schools increased female enrolment. The study also explained that lack of enough water and toilets in schools is unhealthy and unsafe because it forces some students to relieve behind bushes. This affects some girls such that they prefer missing classes during their periods every month which lead to low performance and expulsion in schools (Adukia, 2018). McCalla (2016) explained that girls who attend schools without water and sanitation facilities miss up to 40 days due to menstruation in a single academic year. The forty days of missing classes hinder girls' ability to achieve their full academic potential (McCalla, 2016). The study conducted by Adukia (2018) focused on how sanitation facilities in schools can improve educational outcomes in India.

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This study investigated on whether the provision of sanitation facilities found in community day secondary schools influence retention of girls.

Rutakinikwa (2016) investigated on factors influencing secondary school girls drop out in Bagamoyo district in coast region, Tanzania. The study findings indicated that some of schools were built in the areas where there was no water sources, no toilets and far from home area which discouraged students to go to school. Huie, (2016) states that Girls drop out of school for a number of reasons which are directly related to lack of clean water, toilets and bathroom facilities at their schools. Availability of toilets, clean water, and access to feminine hygiene supplies minimizes absenteeism of girls particularly when they are menstruating (Kapur, 2018). Rutakinikwa (2016) used focus group discussion, questionnaires and interviews to collect data. This study used questionnaires, interviews and document analysis to collect data.

Seka (2012) conducted a study on causes of dropout among girls in selected mixed day secondary schools in Kasalani district in Kenya. Seka revealed that lack of sanitation facilities have a stronger negative impact on girls. The girls need access to safe, clean water, toilets and hand-washing facilities because the missing of any, likely lead them to drop out of school. Njue, (2014) explained that the school sanitation facilities such as toilets, clean water and desk help students to feel confortable at school. The study conducted by Seka was pure quantitative because only questionnaires were used to collect data from headteachers, teachers and students. The current study employed explanatory squential mixed method. The questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers and students and interviews were conducted to get information from the headteachers, education officer and the chief elders.

Chiwaula, Nampota, Meke, and Kunje, (2015) conducted a study in primary schools as a result of the Direct Support to Schools (DSS) Grant in Malawi. The findings show that schools

lack sanition facilities such as; enough water, toilets and hygiene in the classrooms. Chisamba (2018) explain that lack of sanitation facilities in schools influence many girls to dropout. This is because some girls when menstruating they choose either to be absent from school or attend the classes in discomfort at the institution (Chisamba, 2018).

Chiwaula et al, (2015) research focused on the results of the support given in primary schools. However this research investigated if enough and safe water, clean toilets, and security in the environment assist to retain the students in community day secondary schools. The research also adopted a qualitative research design and the data was collected in primary schools found in Blantyre, Zomba, and Mangochi Districts. This study used an explanatory sequential mixed method research design and the research was done Community Day Secondary Schools in Mchinji district.

2.4 Influence of Guiding and Counseling Services on Retention of Students

Oyugi (2016) defined guiding and counseling as a process by which learners are advised on how to deal with their individual problems. Guiding and counseling must be conducted by professionals because it is a process which formally involves a counselor in assisting a client who is in a complicated situation (Wango, 2015). It is complicated because school counselors assist students to express their problems, promote positive and extinguish negative behaviors (Oyugi, 2016). Kimemia (2012) emphasizes that to prevent students drop out in schools, effective counseling facilities should be in place and school counselors should be fully trained to acquire the skills of handling a client.

In India guiding and counseling covers all the ranges of education, meaning it includes all types of education such as formal an informal which aims to adjust the individual in his environment in an effective way (Pal, 2017). The main aim of guiding and counseling is to help the

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students, to solve their own problems and take appropriate decisions in their life at school (Oyugi, 2016). Pal (2017) explained that educational guidance assists students to be in a favourable setting for the individual's education. The finding show that students who were assisted in the choice of subjects, use of libraries, laboratories, workshops, development of effective study habits, evaluation techniques and adjustment of school life are retained in schools.

Wango (2015) conducted a study on guiding and counseling skills, Principal use in schools in Kenya. The findings show that counselors need professional competence such as counseling ethics in terms of confidentiality of the information received. Furthermore the headteachers, teachers and parents share common goals of creating productive school culture, encourage and retain students to achieve their goals at school. Therefore headteachers should always involve teachers and parents to give guiding and counseling to students at school (Wango, 2015). Wesonga (2010) explains that the support provided during guiding and counseling in secondary schools strengthens the students to persevere at school and achieve their goal. The findings assert that principals should ensure that schools within their jurisdiction provide counselors to enhancing retention. Administrators and teachers are responsible for helping to mold youth into productive citizens, and this can only be achieved through guiding and counseling (PASS, 2017). Wango focused on the counseling skills used by principals in schools in Kenya. This study focused on whether guiding and counseling offered in community day secondary schools, influence the retention of girls.

Forum for African Women Education in Malawi (FAWEMA) (2012) explains that presence of the female teachers and the role models also influence retention of girls through their academic guidance and advice offered to them. Therefore it is viable that headteachers should provide female role models to guide, counsel, encourage and give famine support to girls to

complete their school (FAWEMA, 2012). FAWEMA focused on the ways used to retain the girl child in education. This research was to find out whether strategies employed by headteachers influence retention of girls in Community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

2. 5 Community Involvement Strategy and Retention of Girls

A community is a group of people living in a particular place or region, where the people share common traits, values, knowledge, and activities embodied through ethnicity, culture, language, religion, recreation, businesses, organizations, proximity, and lifestyle (Preston, 2013). Therefore, community involvement is the participation of the people from around the school in all activities which support the students' physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs to complete their education. School–community involvement includes the participation of; parents, extended family members of students, chiefs, community agencies, and organizations that promote education and societal well-being of students at school. School community involvement activities include school-sponsored events, fundraising activities, service-learning activities, student scholarships and donations to the school, community mentorship opportunities, charitable school events, and anything that promotes student success in education (Epstein, 2011; Gregoric, 2013).

Robles (2011) explored parental involvement in an urban minority school district in the United States of America. Robles defined parental involvement as the formal or informal ways in which parents and family members assist in the education of their children at school. The findings revealed that participation of the parents in decisions making of the school and the counseling of the students usually lead to decreased rate of school dropouts of the students (Robles 2013). Parents are members of the community who indirectly initiate school discipline, the good relationship of the teachers and the students through the advice and counseling, learners receive from them. The reviewed literature concentrated on parental involvement in minority schools in

the United States of America. This study explored whether community members are involved in school activities to retain girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

In India, the study by Sharma (2014) on community participation in primary education revealed that poor participation of the parents was a big challenge in school. The findings of the study show that school administrators blame community members' inability to attend the meetings and poor participation in dealing with issues affecting the school. However, parents also complained of poverty to find transport and other financial contributions to support the school. Sharma used a qualitative research design only and purposive sampling was used to select participants and data was collected through focus group interviews from teachers, Parent Teacher Association and Mather group. This study involved the following participants; girls, teachers, headteachers, education officer, and chiefs get information.

Pansiri and Bulawa (2013) conducted a study on parents' participation in public primary schools in Botswana: perceptions and experiences of headteachers. Pansiri and Baluwa explained that the headteachers receive the minimal support from parents. For example, 82% of the headteachers indicated that parents do not pay any fees for their girls while 75% of the headteachers also revealed that parents fail to contribute to the school development fund requested by the PTAs. Busch and Fernandez (2019) concurred that most parents do not understand how their involvement may have a great impact on the academic wellbeing of their children. Some parents do not attend the school meetings. Pansiri and Baluwa employed a quantitative design using questionnaires to collect data while this study used explanatory sequential mixed research design.

Muthoni (2015) conducted a study in Kenya on the impact of community involvement in public secondary schools management in Machakos County. The findings discovered that the government contribution to schools can be as low as 15 percent or even less of the total income of the school, while the rest is contributed by parents and community members. Therefore, parents' contributions are utilized for purchasing scholastic materials, construction of buildings such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, school fences, and teachers' houses. Community members also assist in planning school policies, monitoring performance, safeguarding school finances, and controlling the discipline of the students. The mentioned support is offered to the students through the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) and Boards of Management (BOM) in schools which involve parents, governments, administrators, educators, and the community around the school. The formation of PTA and BOM link the headteacher, teachers, and society on matters affecting the school. PTA and BOM fulfill the function of funding, management, and successful operation of the school.

Muthoni (2015) used a stratified random sampling technique and 34 secondary schools out of 335 were sampled. The validity of the content of the study was tested by supervisors and other experts. Test-retest technique using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the reliability of the study. A correlation coefficient of +0.68 was obtained for the first trial and +0.72 for the second trial which indicated a much stronger relationship. The previous study collected data from the headteachers only. This study included girls, teachers and headteachers, and community members as the participants.

Kirimi and Muteti (2016) investigated on an assessment of parental involvement in learners retention in public primary schools of Malindi Sub - County in Kilifi County. Kirimu and Muteti explained that for the students to use their potential to the maximum at school, they need full

support from their parents, relatives, and the communities in which they live. The community full support is appreciated when students are given encouragement, learning materials, uniform, fees, pocket money, and security around the school. Epstein (2012) explains that there is a correlation between increased levels of parent involvement and increase in student achievement as well as improved student attendance and reduced dropout rates.

This is because the involvement and participation of the community members promote the well-being and academic growth of the students through economic support. Although community involvement is one of the strategies there was a need of investigating the strategies headteachers were using to retain girls in schools. Hence this research explored if community involvement in different forms such as: uniform, fees, pocket money, and security around the school are the administrative strategies headteachers use to influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji.

Nkhoma, (2014) conducted a study on the assessment of community involvement in managing community day secondary schools in Mzimba South in Malawi. Nkhoma discovered that headteachers lacked innovative ways of involving the communities in school management. The members of the community are involved in raising funds for the development of infrastructures only. Headteachers rarely involve Community members in dealing-out with cultural issues affecting the progress of students in education. Community members have more influence on child education than other stakeholders because children are raised among them, therefore traditional leaders must take up their role to encourage girls' complete education (Kachaje, 2015). In Malawi, nearly four in 10 girls drop out of school and marry before the age of 18, and three in 10 girls have their first child before this age (World Bank, 2018). Although there is a policy that marriage below the age of 18 is illegal in a real sense this is not effective

(Campaign for Female Education (CARFED), 2021). It is in their culture and it values family and children more than education. CARFED suggested the formation of by-laws to prevent early marriages and involve the communities, schools, parents, education authorities, and traditional leaders, to take action for their implementation. Nkhoma's study assessed how the community was involved in managing community day secondary school. This study investigated how community members such as chiefs, parents, relatives are involved to assist in retaining students in community day secondary schools.

A research study conducted by Barnett (2013) analyzed community involvement in primary schools in Malawi. The data was collected quantitatively using questionnaires. The study used standardized tests to analyze the data and test-retest to check its reliability. However, the researcher did not check the validity and trustworthiness of the study as this study intends to test. The current study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods using research design. Questionnaires, explanatory sequential mixed method interviews, and document analysis were used to collect data from headteachers, students, teachers, chiefs, and education officers. It has also tested the validity and reliability of the instruments to be sure if they were effective.

Barnett's study findings revealed that the role of the local community is very important in schools because of its financial and haven support to the learners. Barnett and Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC), (2014) explain that communities are also responsible for inculcating values in girl child education through advice, encouragement, financial support, infrastructures, teaching, and learning materials. Barnett assessed community involvement in primary schools. Hence this study investigated how headteachers involved the community members to retain girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district in Malawi.

2. 6 Summary of the Literature Reviewed and Knowledge Gap

The literature indicates that globally in countries like United States of America, India, Philippians and United Kingdom studies were conducted on the strategies and also on the retention of students in schools such as: Sharma(2014) UNICEF (2014), Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS) (2017). Glariana and Sola (2015), Hanover (2013), Adukia (2018) and Pal (2017). However the studies did not concentrate on administrative strategies employed by the headteachers to retain girls in community day secondary schools.

Regionally in Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya, studies were conducted such as; Komora (2014) Abiodun, Olawale, Adenira and Zuberu (2017) Rutakinikwa (2016) Seka (2012). However, there are limited studies addressing the security resources, school sanitation facilities, guidance and counseling and community involvement as the administrative strategies used by the headteachers to influence retention of girls, in community day secondary schools.

Furthermore in Malawi, studies were done on the strategies on retention of students. For example; Kunje (2012) conducted a study on strategies employed by institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to increase student retention in public secondary schools in Thyolo district, Malawi. International Law Commission in Africa [ILC] (2014) also conducted a study on girl's education challenges in Malawi. Chiwaula, Nampota, Meke, and Kunje (2013) conducted a study in Primary Schools as a result of the Direct Support to Schools (DSS) Grant in Malawi. Nkhoma (2014) conducted a study in Malawi on the assessment of community involvement in managing community day secondary schools in Malawi in Mzimba South. However, these studies did not focus on the influence of the following guidance and counseling, school security measures, sanitation facilities and community involvement as strategies used by the headteachers to retain girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district schools.

