

**EXPERIENCES OF BLANTYRE URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS
IN IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE**

MSC IN (CHILD HEALTH NURSING) DISSERTATION

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**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
KAMUZU COLLEGE OF NURSING**

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Msc in (Child Health Nursing) Dissertation

By

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AUGUST, 2020

Declaration

I, Tauncio Kayange, hereby declare that this thesis on exploration of primary school teachers' experiences in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse in Blantyre urban is entirely my work. This thesis has not been presented for any award at any university within or outside Africa. All the sources of information quoted in this thesis have been acknowledged and duly added to the list of references.

Tauncio Nyirenda Kayange

Legal full name

Signature

Date

Certificate of Approval

The undersigned approve that this thesis represents the students own work and has not been presented anywhere else in or outside Africa.

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Second supervisor

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Petros for his support and to my children;
Fyabupe, Bwighane and Martha.

Acknowledgement

I sincerely thank God almighty for making it possible for me to start and finish my Master of Science in Child Health Nursing studies and during the write up of this thesis. His Grace has seen me through my studies. May His name be glorified. My thanks should go to the following institutions and individuals;

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- My fellow students and the entire members of staff at Kamuzu College of Nursing.
- All participants who willingly took part in this study.

Abstract

Child physical abuse is a serious public health problem because of its association with poor child health outcomes. Effective identification and reporting of child physical abuse is critical to break cycles of physical abuse and for developing a well-functioning child protection system. Teachers among other professionals are uniquely positioned to identify and report child abuse cases because of their daily contact with children. However, little is known about the experiences of teachers in identifying and reporting child abuse cases in their schools. This study explored the experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse cases in Blantyre urban. A descriptive qualitative study, with purposive sampling technique, was employed. The sample size was 10 key informants and 59 primary school teachers. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data with the aid of a semi structured interview schedule. Thematic data analysis using six steps of Braun and Clarke was employed to analyze data. The findings of the study revealed that teachers were aware of their responsibility to detect suspected child physical abuse and also to report the suspected cases but faced challenges such as lack of knowledge and skills, large classes, inadequate time and lack of clear guidelines for dealing with child physical abuse. It was also noted that some teachers were culprits of perpetrating child physical abuse and many had supportive attitudes towards the utilisation of corporal punishment as a means of child discipline. It was, therefore, suggested that there should be professional development for both primary school managers and teachers on handling child physical abuse cases and on alternative and effective strategies of disciplining students. With

regards to safety concerns raised by the teachers and effective response to child physical abuse cases, the study further recommends a multiple disciplinary approach to the issue of child physical abuse with clear reporting lines and guidelines.

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List of Abbreviations

BDEO	Blantyre District Education Office
CAN	Child Abuse and Neglect
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COMREC	College of Medicine Research and Ethical Committee
CPA	Child Physical Abuse
DEM	District Education Manager
DFID	Department for International Development
FGDs	Focus group discussions
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MNPAC	Malawi's National Plan of Action for vulnerable Children
NSO	Malawi National Statistical Office
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRGBV	School-Related Gender Based Violence
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VACS	Violence against children and young women in Malawi survey.
WHO	World Health Organisation

Operational Definitions

Child:	A person who is less than 18 years' old
Child physical abuse:	The non-accidental physical injury of a child inflicted by a parent or caretaker, which ranges from superficial bruises and welts to broken bones, burns, serious internal injuries and, in some cases, death. Physical abuse is an act of violence such as being punched, kicked, whipped, or beaten with an object, choked, smothered, tried to drown, burned, scalded intentionally, or used or threatened with weapon such as a knife or other weapon.
Primary school:	The basic structure of schooling, where children usually from the age of 6 to 13 receive primary or elementary education which comes after preschool and before secondary school.
Primary school teachers:	A teacher in a primary school.
Identifying:	Recognising the common signs of child physical abuse or establishing that the child is being physically abused.
Reporting:	Giving an account or statement describing in detail an event, situation, or the like when you have reason to believe that a child is being abused.