Some studies also used different research designs for example; Robles (2011) and Sharma (2014) employed qualitative design only. Pansiri and Bulawa (2013) in Botswana employed pure quantitative design and only headteachers were the participant. Validity and reliability were not tested. The research study did not review the documents such as registers in schools while this research has analyzed the school registers to find out the dropout rate of students, school policies and rules which support to retain students.

In Malawi Barnett (2012) conducted a quantitative study to analyze community involvement in primary schools and data was collected using questionnaires only. However this study was conducted in community day secondary schools. Furthermore, the increase of dropout rate, led to the demand for the current study to investigate whether the use of strategies like: community involvement, provision of security measures, sanitation facilities and guiding and counseling influence the retention of girls in community day secondary schools. Due to all these study gaps, there was still a need of investigating the influence of the strategies employed by the headteachers' to retain girls in Community Day Secondary Schools in Mchinji district, Malawi. The momentum study employed an explanatory sequential mixed method design which other studies did not use. The researcher used a large sample to have clear and reliable information on the strategies that influenced the retention of girls in schools.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research design and methodology used to address the research problem. These included identification and description of the research design and the methodologies such as target population, location, sample and sampling procedures, piloting of the research instruments, validity, reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and lastly, ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), research design refers to logical strategies chosen to incorporate different techniques and tools of the study to address the research problem. The study employed explanatory sequential mixed method research design. It is known as the sequential mixed method because it allows the collection of quantitative data first and after analysis the researcher collects data through interviews to help to explain the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014).

The study employed questionnaires to collect quantitative data from the students and the teachers, then interviews from the headteacher, Education officer, and the Chief elders. The researcher opted for explanatory sequential mixed methods design because the quantitative part allowed statistical analysis while qualitative part collected data through the interviews which provided the study with the detailed information from the individual participants who were purposively included in the study.

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in community day secondary schools in Mchinji, one of the nine districts in the Central Region of Malawi. Mchinji district has 17 community district secondary schools and covers an area of 3,356 square kilometers (335,600 hectares) and it represents 3.6% of the total land of Malawi (Mchinji District Assembly Report, 2011; Mkumba, 2016. It borders with Kasungu District to the north, Lilongwe District to the east, and Chipata district the City of Zambia to the west, and Villa Ulongwe district of Mozambique to the south. The district headquarters is located along the main road (M l) that connects Lilongwe and Zambia (Mkumba, 2016). It is 110 kilometers away from Lilongwe City, which is the Capital of Malawi, and about 10 km away from the Zambia border of Mwami (Mchinji district Assembly report, 2011). (See appendix L & M). This is the location with many community day secondary schools that experience challenges of retention that made it relevant for the study.

3.4. Target Population

According to Kombo and Tromp (2018) target population refers to a large group from which samples are taken for measurement. This population includes people or objects depending on what the study intends to use. Samples are small parts of the total number that could be studied. The target population gave the sample of the study from which the results were meant to generalize (Mvumbi & Ngumbi, 2015). The target population of this study included the 17 headteachers, 225 teachers, 3150 students, one education officer and five chief elders.

3. 5 Sampling Techniques and sample size

A sample is a group of individuals or objects selected from the target population of the study to conduct the survey or interview (Preece, 2013). Mvumbi and Ngumbi (2015) indicate that a sample ought to be sufficiently large to represent the significant features of the target population.

According to Fairbairn and Kessler (2015), 30% is sufficient and considered the minimum sample size for representation of the data. The researcher purposively sampled 15 out of 17 headteachers representing 82.24%. The researcher also purposively included the five chief elders representing all the five traditional chiefs found in Mchinji district. The district has one Education Officer who is an overall in-charge of all the schools in Mchinji. The researcher also interviewed the only education officer of Mchinji district.

Furthermore the teachers were stratified into male and female to ensure gender representation. Therefore 169 were male while 56 were female teachers making a total of 225. This represented the ratio of three male to one female teacher. Therefore the researcher used simple random to sample 80 teachers out of 225 representing 35.5% of the target population. As such the sample included: 60 male and 20 female teachers. Furthermore, Preece (2013) explained that the sample size of 10% to 20% is sufficient for a research study. Therefore the researcher used 10% of the total number of students. This gave a total of 315 students from the entire population of 3150 students. Table 1 shows the summary of the sampling techniques used in the study.(see table: 1)

Table 1: Sample Distribution.

Target group	Target Population	Sample Size	Percentages %	Sampling Technique
Head teachers	17	15	82.2%	Purposive
Teachers	225	80	35.5%	Stratified random sampling
Girls	3150	315	10%	Simple random sampling
Education officer	1	1	100%	Purposive
Chief elders	5	5	100%	Purposive

3. 6 Research Instruments

Research instruments are various procedure of collecting data for the study (Zohrabi, 2013).

Kombo and Tromp (2018) explained that a questionnaire is an instrument that allows the

researcher to collect data over a large population with confidentiality and it also saves time.

Creswell (2014) stated that the size of the sample determines the instrument of the study.

Therefore, questionnaires were distributed to gather data from the students and from the teachers

who constituted a larger number of the study participants. A semi-structured interview guide was

used to collect data from the headteachers, Education Officer, and chief elders for in-depth study.

Headteachers perform a central role in implementing administrative strategies in retaining girls in

schools. In this case, it was vital to access detailed information from them through interviews.

3.6.1 Questionnaires for Students

The questionnaire had both closed and open-ended questions. The use of questionnaires

allowed the researcher to collect data from a large population of students for the generalization of

the results. The questionnaires had two sections: Section A focused on demographic information,

Section B, the questionnaires investigating on the influence of security resources, sanitation

facilities, guiding and counseling and community involvement on retention of girls. Lastly, other

strategies headteachers can use to improve the retention of girls in community day secondary

schools in Mchinji district.

3.6.2 Questionnaire for Teachers

The questionnaires were also given to 80 teachers. The questionnaires had both closed and

open-ended questions. Teachers' questionnaires comprised of two sections as well. Section A

focused on demographic information, B the questionnaires determining the influence of security

resources, sanitation facilities, guidance and counseling and community involvement on the

retention of girls. Lastly, other strategies headteachers can use to improve the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

3. 6. 3 Semi-structured interview Guides for the School Headteachers

The study employed Semi-structured interviews and this consisted of both open and closed-ended questions that provided a detailed understanding of the issues under investigation with immediate feedback. The interview schedule for headteachers had a set of questions which included: demographic information, how do security resources, sanitation facilities, guidance and counseling and community involvement the influence retention of girls Lastly, other strategies headteachers can use to improve the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

3.6.4 Interview for the Education Officer

One Education Officer was interviewed representing the Ministry of Education as part of the community. The education officer was interviewed to find out how the involvement of the ministry of education influences the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

3.6.5 Interview for the Chief Elders

Chief elders are in charge of different communities which include more than villages. They directly involve people in developmental activities and settling down quarrels in the community. Therefore the chief elders were interviewed representing the community members. The researcher sought to find out how the community members influence to the retention of girls in Community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

3.7 Document Analysis Guide

Document analysis is a critical examination of recorded information (Creswell, 2012). The first document which was reviewed was the students' enrolment list and admission registers. The aim was to check the information concerning students' dropout rate.

The second documents analyzed were policies and rules used to retain girls in schools. The researcher aimed at checking whether community day secondary schools have the policies and rules and if they are effectively applied in schools to retain girls. Document analysis was done to find out the administrative strategies headteachers use to retain girls in community day secondary schools.

3.8 Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity means the confidence shown by a given research finding and it is verified when the research instruments measure what they are supposed to measure (Selvam 2017). Test validity assists to make sure that the instruments are meaningful and appropriate to produce effective results. There are three different basic approaches to validity which include: content, construct, and criterion-related validity. The study employed content validity assessment to examine the research instruments. Content validity refers to the degree to which the scores yields by a test adequately represent the content or conceptual domain they purport to measure (Mvumbi & Ngumbi, 2015). The two supervisors and one of the experts in the field at Tangaza University College were given the questionnaires to check on the errors like wrong numbering, spelling mistakes, inadequate spaces for the response, clarity of instructions, and the relevance of questions to the study. The suggestions were incorporated in the instruments. The researchers also used direct quotations to validate the qualitative data.

3.9 Pilot of the Study Instruments

Piloting is a process of conducting a preliminary survey used to determine challenges respondents will likely face when responding to the items (Mvumbi & Ngumbi, 2015). The main aim was to rectify ambiguities like vague questions so that respondents should not have challenges when answering the sample question. Out of 17 community day secondary schools, two were selected for the piloting and 15 participated in the actual study. However the two piloting schools were not part of the actual study. The two schools were chosen for piloting because they had same characteristics with the other schools which participated in the actual study in Mchinji district. The 2 headteachers, 6 teachers, and 12 students were involved in the pilot exercise.The pilot study helped in making necessary adjustments to align the instruments to the culture of the population under study. Finally, the researcher corrected the errors to confirm the validity of the instruments. The reliability of the results was also tested using Cronbach's alpha. From the findings of the piloted study, Cronbach's Alpha (Coefficient Alpha) value was 0.81 for the teachers and 0.78 for the students, meaning that the instruments were reliable. To confirm the reliability of the piloting results refer to the tables at appendixes H and I.

3.10 Reliability of the Research Instruments

According to Selvam (2017), reliability refers to the consistency of an instrument in effecting similar results at different times when the instrument is utilized. This is the degree to which an instrument produces similar results over the same repetitive measurements. Reliability is the degree of consistency that measures whatever is measuring (Ary, Jacob, Sorensen & Razavien, 2010) Test-retest was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. The research instruments were distributed to the same population after two weeks and the two scores were compared. The reliability of the results was also tested using Cronbach's alpha. The researcher opted to use

Cronbach's Alpha because requires one testing session and all items are compared with each other rather than half of the items (Okemasisi, 2016). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges from 0 to 1 (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). Furthermore Taber (2017) explained that the internal consistency of the study items is always acceptable if its coefficient alpha lies between 0.7 to 1.00. Therefore, the findings of this study revealed that Cronbach's Alpha (Coefficient Alpha) values were greater than 0.7 that means there was internal consistency in the items which showed that the instruments were reliable.

3.11 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Research Instruments

Trustworthiness in a qualitative study is determined by credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Kumar, 2011). The credibility of the research refers to the confidence in the findings from the informants and the context from which the study was undertaken (Mvumbi &Ngumbi, 2015). The researcher also used triangulation by employing various research instruments such as interviews and document analysis to collect data.

Dependability measures the quality and appropriateness of the inquiry process (Creswell, 2014). It aims at finding out whether multiple researchers using qualitative instruments both had produce the similar results. In this case the researcher took comprehensive field notes when collecting data. In addition to that researcher also directly quoted the participants during interviews for easy reporting during data analysis and presentation.

3.12 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection refers to techniques followed to ensure that research tools are used correctly and efficiently (Creswell, 2012). The researcher collected a clearance from Tangaza University College Research Ethics Committee (TUCREC) before proceeding to the field for research. The

researcher also had to seek a clearance and approval letter from the District Education Manager (DEM) to research the Community Day Secondary Schools in Mchinji district, Malawi.

Furthermore the researcher showed the approval letter from the District Education Manager and further sought permission from the school headteachers where the study was conducted and booked an appointment to make arrangements on how to meet the selected respondents. The headteachers signed an agreement of acceptance to allow the researcher to conduct research at their school. Consents of all respondents were sought out before administering the research study. The researcher was assisted by the appointed teachers to supervise the students' questionnaires with guidance from the headteachers to ensure 100% return rate. The teachers also responded to their questionnaires the time the students were responding. After collecting the questionnaires the researcher interviewed the headteacher.

The Covid 19 pandemic was a challenge during the data collection. Before going to the field to collect data, schools were closed for six months as a result the research plan was prolonged. Secondly, the headteachers, teachers and students were hesitant to participate in the research. However, the approval letter from the ministry of education of Malawi which permitted the researchers to collect data helped to convince the headteachers. Finally the headteachers allowed the researcher to collect data from their schools.

3.13 Data Analysis Procedures

Creswell (2014) stated that data analysis is a way of sorting data, coding, cleaning, processing, and interpreting results. Firstly, the researcher analyzed and presented quantitative data followed by qualitative data. The aim of collecting and analyzing the qualitative data was to explain clearly the quantitative data. Therefore the raw quantitative data was collected from the field, cleared, coded, computed, generated, and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social

Science (SPSS) software version 21. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the data and present it in form of tables. Likert scale questions were analyzed in a way that; Strongly Agree (SA) represented a high score which means favoring the item. Strongly Disagree (SD) represented the lowest score. Qualitative data was manually organized, categorized, and analyzed into themes. Finally, qualitative data was interpreted and presented in a narrative form and direct quotes according to various themes while focusing on the objectives of the study.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

Best and Khan (2011) observed that valid research should follow ethical considerations regarding to the study. Ethical considerations protect the rights of the participants which gives them the freedom to respond to the research instruments. Preece (2013) explains that participants should be given enough time to understand the content of the instrument before responding. Therefore researcher gave the participants a research consent form and explained to them the intention of the study, possible risks, rights, and privileges, how the collected data would be handled and reported.

Furthermore, the participants were assured that their names and identity would not be revealed to anyone. Information shared would be handled accordingly without being exposed to the third party. The researcher avoided incriminating acts such as falsifying other people's information and presenting it as her own. The researcher also avoided intimidating words when reporting the findings.

During data collection some participants were not willing to take part in the research because of the fear of Covid 19 pandemic. As such the researcher and the headteachers had to agree on the Covid 19 preventive measures to be followed: both the researcher and the participants had to wear masks, use of sanitizers and washing of hands before and after using the

questionnaires, observing and maintaining of the social distance when interviewing the headteachers, the education officer and the chief elders.

After data collection, the researcher thanked the participants for their contribution. The research document went through a plagiarism test to ensure its originality. The results would be sent to the District Education Manager (DEM) through hard copies. The study document went through a plagiarism test to avoid the overuse of other peoples' information without recognition. Kombo and Tromp (2018) noted that the researcher must accept individual responsibility for the conduct of the research as far as foreseeable, consequences of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, presentation, and discussion of the study findings. The discussions were analyzed within the framework of the research objectives and questions. The researcher analyzed whether: provision of security measures influence retention of girls, school sanitation facilities influence retention of girl, provision of guiding and counseling services influences retention of girls, community involvement influences retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi.

4.2 The Response rate of the participants

This study was done in 15 out of 17 community day secondary schools and questionnaires were administered to 315 students and 80 teachers. Out of these questionnaires, those successfully collected were from 307 representing 97.5%, 78 teachers representing 97.1% indicating an overall success 97.5%. The questionnaires returned rate dropped because five students were sick therefore they failed to respond to the questions. Two students received messages that they have lost one of their parents and one student lost an elder sister so it was difficult to participate in the research study. The two teachers choose not to participate due to unrevealed reasons. However, Chirwa and Munthali (2011) mentioned that a response rate of 60% is acceptable for examination and recording, therefore the response rate of this study was very high and acceptable as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Questionnaires Returned Rate

Respondents	No. of Questionnaires Issued	Returned rate	Percentage
Students (girls)	315	307	97.5
Teachers	80	78	97.
Total	395	385	97.5

4.3 Demographic Information of the Study Participants

The research sought the demographic information of the students, teachers and headteachers. The researcher presented the information of the intems of age and class for the students, while for the teachers and headteachers included: gender, age, professional qualification and teaching experience.

4.3.1 Demographic Information of students

The students were asked to indicate their classes as shown in Figure 2. The researcher sought this information to find out the enrolment per class and linked it to the dropout rate of girls in community day secondary schools.

Figure 2: Number of Students per Class (form)
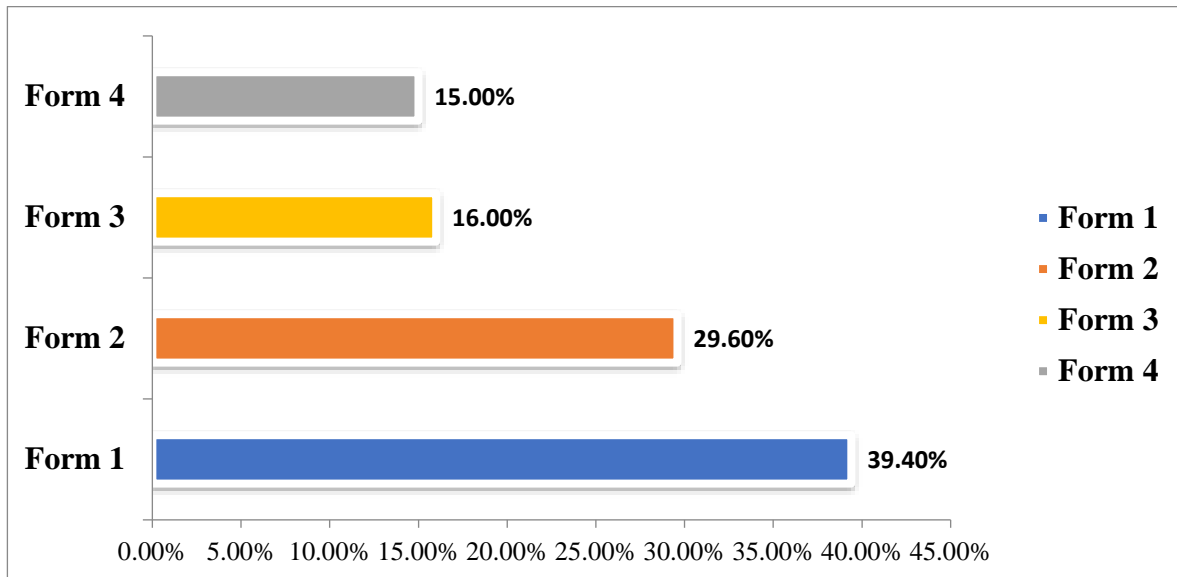
The results in figure 2 show that 39.4% of students were in form one, 29.6% were in form two, 16.0 % were in form three and 15.0% were in form four. The results indicated that form one had many students compared to the rest of the classes. This revealed that the enrollment number of the students keep on decreasing as they move further to a higher class. World Bank (2018) noted that in Malawi, nearly four in 10 girls, drop out of school and get married. This indicated that despite the government policy of ensuring improved girls enrolment and retention through bursary and reinforcement of readmission policy, few students complete their form four-level in community day secondary schools (National Education Sector Plan 2008-2017).

Figure 3: Age of Students

The researcher sought to find out age of the students as shown in figure 3.
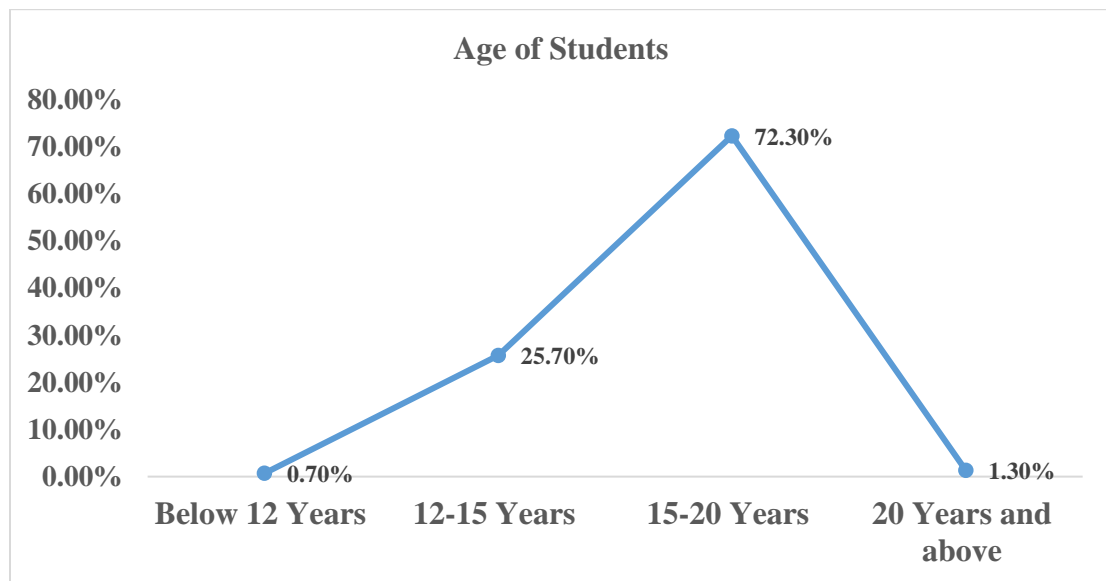
The results in Figure 2 revealed that 0.7% of students were within the age range below 12 years, 25.7 % were within the age range of 12-15 years, 72.3% were in the age range of 15-20 years, 1.3% were in the age range of 21years and above. The findings showed that majority of the students are within the age range of 15-20 years. This also revealed that many girls reach marriageable age while still at secondary school level. As results when a girl reach 18 years easily dropout school and go for official marriage. This showed that although there is a policy that marriage below the age of 18 is illegal in a real sense this is not supporting girls to complete their school before marriage in community day secondary schools (CARFED, 2021).

4.3.2 Demographic Information of Teachers

The teachers were asked to indicate: gender, age, professional qualification, and teaching experience. Figure 4 shows the findings of gender of the teachers.

Figure 4: Gender of the Teachers

Gender of the Teachers

25%

75%
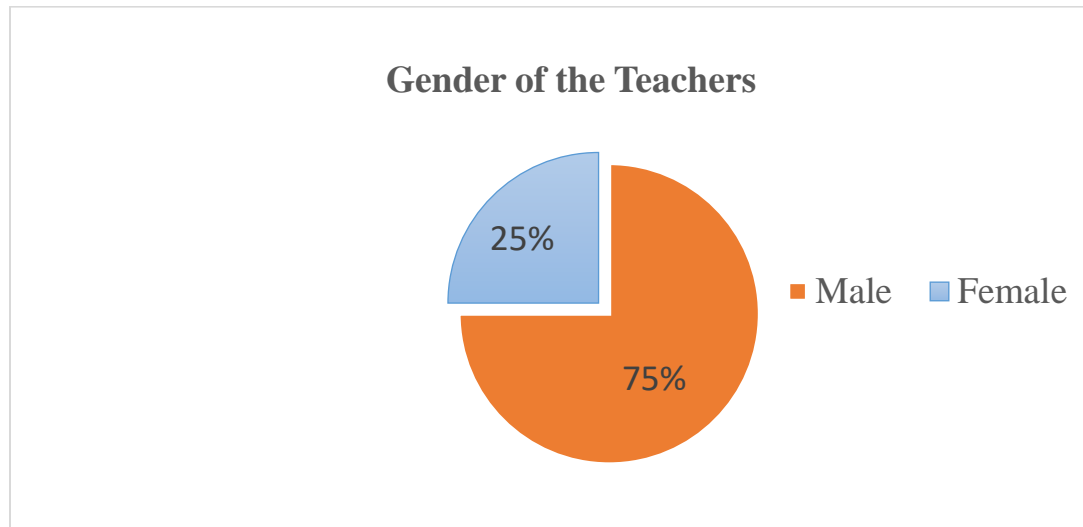
■ Male ■ Female

The analysis showed that 75% were male and 25 % were female in schools. The study shows that that there is gender disparity among the teachers in community day secondary schools Kunje (2013) exposed that although the teaching profession accommodates both sexes the number of female teachers is far much lower than that of male teachers such that their presence is not felt in rural areas in Malawi, Mchinji district inclusive, hence minimal motivation on girl child education. CARFED (2021) mentioned that there is a shortage of qualified teachers with very few female teachers in Malawi, such that girls lack role models to encourage them to complete school. Although the government of Malawi policy emphasizes a 50-50 chance to both male and female teachers in the training and recruitment of teachers, retention of female teachers in rural areas is on a lower side (National Education Sector Plan 2008 -2017/). The policy has not yet achieved its goal by 2018. Some schools do not even have a single female teacher (Banda, 2014). Therefore there is a need for policymakers to address the gender gap in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district (National Education Sector Plan 2020 -2030).