**Corporal
punishment:**

Intentional infliction of physical pain with the purpose of discouraging unwanted behaviour. Corporal punishment can be defined as the intentional infliction of physical pain with the purpose of deterring unwanted behaviour. It remains an all too common phenomenon in African households and schools, where harsh physical punishment is associated with later aggression and other maladaptive behaviour

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Background

1.1.Introduction

An estimated 246 million children experience school violence every year (USAID, 2018) and in 2014 alone , 23% of children worldwide were physically abused (Mogaddam et al., 2016). Child physical abuse is the most common type of abuse experienced among primary school children in Africa and other low income countries (Badoe, 2017; Breiding et al., 2013b; Kemoli & Mavindu, 2014; Khani, 2016). Nearly, 720 million school-aged children live in countries where corporal punishment at school is not fully prohibited (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of children, 2015).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines child physical abuse as an intentional use of physical force against a child that results in, or has the potential to result in, physical injury (Leeb et al., 2008). Acts of physical abuse can include: hitting, kicking, punching, beating, stabbing, biting, pushing, shoving, throwing, pulling, dragging, dropping, shaking, strangling/choking, smothering, burning, scalding, and poisoning which may cause permanent disability, disfigurement, or death (Walakira & Ddumba, 2012). In addition, physical abuse may or may not leave a physical mark on the child from beatings and kicks; and may present with a combination of both fresh and old bruises in unusual places.

Child physical abuse continues to occur throughout the world, both in countries where it is legal and countries where it is banned (Covell & Becker 2011). In the USA, the Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS-4) concluded that 58% of American children are exposed to physical abuse at some point in their lives (Sedlak et al., 2010). In Saudi Arabia, the 2010 and 2012 annual reports of the Hospital-Based Child Maltreatment Registry indicated that 60% and 35.8% respectively of reported maltreatment cases involved physical abuse (National Family Safety Registry, 2010; National Family Safety Registry 2012). Studies among adults have also revealed that about a quarter of all adults have experienced some form of childhood abuse (Sherr et al., 2015). Studies in Central African Republic revealed that 50.7 percent of primary school ranked physical violence as the most common form of violence in their school (Antonowicz, 2010); and 52 percent of primary school teachers in the country inflict corporal punishment every day (Feinstein & Mwachombela, 2010); and nearly one in five females in Swaziland has experienced childhood physical abuse in their lifetime, with nearly 1 in 20 having experienced abuse that was so severe that it required medical attention (Breiding et al., 2013a).

Similarly, reports from schoolchildren in Malawi demonstrate high incidents of child physical violence (Molyneux et al, 2013). Two in five females and two in three males aged 18 to 24 years in Malawi reported having experienced physical violence prior to the age of 18 years. Of the children who experienced violence, 25% of females and 40% of males reported physical violence perpetrated by an adult family member. One in five females and two in five males reported a peer as the perpetrator. Twenty-four percent of girls and 41% of boys experienced physical abuse, perpetrated by

parents or another adult; 50% of girls and 55% of boys, report witnessing physical abuse violence in the home prior to the age of 18 (Violence Against Children Survey, 2013). High prevalence of child physical abuse was also found in a study that involved 561 primary school pupils in Malawi. Approximately 30% of the pupils reported experiencing physical abuse at home. The rates were even higher for violence at school where 42% of the girls and 36% of boys reported experiencing physical abuse (Ameli, Meinck, Munthali, Ushie, & Langhaug, 2017).

According to Malawi National Statistical Office (NSO) (2013), three quarters of children in Malawi are exposed to physical punishment by the age of four. Further to this, Banks, Kelly, Kyegombe, Kuper, & Devries (2017) found that corporal punishment by adult family members or teachers was common despite participants recognising it as undesirable and a form of abuse by many caregivers. Both boys and girls are affected by corporal punishment (Antonowicz, 2010; Khani, 2016; Richter, Komárek, Desmond, Celentano, Morin, Sweat, Chariyalertsak, Chingono, Gray, Mbwambo, et al., 2014); In spite of the widespread of physical abuse in schools, generating accurate estimates of the prevalence and effects of school violence is complicated by situations in which cultural norms may condone these behaviors (Bisika, 2009; Leach, 2008; Parkes, 2011).