Figure 5: Age of the Teachers

The researcher investigated the age range of teachers in community day secondary schools.
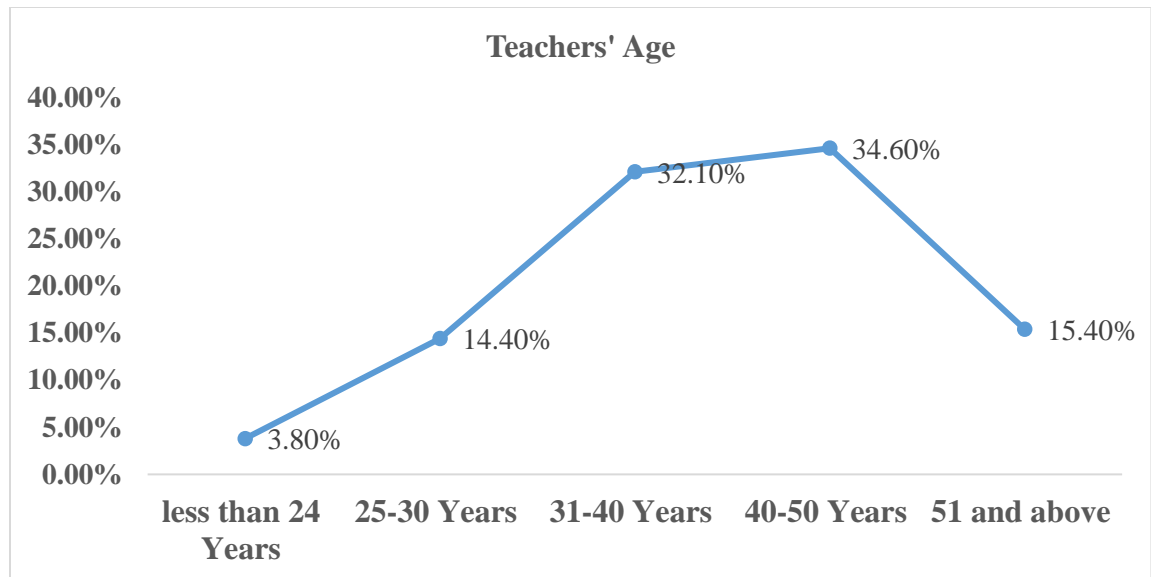
Figure 5 demonstrates that 34.6% of the teachers were aged between 41-50 years, followed by 32.1% who were within the range of 31-40 years, followed by 15.4% of the age range of 51 years above and 14. 1% were within the range of 25-30 years and 3.8% were less than 24 years old. The findings showed that majority of the teachers were within the range of 41-50 years. This revealed that community day secondary schools have experienced teachers who can easily apply their skills to retain girls in schools. In addition to that according to the Malawi Government National Education Policy 2015 a civil servant is supposed to retire at the age of 60. Therefore all the teachers in Community day secondary schools are still at the recommendable age of teaching.

Figure 6: Professional Qualification of Teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate their professional qualifications and the results are indicated in figure 6.

Professional qualification of the teachers

- Bachelors: 51.30%
- Diploma: 32.10%
- Certificate: 16.70%
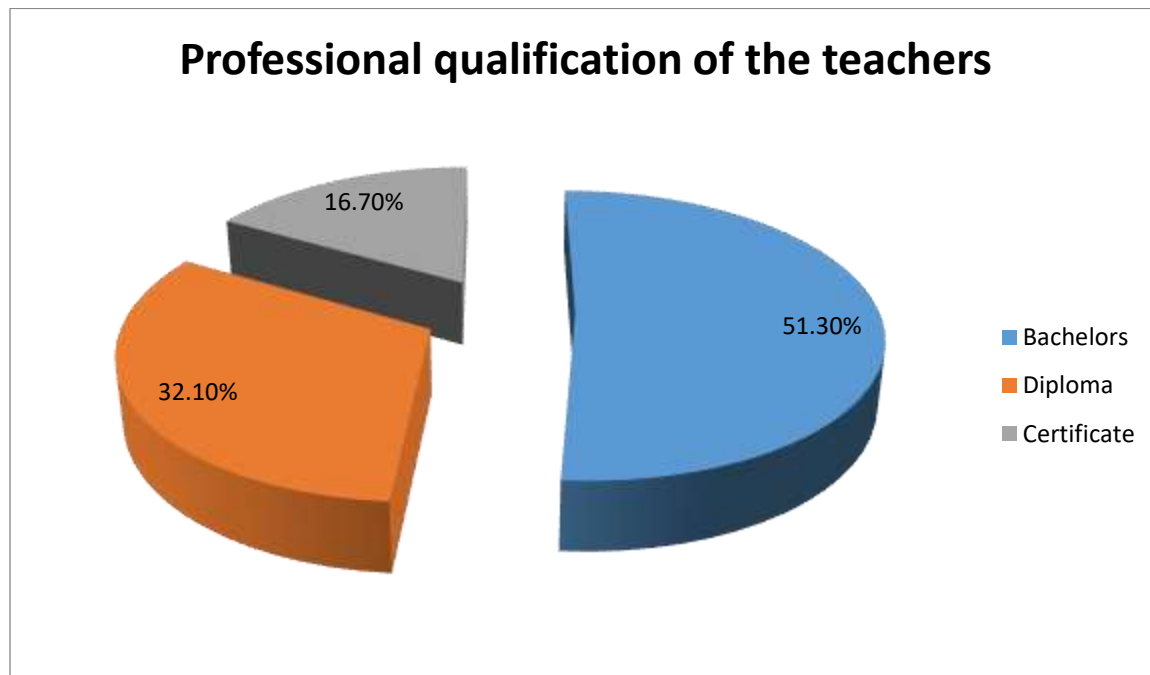
The researcher analyzed the academic qualification of teachers in community day secondary schools. This was to find out if teachers have the required qualification to teach in the secondary schools and check if it contributes to the retention of students in community day secondary schools. Figure 5 showed that 51.3% were bachelor's degree holders, 32.1% had diplomas while 16.7 % had Malawi School Certificate of Education and no teacher had Masters.

The findings showed that majority of the teachers were bachelor's degree holders which implied that community day secondary schools have qualified teachers who offer better education of which one of it, is to minimize dropout cases in schools. This concurs with Malawi Government National Education Policy(NEP) (2013) which mentioned that diploma qualification is a minimum qualification requirement for teaching in secondary schools.

Figure 7: Teaching Experience

Teachers were asked to indicate their teaching experience interms of years of service and the results are as shown in figure7.
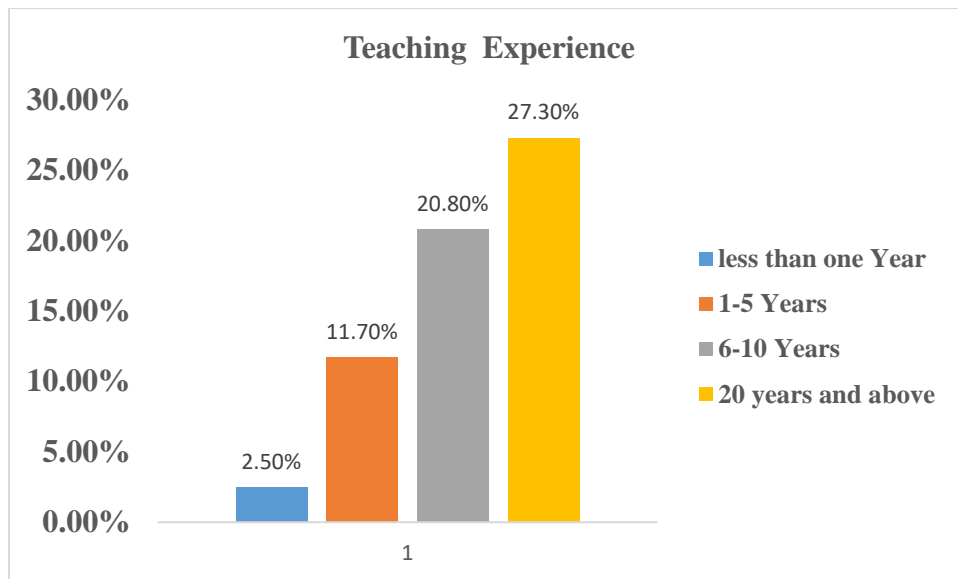
The research results in figure 7 indicated that 27.3% of teachers had teaching experience of

21 years and above while 20.8% had an experience of 6-10 years, 19.5% had taught of 16-20

years, 18.2% had teaching experience of 11- 15 years, 11.7% had an experience of 1-5 years and

2.5% had an experience of less than one year. The research results exposed that schools have

different teaching experience. However, the majority (27.3%) have been in teaching for 21 years

and above. This shows that community day secondary schools have experienced teachers. World

Bank (2010) confirmed that teaching experience is a valuable asset in schools because it assists the

teachers to be stable, efficient and maintain a better relationship in helping students, not to dropout

school.

4.3.3 Demographic Information of the Head Teachers

The researcher observed the gender of the head teacher and interviewed them on their academic qualifications and teaching experience. The researcher interviewed the 15 headteachers in the community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

The percentage of male headteachers was 86.7% while the female was (13.3%). The Malawi Education Policy has not yet achieved the full implementation of the 50-50 both sex recruitment of teachers (National Education Sector Plan, 2007 -2018). Therefore there is a need to address the gender gap in leadership in schools as one way of motivating and retaining girls in schools.

On academic qualification, 53.3% had bachelors degrees while 7(46.7%) had diplomas. None of the headteachers had a certificate, master's degree, or attended any course related to management or leadership of the school. The results indicate that headteachers are well qualified to teach in secondary schools.

The study results revealed that the teaching experience of the headteachers as follows; 6.7% had an experience of 10-15 years, 46.7% had an experience of 16-20 years and 46.7% had an experience of 21 years above. No headteacher had teaching experience of less than10 years. Gondwe (2016) commented that qualifications and experiences contribute to the success of an organization. Therefore all headteachers interviewed are capable of developing administrative strategies on retention of girls using their long experiences in teaching.

4.4 School Security measures on Retention of Girls.

The teachers and students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on security measures heateachers employ to retain girls in community day secondary schools. The findings are as shown on table 3: Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A), mean; positive or favouring the item, Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (DS) not to favouring the item. Neutral shows that the respondents were not sure of the answer.

Table 3: Frequency Table for School Security Measures

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
Students					
Your school has security guards	1(.3)	4(1.3)	12(3.9)	102(33.2)	188(61.9)
Your school has fence	24(7.8)	56(18.2)	3(1.0)	77(25.1)	147(47.9)
Your school has hostels	23(7.5)	56(18.2)	1(.3)	78 (25.4)	149(48.5)
Your has locked the doors, and gate	8(8.8)	58(18.9)	16(5.2)	60(19.5)	146(47.6)
Teachers					
Your school has security guards	4(5.1)	3(3.8)	0(0)	24(30.8)	47(60.3)
Your school has fence	5(6.4)	11(14.1)	0(0)	20(25.6)	42(53.8)
Your school provides students hostels	4(5.1)	8(10.3)	0(0)	18(23.1)	48(61.5)
Your school have locked gates, doors and windows	9(11.3)	9(11.3)	2(2.6)	18(23.1)	42(53.8)

The first item was to find out if the school has security guards for safety of the students. The study found that 188 (61.9%) of the students strongly disagreed that they have security guards, followed by 102 (33.2%) who disagreed. The 12(3.9%) of the students were neutral, 4(1.3%) agreed and 1(0.3%) strongly agreed that their school has security measures. The results from the teachers concurred with the students such that 47(60.3%) strongly disagreed, while 24(30.8%) disagreed that schools have security guards. Then 3(3.8%) agreed and 4(5.1%) strongly agreed that school has security guards to safe guards the school to influence the students to complete their education level.

The results from the students and teachers showed that majority disagreed that their schools have security guards. The findings means that headteachers do not use security guards as a strategy of influencing girls to complete their school. This also means schools lack security measures to influence the retention of the students in Community day secondary schools in Mchinji district. Hanover (2013) revealed that in United Kingdom nearly 70 percent of the students like to register to a school that has security guard or a police office for their safety. Furthermore, Glariana and Sola (2015) in Philippians stated that presents of the security guards within the campus ensure the standard of the security at school. Lack of security guards create unsecured feelings in learners and some dropout school (Komora, 2014; Kapur, 2018).

Furthermore, the students were asked whether their schools have fences for their security. The results showed that 147(47.9%) students strongly disagreed, followed by 77(25.1%) who disagreed, 24(7.8%) strongly agreed, 56(18.2%)agree and 3(1.0%) were neutral that schools have fences for security. The results from the teachers showed that 42(53.8%) strongly disagreed, followed by 20(25.6%) who disagreed, 5(6.4%) strongly agreed, 11(14.1%) agreed that schools have fences for security.

Basing on the results majority of the students and teachers, strongly disagreed that schools have fences. This exposed that headteachers do not use fences to influence retention of students. The results of mean that community day secondary schools lack fences to retain girls. According to Malawi National Education Policy (2013), head teachers with assistance from the Ministry of Education and the local community should make sure that all members of staff students and school property are secured to support learning processes. Chiwaula, Nampota, Meke, and Kunje, (2013) mentioned that security provides safety of the teaching and learning materials for the students to concentrate on learning and complete their education level.

The study also investigated if the school provides hostels to the students within the campus. The finding was;149 (48.5%) students strongly disagreed, 78(25.4%) disagreed, 56(18.2%) agreed and 23(7.5%) strongly disagreed that schools provide hostels.The results from the teachers also strongly disagreed with 48(61.5%), 18(23.1) disagreed while 8(10.3%) agreed and 4(5.1%) strongly disagreed that that schools provide hostels.

The results portrayed that the majority of the students and teachers, strongly disagreed that their schools provide hostels to accommodate girls every term. The findings also mean that headteachers do not use hostels as a strategy to influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools. In this case, some students operate from homes to school, while others rent in the neighboring villages. The results were in-line with Kunje,(2012) who mentioned that hostels within school campus assist students not to walk long distances and be fresh in class.

The researcher also investigated if head teachers use locked gates, doors and windows as a strategy of retaining students at school. The finding from students revealed that 146(47.6%) strongly disagreed, 60(19.5%) disagreed 58(18.9%) greed, 16(5.2%) were neutral, , 8(8.8%) strongly disagreed. The findings from the teachers also showed that 42(53.8%) strongly disagreed,

which is the majority followed by 18(23.1%) who disagreed, 2(2.6%) neutral 9(11.3%) agreed, 9(11.3%) strongly agreed. The results showed that schools do not have locked gates, classroom doors and windows. This means that the headteachers do not employ locked gates, doors and windows in order to retain students in Community Day Secondary schools in Mchinji district.

After the likert scale questions, the researcher asked an open-ended questions for students and to the teachers to explain also how they felt about the security of their schools. All the respondents stated that they are not satisfied with the security of their schools because of thieves and riots which involve the braking of the school building like windows and doors. Students and and majority of teachers complained. Teachers complained of high rate of students absenteeism, poor concentration during classes to those learning outside and coming late to school especially during the rain season. However, the headteachers have formulated time tables which start and finish daily classes in a time which accommodates students to be punctual in class and also reach home in good time. However this solution has its own disadvantages because it gives students few hours of learning compared to full boarding secondary schools.

The results concurred with Tinto's theory of departure which emphasizes that students' retention is dependent on their experiences at school. Hanover (2013) also emphasized that schools should be safe places where parents can send their children without worry and students can learn without fear. Therefore it is vital that school administrators should focus on security measures as their priorities in order to achieve its aim (Partner Alliance for Safer Schools, (PASS) 2017). Zais (2011) mentioned that schools should promote the safety of the students, physical and mental health fairness, and adequacy of disciplinary procedures, inorder to assist students to achieve their goals in life.

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed the headteachers on how their school security measures influence the retention of girls. The majority of the headteachers explained that their schools lack security in order to retain girls. Many community day secondary schools do not have fences, security guards, hostels within the campus to accommodate girls. In addition to that community days mostly experience riots, demonstrations due uncontrollable indiscipline cases. On the issues of accommodation, headteachers explained that they do request the near -by villages to provide renting houses to the students. However, a number of them complained that renting in villanges make it so difficult to apply disciplinary measures to students. Further, some also explained that students are not secured in the renting houses. Students complain of theft, landlords steal or frequently ask for food and borrowing of some material like: buckets, plates, basins pots and others refuse to give back to the owner. One headteacher lamented that:

> the problem is that these schools are supposed to be supported by the
> community, and most of them are typically found in rural areas where it is
> difficult to source funds to build infrastructures like fences or parameter walls,
> hostels to accommodate students within the campus. (Head teacher A,15ᵗʰ
> November 2020,)

Another head teacher also expressed that;

> Some students learn outside or in grass thatched classrooms or under the tree and
> without desks because schools have few classes. (Head teacher B, 10ᵗʰ November
> 2020).

The head teachers suggested other security resources the school can use to increase the retention of girls. The majority of the head teachers suggested; building fences and hostels within

the school campus, opening of the police units close to the schools. furthermore all the schools should have fence with locked gates and building to have locked doors and windows if not used.

Finally, the findings showed that community day secondary schools lack hostels, fences, security guards, discipline in order to retain girls in Mchinji district. This means that majority of the headteachers do not employ security measures as a strategy to influence the retention of girls in Community Day Secondary schools. Therefore there is a great need of improving the security measures in order to increase retention rate of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

4.5 School Sanitation Facilities and Retention of Students

The teachers and students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on sanitation facilities heateachers employ to retain girls in community day secondary schools. The findings are as shown on table 4: Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A) mean; positive or favouring the item, Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (DS) not to favouring the item. Neutral shows that the respondents were not sure of the answer.

Table 4: Frequences and percentages of Sanitation Facilities

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
Students					
Your school has enough water	23(7.5)	54(17.6)	8(2.6)	77(25.1)	145(47.2)
Your school has enough toilets for students	24(7.8)	53(17.3)	8(2.6)	72(23.5)	150(48.9)
Your School provides Sanitary pads to students	23(7.5)	34(11.1)	2(.7)	120(39.1)	128(41.7)
Teachers					
Your school has enough water	4(5.1)	9(11.5)	5(6.4)	20(25.6)	40(51.3)
Your school has enough toilets for students	8(10.3)	12(15.4)	3(3.9)	20(25.6)	35(44.9)
Your School provide Sanitary pads to students	10(12.8)	10(12.8)	6(7.9)	20(25.6)	32(41)

The study sought to find out from students and teachers if the schools have safe clean enough water to influence retention of students in schools. The results showed that 145(47.2%) students strongly disagreed, 77(25.1%) disagreed, 23(7.5%) strongly agreed, 54(17.6%) agree and 8(2.6%) were neutral that schools have safe clean water.The results from the students were in agreement with the findings from the teachers which showed that 40(50.3%) strongly disagreed, 20(25.6%) disagreed, 5(6.4%) were neutral, 9(11.5%) agreed, 4(5.1%) strongly agreed that schools have enough water to support the students and the whole school.

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According to the results, because majority of the students and the teachers strongly disagreed that schools have enough water to support students. The analysis from the documents showed that majority of the teachers mark the school register daily to keep track of the absenteeism and drop out of the students. The findings from the registers showed that many girls miss classes two to three days every month. This means that headteachers do not employ the availability of enough water resouces at school as a strategy to retain girls in community day secondary schools. This concurred with Huie (2016) who stated that girls drop out of the school due to a lack of clean water and bathroom facilities at their schools. McCalla (2016) also explained that girls who attend schools without water and sanitation facilities miss up to 40 days due to menstruation in a single academic year. Forty days of missed school leave them at a total disadvantage of hindering their ability to achieve their full potential academically (McCalla, 2016).

Secondly, the study sought to find out from students and teachers if the schools have enough toilets to support all the students at school. The results showed that 150(48.9%) students strongly disagreed, 72(23.5%) disagreed 24(7.8%) strongly agreed, 53(17.6%) agree and 8(2.6%) were neutral that schools have enough toilets. The responses from the teachers showed that 35(44.9%) strongly disagreed, 20(25.6%) disagreed, 12(15.4%) agreed, 8(10.3%) strongly agreed and 3(3.9%) were neutral that schools have enough toilets to support the students.

The results showed that teachers and the students strongly disagreed that sanitation facilities retain of the students because schools lack enough toilets to assist all students. This also potrayed that headteachers do not employ availability of toilets to influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools. The results agreed with the study conducted by Adukia (2018) in India which explained that lack of sanitation facilities was a problem at their schools such that some

girls relieve in the bush. This affects some girls such that they prefer missing classes every month during their periods, leading to their expulsion at school.

Furthermore, the study sought to find out from students and teachers if the schools give sanitary pads to the students. The results showed that 128(41.7%) students strongly disagreed 120(39.1%) disagreed, 23(7.5%) strongly agreed, 34(11.1%) agreed and 2(.7%) were neutral that school give them sanitary pads. The male teachers also showed that the majority 32(41%) strongly disagreed, 20(25.6%) disagreed, 10(12.8%) disagreed and 6(7.9%) were neutral that students receive sanitory pads from the school. This disclosed that distribution of pads to girls was not used to retain n girls in schools. The findings agreed with Komora (2014) who explained that shortage of water and toilets affects the welfare of the life of students at school and finally they dropout.

After the likert scale questions, the researcher asked an open-ended questions for students to explain also how they felt about the sanitation facilities in community day secondary schools. The students explained that they are not satisfied with the sanitation facilities. Their main concern was during mestration period that they have nowhere to exchange the sanitary materials because of congestion in the toilets. Water also was not enough since schools rely on one borehole. The results concurred with Tinto's theory of departure which emphasizes that students' retention is dependent on their experiences at school. Therefore, for the students to be retained at school need to be integrated and incorporated fully into the school environment as an institution.

Similarly, teachers suggested that the sanitation facilities need to be improved in order to retain students especialy in community day secondary schools. A number of the teachers mentioned that the headteachers should sensitize the community members to understand the

importance of the sanitation facilities in schools. The community members should also be sensitized to assist in building the toilets and improve water resources.

Furthermore, the headteachers were interviwed on how the sanitation facilities influence the retention of girls in schools. The majority of them explained that their schools have limited sanitation facilities. One head teacher explained that:

Our school does not have enough water, enough toilets and bathrooms, enough buckets. The toilets are not enough, mostly students go to the bush if there is congestion during break time, which make some girls feel embarrassed and choose to be absent especially when they are in monthly period. With such absenteeism slowly they are demotivated to proceed with their education and finally they drop out of school. (Head teacher A,15th November 2020,)

The headteachers were similarly interviewed to suggest other sanitation facilities the schools can use to increase the retention of girl. The majority of the head teachers proposed; building more toilets, bathrooms, provision of sanitary pads, buckets and soap, increase availability of water sources. Headteacher G (14th November 2021) said that: " provision of sanitation facilities is a challenge because lack of funds because community members and even parents in typical villages seem not to be willing to contribute the development of the school." Head teacher B (10th November, 2021) also explained that:

Madam, there is a need to civic educate parents and community members on how they can contribute to the development of the sanitation of the school. The challenge is that people from the villages also misuse the toilets and borehole for the students. They come at night to steal, misuse the toilets and water . When it comes to school contribution they do

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not participate and some students shout at the headteacher that they just want to steal or

misuse their money.

Rutakinikwa (2016) explained that in Tanzania some of the schools which were built in a place whereby there was no water sources, no toilets and also far from home area experienced high dropout rate of girls. According to the results, headteachers failed to retain students because schools do not have enough sanitation facilities such as toilets and water to support the students.

4.6. Guiding and Counseling and Retention of students

The teachers and students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on guiding and counseling services heateachers employ to retain girls in community day secondary schools. The findings are as shown on table 5: Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A), mean; positively or to favour the item, Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (DS) not to favour the item. Neutral shows that the respondents were not sure of the answer.

Table 5: Frequency Table Guiding and Counseling for Retention of Girls

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
Students					
Teachers advise and encourage you to complete school	9(3)	4(1.3)	12(3.9)	102(33.2)	180(58.6)
You never experienced riots at your school	58(18.9)	146(47.6)	16(5.2)	60(19.5)	8(8.8)
Your headteacher invites women role models	21(6.8)	35(11.4)	2(.7)	127(41.4)	122(39.7)
Teachers					
Your trained in guiding and counseling	7(9)	16(20.5)	3(3.8)	17(21.8)	35(45)
You easily advise and encourage girls to complete school	12(15.4)	8(10.3)	2(2.6)	24(30.8)	32(41)
Your school involve female role models to advise and encourage girls	8(10.3)	8(10.3)	3(3.8)	24(30.8)	35(45)

The first question was to find out from the students whether teachers advice and council students to complete school. The responses from the students revealed that 180(58.6%) strongly disagreed, 102(33.2%) disagreed, 9(3%) strongly agreed, 4(1.3%) agreed, 12(3.9%) were neutral. This means that guinding and counseling offered in schools do not influence students to complete their education level. Furthermore, the teachers were asked if they are trained to acquire skills of offering guidance and counseling. The findings from the teachers showed that; 35(45%) strongly disagreed, 17(21.8%) disagreed, 7(9 %) strongly agreed, 16(20.5%) agreed and 3(3.8%) were

neutral that they have been trained to offer guiding and counseling to the students. The results showed that teachers have no skills on how to guide and counsel students in schools.

The findings showed that students drop out of school due to a lack of proper guiding and counseling skills of the teachers in schools. This also agreed with System theory (1968) which recognizes that the failure of one part affects the whole system to achieve its goal. Guidance and counselling must be conducted by professional practioners in schools because it is a process by which a counsellor is formaly involved to assist a client who is in a complicated situation (Wango, 2015). Kimemia (2012) emphasizes that to prevent students drop out in schools, effective counseling facilities should be in place and school counselors should be fully trained to acquire the skills of handling a client. Students are more close and easily express themselves to their teachers to than to the school administrators, therefore headteachers should empower teachers to provide guiding and counselling to the learners (Wango, 2017).

Secondly, the researcher asked the students if their schools had never experienced riots. The findings from the students revealed that 146(47.6%) strongly disagreed, followed by 58(18.9%) who disagreed, 60(19.5%) agreed, 8(2.6%) agreed and 16(5.2%) were neutral that their schools have never experienced riots. Furthermore, the teachers were asked whether they easily advice and encourage students to complete their school. The responses from the male teachers showed that 32(41%) strongly disagreed, while 24(30.8%) disagreed, 12(15.4%) strongly agreed, 8(10.3%) agreed and 2(2.6%) were neutral, that they easily advice and encourage students to complete their school. The findings indicated that guiding and counseling do not influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools. According to the results community day secondary schools a frequently experience riots and teachers find it hard to advice and encourage students to complete their education level. Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS) , (2017) asserted that

administrators and teachers are responsible for helping to mold youth into productive citizens, and providing them with the resources they need to grow into successful adults. Therefore headteachers should ensure that schools should provide genuine counselors to enhance retention students (Wesonga, 2010).

Further, the students and teachers were asked if their schools involve women role models to advice and encourage girls to complete their school. According to the students' responses; 127(41.4%) strongly disagreed while 122 (35.2%) disagreed, 21(6.8%) strongly agreed, 35(11.4%) agreed and 2(.7%) were neutral that that school invite women role models to advice and motivate girls to complete schools. The responses from the teachers strongly disagreed with 35(45.6%) which were the majority, seconded by 24(30.8%) who disagreed, 8(10.3%) strongly disagreed and 3(3.8%) were neutral that schools involve women role models to advise and motivate girls to complete their education level.

The findings showed that guiding and counseling do not in influencing retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji. This concurred with the system theory (1968) which states that for any organization to survive should rely on the contributions from the environment in which it is established. The Forum for African Women Education in Malawi (FAWEMA), (2012) explained that presence of female teachers and role models also influence retention through their academic guidance and advice so much so that girls discover the value of education. Therefore it is viable that headteachers should provide female role models to guide, counsel, encourage and give famine support to girls to complete their school (FAWEMA, 2012). According to system theory, the school is a system that relies on interaction and interdependence of different parts to achieve its goal. This denotes that headteachers should not underestimate the

influences from other education stakeholders in dealing with issues affecting the retention of learners in schools.

In addition to the likert scale questions, the researcher asked the students and teachers to suggest possible guiding and counseling ways which can be employed in order to reduce dropout rate in schools. The majority of the students suggested that headteachers should be inviting the prominent educated women to share their life experience on the benefits of education. Majority of the teachers also suggested that they should be trained to aquire the skills on how to guide and counsel students. The majority of teachers proposed that headteachers should appoint experienced and trained teachers to provide guiding and counseling to the girls in order to reduce dropout in schools. Teachers also proposed that the headteachers should ask the ministry of education to increase female teachers in community day secondary schools. A number of teachers also stated that girls should be given leadership positions as one way of empowering, exposing and motivating them to continue their school.

The analysis from the documents also showed that almost every school had policies on guiding and counseling. One of that policy was that every school should appoint two teachers to assist students in guiding and counseling . However the majority of the headteachers complained that guiding and counseling is not achieving its intended outcome many girls still dropped out after receiving it in schools. Even the girls who dropped out school because of pregnant and re-register they also dropped out. This showed that teachers lack skills of guiding and counseling. Among the 15 only 3 headteachers mentioned that their schools have teacher who are trained in guiding and counseling. A good number of headteachers complained that their schools experience many indicipline cases and riots which affects some girls to dropout of the school.

In my school in 2018, 15 girls dropped out of the school because there was riots; windows, doors were broken, in library books were stolen and some were burnt. This led to the urgent closing of the school and opened after one month just to sought out some issues. It was within that one month when 10 girls were found pregnant such that it was hard for them to continue schooling. The other five girls they decided to dropout and continued with their businesses at Mchinji boarder. I appointed some teachers to offer guiding and counseling to students but it is not fully effective because they are not trained (Headteachers F, 27 November 2021).

Headteacher C, (28 November 2021) complained that:

As a headteacher I am willing to have full trained teachers in guidance and counselling but the institution can not afford due to lack of money to send teachers for training. The appointed teachers are just use their little knowledge they learnt from the school. However with the current situation, our students are affected with many things which needs to be handled by a fully trained counselor.

Furthermore, headteacher D, (11 December, 2021) also explained that

Madam , sometimes we blame students too much while we are the source of the problem. Mostly students join school with innocent mind just gearing on how they can achieve their education level. However it is not only students who need counseling, even us teachers we are affected in one way or another in our life. Therefore how can a blind man lead fellow blind man. In this case the issue of counseling and guidance is a long process. Headteachers a lone can not afford unless the ministry of education intervine by sending teachers to schoo, just to specialize in that.

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The interviews with the headteachers showed that majority agreed that they have failed to employ guiding and couseling in order to retain girls in community day secondary schools. Headteachers also complained of indiscipline and riot cases in their schools. Furthermore they complained of lack of funds to train the teachers in guidaince and counseling unless the ministry of education to interviene.

The results agreed with Tinto's theory which emphasizes that students' retention is dependent on the experiences of the students at school. The theory explains that students who are satisfied with the in formal and informal academic and social systems of the school tend to stay (Hanover 2010). On the contrary, those with negative experiences tend to withdraw and drop out from the school institution. Students also join school institutions with determination to succeed; therefore they set the goals which they want to achieve. School administrators and the institution also set their standards, requirements, and goals. When the two goals crush, mostly, students suffer, their school interests begin to decline, and finally, they drop out (Rizkallah & Seitz, 2017). In this case, the integration process cannot be successful unless, the school has good policies, an enabling environment, and enough resources to sustain the students in their secondary level (Adoyo, 2014).

4.7 Community Involvement and Retention of Students

The teachers and students were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on whether heateachers involve community members to retain girls in community day secondary schools. The findings are as shown on table 6: Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A), meant positive or to favour the item, Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (DS) not to favour the item. Neutral shows that the respondents were not sure of the answer.

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Table 6: Frequency Table on Community Involvement on Retention of Students

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
Students (girls) Community members encourage girls in school	48(15.6)	56(18.2)	22(7.2)	120(39.1)	61(19.9)
Communities fund fees	21(6.8)	34(11.1)	2(.7)	128(41.7)	122(39.7)
Community members create secured atmosphere at school	31(9.8)	32(10.4)	1(.3)	132(41.9)	111(35.2)
Community has by-laws to safeguard girls	48(15.6)	56(18.2)	22(7.2)	120(39.1)	61(19.9)
Community members help in building school facilities	37(12.1)	46(15.0)	2(.7)	120(39.1)	102(33.2)
Teachers: Community encourage girls to complete school	5(6.4)	11(14.1)	0(0)	36(46.1)	26(33.3)
Community members are involved to fund fees,	6(7.7)	4(5.1)	1(1.3)	35(45)	32(41)
Community members create secured atmosphere at school	4(5.1)	1(1.3)	1 (1.3)	39(50)	33(42.3)
Communities participate in building school facilities	8(10.3)	12(15.4)	0()	33(42.3)	25(32.5)
Community has by-laws to safeguard girls	5(6.4)	9(11.5)	0	40(51.3)	24(30.8)

The first question was to find out from the students and the teachers whether community members encourage students to complete school. The responses from the students revealed that 120(39.1%) disagreed, 61(19.9%) strongly disagreed, 48(15.6%) strongly agreed, 56(18.2%) agreed, 22(7.2%) were neutral. Furthermore , the findings from the teachers showed that 36(46.1%) disagreed, 26(33.3%) strongly disagreed, 5(6.4%) strongly agreed and 11(14.1%) agreed that communities advise and encourage students to complete school. This means that community members do not encourage students to complete school. The findings show that students drop out of school due to a lack of encouragement from the members of their communities. Kirimu and Muteti (2016) explained that for the students to use their potential to the maximum at school, they need to be given encouraging advice about school. Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC), (2014) explains that communities are responsible for inculcating values in girl child education through advice and encouragement. Teresiana, Timothy, and Ongoti (2015) also stated that students are retained if they feel supported and encouraged by parents, relatives, teachers, and peers. This also agreed with System theory (1968) which recognizes that the failure of one part affects the whole system to achieve its goal. Therefore the results mean that community involvement has failed to contribute to the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district.

The researcher also investigated whether the community members contribute to paying the school fees for the students and providing teaching resources and sanitary materials for the students in schools. The findings from the students revealed that 128(41.7%) disagreed, followed by 122(39.7%) who strongly disagreed, 21(6.8%) strongly agreed, 34(11.1%) agreed and 2(.7%) were neutral that communities contribute to the funding of fees, learning materials like buying books for the school and sanitary materials. The teachers' responses show that 35(45%) disagreed,

32(41%) strongly disagreed, followed by 6(7.7%) who strongly agreed. 4(5.1%) agreed and 1(1.3%) was nuetral that community members fund fees and learning materials.The findings mean that community members do not contribute funding for fees, teaching, and learning materials such as books hence difficult to retain students at school. The findings are in line with Wallace (2012) that parents do not care supporting the schooling of their children although pretend to prioritize education. The findings also concurred with Barnett (2013) and Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC), (2014) who emphasized that the role of the community is to provide financial support and learning materials to their children at school. The failure of the community members to fund fees and learning materials contribute to the dropping out of school Tinto's theory commented that the availability of resources such as teaching and learning materials moralize and retain girls at school. Unfortunately, students do not receive enough support from the community members such as fees and learning materials. In this case, the community members have failed to contribute to the retention of students because they do not support them with school fees, learning, and sanitary material which force some to dropout of school.

Further, the researcher asked whether the community members contribute to creating a secured atmosphere at school. According to students' responses; 132(41.9%) disagreed while 111(35.2%) strongly disagreed, 32(10.4%) agreed, 31(9.8%) strongly agree and 1(.3%) was neutral that community members contribute in creating secured atmosphere at school.

The responses from the teachers showed that 39(50%) disagreed, 33(42.3 %) strongly disagreed, 4(5.1%) strongly agreed, 1(1.3%) agreed that community members create secured atmosphere. The findings mean that community members do not contribute in creating secured atmosphere of the school. Barnett (2013) explained that communities are responsible for the security of the students, infrastructures, teaching and learning materials within their locality. This

concurred with the system theory (1968) which states that for any organization to survive should rely on the contributions from the environment in which it is established. However, it is the responsibility of the head teacher to coordinate and manage school- communities operations such as security through community involvement.

The researcher also asked whether community members participate in building school facilities. The findings from the students show that 102(33.2%) strongly disagreed, 120(39.1%) disagreed, 37(12.1%) strongly agreed, 46(15.0%) agreed, and 2(.7%) neutral. Similary the teachers' responses showed that 33(42.3%) disagreed, 25(32.5%) strongly disagreed, 8(10.3%) strongly agreed, 12(15.4%) agreed that communities members participate in building school facilities such hostels, fence, and classes. The female teachers' responses also showed that 12(63.2%) strongly disagreed, 3(23.1%) strongly disagreed, 4(17.9%) agreed, 2(6.4%) strongly agreed that communities members participate in building school facilities such hostels, fence, and classes.

According to the results community involvement is not contributing to the retention of students in community day secondary schools because members do not participate in building school facilities like; hostels, fences and classes. Muthoni (2015) explained that communities need to contribute to the purchasing of school materials, construction of buildings such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries. According to system theory (1968) school is a system that relies on interaction and interdependence of different parts to achieve its goal. As such, the head teacher as the administrator represents a crucial component of the school as a social system on the retention of students. In this way communities around the school play critical roles in boosting the schools' administration thus improving retention of students (FAWEMA, 2012). The headteacher is bound to involve community members such as; chiefs (Muthoni, 2015). This denotes that headteachers as

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the chief administrators of the school should not underestimate the contributions of communities in dealing with issues affecting the retention of learners in schools.

The study also asked if communities have created the by-laws to safeguard students from any act influencing them to drop out of school. By-laws are rules created by chiefs for the community members to implement the policies about a certain problem. The responses from the students showed that; 120(39.1%.) disagreed, 61(19.9%s strongly agreed, 56(18.2%) agreed, 48(15.6%) strongly agreed and 22(7.2%) were neutral. The responses from the teachers were also as follows; 40(51.3%) disagreed followed by 24(30.8%), who strongly disagreed, 9(11.5%) agreed, 5(6.4%) strongly agreed and no respondent was neutral that community members created the by-laws to retain girls in schools.

The finding exposed that the students and the teachers disagreed that community members have the by-laws to safeguard the students to complete their education. As such the results show that majority of the community members do not apply the by-laws to assist students to complete their schools. CARFED (2021) explained that the by-laws guide stakeholders to behave according to the expectations of society. CARFED (2021) suggested the formation of by-laws to minimize dropout rate in schools. Chance (2013) also explained community participation includes the involvement of the stakeholders in the creation and application of the laws, policies, and regulations to support students and for the school to achieve its goal. Therefore administrators should involve community members in school activities for the benefit of the students (Hanover, 2014).

In addition to the likert scale questions, the researcher asked students and teachers open-ended questions to suggest possible ways community could help to reduce dropout in schools. The researcher also interviewed head teacher, education officer and the chief elders if co possible ways community members could help to reduce dropout in schools.

The majority which is 60% of the students suggested that headteachers should strengthen the Mother Group members to force girls who dropped out to be readmitted to school. In addition to that 50% of the students suggested that teachers should be faithful in giving school reports to parents to know the performance of their daughters so that they should advise or encourage wherever possible. Lastly, 19% of the students suggested cooperation between head teachers, community, and the neighbouring police unit to promote security at school and in renting houses especially when riots arise. Finally, the students recommended that the head teachers must keep on reminding the parents and community members to give financial and moral support to their children at school.

Teachers were also asked to suggest other ways which could be used to involve community members to reduce dropout among girls. The first point was that headteachers should cooperate with the Mother Group members and Parent Teacher Association in advising and encouraging students to complete their education. The headteachers should strengthen the involvement of Parent Teacher Association committee in all schools and discuss issues affecting students and find solutions together. Busch and Fernandez (2019) mentioned that most parents ignore school meetings because they do not understand how their involvement impacts the academic wellbeing of their children. Therefore teachers suggested that headteachers should learn to create a conducive environment for effective participation of the community members in the activities of the school.

The results from the interviews with headteachers show that community members do not contribute fully to the retention of girls in community day secondary schools. Furthers more majority of the headteachers said that despite the emphasis on re-entry policy and the support from the Mother group to send back to school, girls drop out again. Among the 15 only two headteachers mentioned that chiefs around their schools have introduced the by-laws to safeguard girls from dropping out of school. For example, they punish every parent whose girl child dropped out of school. Chiefs demand a goat or money value equal from parents whose child dropout of school. *Despite the by-laws, some parents prefer to pay the fine to chief than forcing a child to go to school (*Headteachers F, 27 November 2021).

Headteacher C, (28 November 2021) complained that:

> *it will take time to have 100% retention in schools because some parents are not*
> *responsible, they do not want to take part to support their girl child education.*
> *Mostly they push their responsibilities to teachers and other mother groups and*
> *organization such as United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Campaign*
> *for Female Education (CARFED) to pay fees and give full support to their girls.*

Furthermore, headteacher D, (11 December, 2021) also explained that

> *Many supporting groups do not offer full support to girls because they have many*
> *needy children as a result they expect parents or guardians to contribute something*
> *to the education of their children. As a result many girls drop out school due to lack*
> *of full support especially basic needs such as books, house rent at school. As such*
> *girls are forced to run away from school to their man or boyfriends who can give*
> *them the basic needs. This leads them to have unwanted pregnancies and also low*
> *concentration in class hence they drop out of the school.*

Furthermore, the headteachers said that community members prefer agriculture and business more than education because it is more profitable than those who are employed. Farmers consider their life style as far much better than that of the civil servants like teachers.

Madam, it is not easy to end school dropout completely because this area has well to do farmers an d business people who are living better life than teachers because of farming. They have cars, well built houses and everything to sustain their life than teachers and other civil servants. Therefore education to some of parents is wastage of money and time. Such parents prefer a girl to marry to a reach farmer than to focus on education (Head teacher F, 23 November, 2021).

Majority of the headteachers suggested that the community members should be sensitized on the importance of education and their role on education of their children.

The results from the headteachers show that community involvement as a strategy is not effective in contributing to retention of girls in community day secondary schools. The observation is that not all parents and community members value education of the girls in Mchinji district. In some communities parents value agriculture more than education. Parents see themselves prospering compared to educated people because of business and agriculture. Therefore, they do not see the benefit of supporting education of the girl child. Although there is a policy that marriage below the age of 18 is illegal but in real sense this is not effective (CARFED, 2021). Some girls also prefer to get married to well to do farmers rather than school. Not all appreciate the importance of education as such there is still existence of some elements which undervalue education in Mchinji district. Wallace (2012) commented that majority of parents prioritize education of children but this cannot be generalized because not all of them care about it.

Mutanana and Gasva (2016) recommended the use of awareness campaigns on the importance of educating the girl-child and punishment of parents supporting early marriage.

The Education Officer also was interviewed on the ways the Ministry of Education employ to contribute to the retention of girls in schools in Mchinji district. The education officer explained that the ministry is trying to involve organization such as Center for Innovation in Science Education (CISE), Campaign for Female Education Development (CAMFED), and Federal Investigative Services Division (FISD) to implement education projects to reduce girls' dropout rate in schools. The education officer also revealed that the ministry of education is also trying to allocate female teachers rural areas although Malawi has shortage of qualified teachers with very few female teachers. The aim of allocating female teachers in rural areas is be role models, to motivate and encourage girls to complete their school (CARFED, 2021).

Furthermore, the ministry of education has introduced re-entry policy where by students who dropped school re-register Mwanza (2014) stated that re-entry policy favours only girls with responsible family members who can assist in taking care of the child when the mother is at school. Furthermore the mother might need tuition fee, learning materials which some family members cannot afford (Mwanza, 2014).

Furthermore the Chief elders were asked ways in which their communities contribute to retention of students in their area. Kachaje (2015) stated that children are born and brought up in the community therefore traditional leaders should take up their role, encouraging the education of their children more than other stakeholders. The responses show that out of the five Chiefs elders only one responded that they are trying to establish the by-laws in his area which punish every family which allows their girl child to marry at an illegal age and drop out of the school without proper reasons. However four Chiefs elders explained that they do not have the by-laws in relation

to retention of students. However formal and informal education compensates each other. Therefore it is important that students should be given holistic education. This means that culture gives identity and sense of belonging to the students and education helps the student to develop the society effectively as such community members are encouraged to go to school. One Chief Elders (18, July 2021) explained that;

> *I have introduced the by-laws to guide people what to do in order to retain girls in school. It pains me when the ministry of education blames chiefs that we are reluctant to terminate some cultural practices that is why there is an increase in school dropout rate among girls in Mchinji district. Yes, I accept the blame but thus not true. There is no way we can have a tribe or a society without culture and customs. Then where is our identity? The only solution is that let culture be there but encourage the youth to go far with their education so that they gain knowledge of how to separate traditions, culture and formal education. Education without cultural values is inhuman.* (Chief A, 10th July, 2021).

Lundu (2018) emphasized that culture becomes a problem when it contradicts with goals and mission of the school within that locality. Commented that a good culture is known by level of education of its people and education is a key to the development of the society, therefore chiefs should encourage their people to go to school Lundu (2018). Despite the fact that Lundu encourages the chiefs to contribute to the education of the girls in their areas they community members still maintain their cultures which undervalue education.

Another, Chief explained that he has involved the Mother Group. This is a team of local women form from within the community to encourage girls not to dropout school. The Mother Group makes a follow up of girls who dropped out of the school and take them back. The only challenge is that some girls dropout again to get married. Civil Society Education Policy Coalition

(2014) mentioned that despite the introduction of school marriageable age and re-entry policy girls still dropout school.

The findings from the students, headteachers, teachers, education officer and the chief elders that community involvement show the involvement of the community members is not effective to retain students in schools. Therefore there is need of cooperation among all the education stakeholders such as teachers, head teachers, chiefs and community members in order to retain students in schools Barnett (2012) who said that, mutual partnership between school and community assist head teachers and education stake holders to identify challenges that affect education and find solution together. Kirimi and Muteti (2016) concurred that for the students to use their potential to the maximum at school, they need full support from their communities in the form of advice, encouragement, material and financial needs from different education stakeholders. The findings concurred with System Theory (1968) which views an organization as an organism made up of many subsystem parts which harmoniously work together to achieve its goals. The Malawi Education Policy 2016 emphasizes on improvement of governance and management of secondary education through community participation in secondary schools however head teachers complained that there is very minimal participation in community day secondary schools. According to the results are community members especially parents still show elements of negligence to participate fully in school activities hence persistence drop-out among girls in Mchinji district.

In summary, the findings from the students, teachers, headteachers, education officer and chief elders show that community members do not contribute to retention of girls because they do not value education. Muthoni (2015) explained that, mutual partnership between school and

community is very important because it assists in identifying challenges affecting students to

progress in education and find solutions together.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings and the conclusion of the research study. Finally, it presents the recommendation based on the findings of the study. It also suggests areas for further studies .

5.1 Summary

The study focused on the influences of the headteachers' administrative strategies on retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi. From the background, the study discovered that the headteachers influence all of the activities happening in schools and one of it is improving retention of girls. Precisely, the study concentrated on security measures, school sanitation facilities, guiding and counseling services and community involvement as a strategies employed by the headteachers to influence retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi.

The findings from the study showed that security measures, sanitation facilities, guiding and counseling and community involvement are not adequately used as strategies to retain girls in community day secondary schools. The findings revealed that majority of the headteachers do not use security guards, hostels, fences and locked gates, doors and windows as strategies to influence girls to complete their school. This revealed that community day secondary schools do not have fences, security guards, hostels, locked gates, doors and windows to increase the security of the students and of the school. This showed that Community day secondary schools lack security measures to retain the students in Mchinji district.

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Basing on the results from school sanitation facilities majority of the respondents revealed that schools lack enough water, enough toilets and do not give sanitary pads to students. This also portrayed that headteachers do not use the availability of enough water, toilets and sanitary pads as as strategies of retaining girls in community day secondary schools.

Furthermore the findings showed that students drop out of school due to a lack of proper guiding and counseling skills of the teachers in schools. Many community day secondary schools are prone to riots because teachers have limited skills of guiding and counseling the students.

Lastly the finding of the study revealed that the government of Malawi is trying to employ different ways such as: introduction of re-entry policy, involving organizations to support girls to complete their school. However the findings showed that students dropout of the school due to lack of encouragement and support from their community members such as parents and relatives. The findings also revealed that majority of the community members do not contribute; funds for fees, buildings school facilities, do not provide secured atmosphere for learning and few chiefs apply the by-laws to encourage girls to complete their school. The findings further showed that not all parents and community members value education of the girls in Mchinji district. In some communities parents value agriculture more than education. Parents see themselves prospering compared to educated people because of business and agriculture. Therefore, they do not see the benefit of supporting education of the girl child.

From the findings it is clear that the headteachers are not fully using the following startegies; security measures, sanitation facilities, guiding and counseling services and community involvement to influence the retention of girls in community day secondary schools. Therefore there is a need to improve these strategies in order to retain girls in community day secondary schools.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concluded that headteachers in community day secondary schools are still facing challenges to retain girls in Mchinji district. From the findings it is evident that they are various strategies which have been identified that headteachers can employ in order to influence retention however are not fully utilized.

The provision of the security measures like security guards, fences and hostels, locked gates, doors and windows are not employed as strategies to retain girls in community day secondary schools. Majority of the respondents showed that their school have no fences, hostels, security gurds and their class room doors remain unlocked. This means that schools have no security to safeguard students and school property.

Furthermore, school sanitation facilities such as: toilets and water are not enough to support the students in community day secondary schools. Schools also do not provide sanitary pads to girls such that girls prefer to be absent from class when they are mestrating. Therefore these make it difficult for many girls to complete their education.

Interms of guiding and counseling the teachers are not fully trained in this field. As such many girls dropout of the school due to lack of proper guidance. Schools also experience many indiscipline cases and riots due to lack of proper guiding and counseling.

Lastly, the headteachers have not yet achieved the skills of involving of community members in order to retain girls in schools. Community members do not encourage and support girls to complete their school. They also show that they are not fully willing to give contribution to some school development activities such as: boarding facilities, fences, girls hostels, toilets and in providing sanitary materials inoder to retain students.

The study also concluded that community day secondary schools benefit members of the community. Therefore headteachers should intensify the involvement of the Parent Teacher Association committees, cooperation among headteachers, teachers and the community members. Finally, the girls, teachers and headteacher emphasized that parents and community members should give full financial and moral support to their children at school.

5. 3 Recommendations for the Study

The researcher made recommendations based on the findings of the study. These include: recommendations for theory, recommendations for the action, recommendations for policy and recommendations for further research.

From the findings, it is clear that the headteachers do not fully understand Tinto's theory of retention and System theory and as such, proper application of these theories has been a challenge. This has been demonstrated by their lack of effectiveness in the use security measures, sanitation facilities, guiding and counseling services and community involvement to influence the retention of girls in community day secondary schools. Therefore there is a need for the headteachers to fully understand Tinto's theory of retention and System theories so as to be able to apply them in order to retain girls in community day secondary schools.

The study found that there are inadequate security measures and sanitation facilities in schools. Therefore it recommends that headteachers should cooperate with the board of management Parent teacher Association (PTA) to make sure that security measure and sanitation are found in order to retain girls in Community Day Secondary Schools.

In regard to guidance and counseling majority of the teachers are not fully trained in guiding and counseling. Therefore lack of adequate skills in counseling is contributing to indiscipline cases and riots in school which leads to drop out many students. Therefore the

ministry of education should also train teachers to be expertise in offering guidance and counseling in schools.

On community involvement, the study found that members do not encourage students to complete their school. Community members do not contribute to: the building of the school facilities, fees, conducive learning atmosphere and establishment of the by-laws to support girls to complete their education. Therefore members should be sensitized on the importance of education and the benefits of their involvement in the activities of the school. In addition, the Ministry of Education should improve working conditions for teachers such as salaries and accommodation which influence community members' to under-value the importance of education and value agriculture as a reliable source of income.

The study recommends for further discussions that can help the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop policies that can assist to retain girls in schools. This can be done by allowing the ministry to prioritize the distribution of materials to all students.

Lastly, the study focused on the influence of the headteachers' administrative strategies on the retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district in Malawi. Therefore study recommends for further research on strategies employed to retain girls in secondary schools in other districts of Malawi and also in other countries that have a problem of an increase of school dropouts among girls in secondary schools. Such would help to generate findings that would assist to retain girls in schools. In addition to that, the current study has concentrated on retention of girls only. Therefore it recommends that further studies should be conducted on the strategies which can be employed in order to retain boys in secondary schools.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT LETTER

Tangaza University College

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

P. O. Box 15055, 00509

Langata, Nairobi.

18th April 2020.

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student specializing in Masters in Leadership and Administration in school of education (Christ the Teacher Institute for Education) in the Tangaza University College. I am conducting a study titled: Head teachers' administrative strategies on retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district, Malawi. You have been selected together with others to participate in this study. Kindly feel free to respond to the items in this questionnaire as honest as possible. Your identity will be treated with highest confidentiality and the information you give will be used for the purpose of the study only. Therefore to maintain confidentiality, do not indicate your name on this questionnaire. Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Kindly sign on the space provided if you are willing to participate.

Yours faithfully,

Euteria Delia Paliani.   Name of the Respondent ………………………………..

                                             Signature……………………..Date…………………

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APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

In this section you are requested to give demographic information. Please give your opinion by ticking (√) on the suitable space provided below.

1. Kindly indicate your class

        Form 1   (   )

        Form 2   (   )

        Form 3   (   )

        Form 4   (   )

2. Kindly indicate your age bracket

    Below   12   (   )

        12-15   (   )

        16- 20   (   )

        21 years above   (   )

SECTION B:

3. The questions below will assist the researcher to investigate whether the headteachers admistrative strategies influence girls to complete their education in your school. The 5 point Likert scale below shows that SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree. The rating scale indicates that strongly agree represents the highest level of your opinion and strongly disagree is the lowest level of your opinion. Kindly give your opinion by ticking (√) in the relevant box provided :

(i) **Security Measures Strategy**	SA	A	N	D	SD
Your school has fence for the security of the property					
Your School has security guards					
Your school provides hostels					
Your teachers are friendly?					
(ii) **School Sanitation Facilities Strategy**	SA	A	N	D	SD
Your school has enough safe clean water					
Your school has enough toilets					
Your School provides sanitary towels					
(iii) **Guiding and Counselling Strategy**	SA	A	N	D	SD
Teachers advise and encourage you to complete school					
You have never experienced riots at your school					
Your headteacher invites women role models to advice and encourage you to complete school					
(iv) **Community Involvement Strategy**	SA	A	N	D	SD
Community members encourage girls to complete school					
Your head teacher involve community members to fund your fees, teaching and learning materials.					
Your community members create conducive atmosphere of the students and the school Your					
Your community members have created the by-laws to safe guard girls from dropping out of the school					
Community members participate in in building school facilities					

1. How do you feel with the following strategies at your school :

   i.   School security measures on retention of girls.

   _____

   _____

   ii. School sanitation facilities on retention of girls

   _____

   _____

   iii. Guiding and counselling on retention of girls

   _____

   iv. Community involvement on retention of girls

   _____

(i)   In your own opinion suggest other strategies the school can use to assist girls to complete their education?

_____

_____

Thank you.

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please give your opinion by ticking (√) in the space provided.

2. Kindly indicate your gender

   Male ( )   Female   ( )

3. Kindly indicate your age bracket

   24 years and below   ( )

   25-30   ( )

   31-40   ( )

   41-50   ( )

   51 years above   ( )

4. Kindly indicate your highest level of your Professional qualifications

   Certificate   ( )

   Diploma   ( )

   Bachelor's Degree   ( )

   Masters   ( )

   Any other specify _____

5. Indicate your years of teaching experience

   Less than one year   ( )

   1-5 years   ( )

   6-10 years   ( )

   11- 15 years   ( )

   16- 20 years   ( )

   21 years above   ( )

SECTION B

6. Kindly indicate your level by using likert scale provided. The Likert scale below shows that SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree. The rating scale indicates that strongly agree represent the highest level of your opinion and strongly disagree is the lowest level of your opinion. Kindly give your opinion by ticking (√) the relevant box provided below:

(i) Security Measures Strategy	SA	A	N	D	SD
Your school has fence for the security of the property					
Your School has security guards					
Your school provides hostels					
Your school has locked gates, doors and windows					
(ii) School Sanitation Facilities Strategy	SA	A	N	D	SD
Your school has enough safe clean water					
Your school has enough toilets					
Your School provides sanitary towels					
(iii) Guiding and Counseling Strategy	SA	A	N	D	SD
Your school has trained teachers to acquire skills in guiding and counselling					
You easily advise and encourage girls to complete school					
Your headteacher invites women role models to advice and encourage girls to complete school					
(iv) Community Involvement Strategy	SA	A	N	D	SD
Community members encourage students to complete school					
Community members to fund fees, teaching and learning materials for the students.					
Community members create conducive atmosphere of the students and the school					
Community members participate in in building school facilities					
Community members have created the by-laws to safe guard girls from dropping out of the school					

7. How do you feel with the following strategies at your school:

    v.   School security resources on retention of girls

_____

_____

    vi.   School sanitation facilities on retention of girls

_____

_____

    vii.   Guiding and counseling on retention of girls

_____

_____

    viii.   Community involvement on retention of girls

_____

_____

8. In your own opinion what other strategies can help to retain girls in your

school?

_____

_____

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Below are the questions, please give your opinion by ticking (√) in the space provided.

9. What is your gender?

   Male (   )   Female   (   )

10. What is your Professional qualification?

   Certificate   (   )

   Diploma   (   )

   Bachelor's Degree   (   )

   Masters   (   )

   Any other specify _____

11. For how long have you been in teaching?

   Less than one year   (   )

   1-5 years   (   )

   6-10 years   (   )

   11- 15 years   (   )

   16- 20 years   (   )

   22 years above   (   )

SECTION B:

1. According to your experience, how does the following influence retention of girls at your school?

i.   School security measures

_____

_____

ii.   Sanitation facilities

_____

_____

_____

iii.   guiding and counseling

_____

_____

_____

iv.   community invoment

_____

_____

_____

2. Suggest other strategies the school can use to increase retention of girls in your school?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATION OFFICER

1. In what ways do the ministry of education contribute to the retention of

   students in community day secondary school in Mchinji district?

   _____

   _____

   Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE CHIEF ELDERS

Community Involvement Strategy on Retention of students in Schools

1. As a member of a school community, in what ways does your community contribute on

   retention of girls in Community day secondary schools in Mchinji district?

   _____

   _____

   Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDEX G. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

DOCUMENT	ANALYSIS DETAILS	COMMENTS
Class registers	Checking dropout rate of girls in each form in schools	
Admission registers	Find out how many girls are still in schools since they started form one.	
Policies on retention of girls in schools and rules.	Checking government and school policies applied to retain girls in schools	

APPENDIX H: RELIABILITY TESTING FOR THE STUDENTS (GIRLS)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.780	.837	15

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Your school has security guards	61.08	44.083	.219	.787
Your school has fence for security	60.67	42.606	.515	.758
Your school provides hostels for girls	60.67	42.606	.515	.758
Your school has locked gates, doors and windows	61.50	46.091	.021	.826
Your school has enough safe clean water	60.67	42.606	.515	.758
Your school has enough toilets for the students	60.67	42.606	.515	.758
your school provides sanitary pads	60.67	49.697	-.104	.803
Teachers advise and encourage you to complete school	60.67	42.061	.567	.753
Your school has never experienced riots	60.67	42.061	.567	.753
Your school invites female role models to advise and encourage you to complete school	61.00	44.182	.235	.784
Community members encourage a students to complete school	61.50	42.636	.698	.750
headteachers involve community members to fund fees for the needy students	61.50	42.636	.698	.750
Headteachers involve community members bulding school facitities	61.67	43.879	.396	.767
Community members have created by-laws to safeguard girls to complete school	61.50	42.636	.698	.750

APPENDIX I: RELIABILITY TESTING FOR THE TEACHERS

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.805	.797	15

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Your school has security guards	58.50	65.100	.577	.781
Your school has fence for security	58.50	65.100	.577	.781
Your school provides hostels for girls	58.50	65.100	.577	.781
Your school has locked gates, doors and windows	60.67	88.267	-.713	.848
Your school has enough safe clean water	58.50	65.100	.577	.781
Your school has enough toilets for the students	58.50	65.100	.577	.781
Your school provides sanitary pads	58.50	65.100	.577	.781
Your school has trained teachers in guidance and counselling	58.50	83.100	-.296	.845
You easily advise and encourage girls to complete school	58.50	67.500	.447	.791
Your headteacher involve female role models to advice and encourage girls to complete school	58.17	74.167	.521	.798
Community members encourage a students to complete school	58.67	62.667	.723	.769
Headteachers involve community members to fund fees for the needy students	59.00	64.800	.680	.774
Community members create secured atmosphere for the students at school	59.00	66.800	.558	.784
Community members have created by-laws to safeguard girls to complete school	59.50	70.700	.282	.804
Headteachers involve community members bulding school facitities	59.00	64.800	.680	.774

APPENDIX J: GIRL CHILD SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE IN COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SCHOOL		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	Total	%
YEAR		2015/2016											
ENROLMENT		205	150	307	200	250	236	150	202	204	189	2093	
DROPOUT	F1	4	5	11	6	6	8	4	5	7	4	60	
	F2	3	3	10	5	3	5	3	6	3	2	43	
	F3	2	2	6	3	1	2	3	2	4	4	29	
	F4	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	17	7.1 %
	Total	11	12	30	15	12	16	12	15	15	11	149	
YEAR		2016/2017											
ENROLMENT		235	190	305	207	266	239	145	162	149	201	2099	
DROPOUT	F1	6	10	16	7	9	5	4	5	4	4	70	
	F2	4	4	8	2	6	4	3	5	3	2	41	
	F3	1	3	3	2	1	2	3	3	4	3	25	
	F4	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	-	1	16	7.2 %
	Total	12	18	29	13	18	14	12	15	11	10	152	

Source: Community Day Secondary Schools Head Teachers' report (2018)

APPENDIX K. A LETTER FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MALAWI

2nd September, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN COMMUNITY DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MCHINJI

I write to advise that sister Euteria Delia Paliani (CMLA 1703) is a final year student at Christ the Teacher School of Education, Tangaza University College, Nairobi –Kenya. She has been granted permission to conduct an academic research in your schools. The target subject for the research is "**Head teachers' administrative strategies on retention of girls in community day secondary schools in Mchinji district**".

However, the researcher will have to seek individual consent from the participants and that normal classes shall not be disrupted.

You are therefore requested to render to the researcher assistance required.

J.J. Mkhala

EDUCATION DIVISION MANAGER(CWED)

APPENDIX L: RESEARCH PERMIT LETTER FROM TANGAZA COLLEGE

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES & RESEARCH

E-mail: dir.pgsr@tangaza.ac.ke Website: www.tangaza.ac.ke

OUR Ref: DPGSR/ERC/05/2020   **Date:** 18th May 2020

The Executive Secretary,
National Commission for Science and Technology
Malawi

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Research Permit for Sr. Euteria Delia Paliani

This is to confirm to you that the person named is a student at Tangaza University College (TUC). She is registered in Christ the Teacher Institute for Education (Reg. No. CMLA 1703) and she is pursuing a degree in M.Ed Educational Leadership and Administration.

Sr. Euteria has met all our provisional academic requirements leading to data collection. However, she cannot proceed to the field before she gets a Research Permit from the Malawi National Commission for Science and Technology or any other relevant research body in Malawi. Kindly assist her to process the permit for the same purpose. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation

Yours sincerely,

Daniel M. Kitonga (Ph.D.)
Director, Postgraduate Studies & Research

CC: Sr. Dr. Kimkonda Okemasisi - Programme Leader, M.Ed Educational Leadership and Administration (CTIE)

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APPENDIX M: MAP OF MALAWI SHOWING MCHINJI DISTRICT

APPENDIX N: MAP OF MCHINJI SHOWING THE STUDY AREA

https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=BIfaWg6o&id=46CEB2F6BF