Identification and reporting of child physical abuse is critical to break cycles of physical abuse and for developing a well-functioning child protection system. Child healthcare nurses, paediatric doctors and primary school teachers are among professionals that can play a vital role in the detection and reporting of these cases

because of their encounter with children. However, since primary school teachers spend more time with almost all children in the population during their daily work they are uniquely positioned to identify and report child abuse cases because of their daily contact with large numbers of young children. However, the experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse are not known and this poses a challenge for developing a well-functioning child protection system aimed at breaking the cycles of abuse experienced by children. It is, therefore, against this background that this study was conducted to explore the experiences and perceptions of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse cases in Blantyre urban.

1.2. Background

Child physical abuse is not only a serious global social problem that cuts across national and cultural boundaries (Gilbert, Widom, et al., 2009), but it is also a global public health problem with associated poor child health outcomes.

Studies have revealed that victims of abuse are at high risk for poor health, related not only to the physical trauma they have endured, but also to high rates of other social risk factors associated with poor health (Bottoms et al., 2016; Gershoff, 2010; Hillis et al., 2016a; Kanchiputu, 2016; Mulambia, Miller, MacDonald, & Kennedy, 2018; Theoklitou, Kabitsis, & Kabitsi, 2011; Wolfe, Crooks, Chiodo, & Jaffe, 2009). Child physical abuse studies in sub-Saharan region have demonstrated a strong relationship between child physical abuse with a range of risky behaviours (Meinck et al., 2016; Richter, Komárek, Desmond, Celentano, Morin, Sweat, Chariyalertsak,

Chingono, Gray, Mbwambo, et al., 2014). A study conducted in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa indicated that, about 40% of adolescent females and 23 % of adolescent males who engaged in high risk behaviour such as excessive alcohol drinking and use of drugs that may lead to aggressive and violent behaviour had experienced physical abuse as children (Richter, Komárek, Desmond, Celentano, Morin, Sweat, Chariyalertsak, Chingono, Gray, & Mbwambo, 2014). Likewise, Devries et al., (2014) found that experience of corporal punishment was significantly associated with poorer mental health and poorer school achievement among primary school students in Uganda.

Severe child physical abuse and resulting injuries can cause long term consequences (Badoe, 2017; Gershoff, 2010; Hillis et al., 2016; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; UNICEF, 2014), which could extend into adulthood (Badoe, 2017; Hillis et al., 2016; Kanchiputu, 2016; Ssenyonga et al., 2018). In addition, abused children have high rates of growth problems, untreated vision and dental problems, infectious diseases, developmental delay, mental health and behavioral problems, early and risky sexual behaviors, and chronic illnesses (Breiding et al., 2013a; Lansford & Deater-Deckard, 2012; Seedat et al., 2009a).

Retrospective and prospective studies have identified strong associations between cumulative traumatic childhood events, such as child maltreatment, family dysfunction and adult physical disease, such as heart disease, liver disease, autoimmune diseases, sexually transmitted infections, and early death (Al Odhayani et al., 2013; Hillis et al., 2016; Majer et al., 2010; Reading et al., 2009; Seedat et al., 2009b).

Literature states that early childhood trauma, including physical abuse, leads to the production of stress hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline that are normally protective. These stress hormones regulate neural circuits that are important in modulating an individual's response to stress, and over time, with severe or persistent trauma, can become toxic and result in structural and functional changes in the brain and other organs. These changes are linked with impairment in the child's ability to respond to future biological and environmental stress, and increase the risk for physical and mental health disease later in life (Kanchiputu, 2016.; Margolin & Vickerman, 2011; Mulambia et al., 2018; Ssenyonga et al., 2018).

Prevention of violence against children is squarely on the international development agenda. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 5.1 calls for the elimination of all forms of violence against girls, and SDG target 16.2 calls for ending all forms of violence against children. With the endorsement of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, greater attention is being focused on multidisciplinary approach in order to ensure the health and safety of these children (Banks et al., 2017b; Leeb et al., 2008; Mtibo et al., 2011; Mulambia et al., 2018). Similarly, Malawi is also determined to end violence against children as stipulated in the Malawi's National Plan of Action for vulnerable Children (MNPAC) which led to the development of the National Child Protection System. The child protection system is a collection of interacting and interdependent components or parts that are organised to prevent and responds to all forms of violence, abuse exploitation and neglect of children. It also works to mitigate the effects of HIV/ AIDS. The system approach ensures a holistic

view of children and child protection that engages the full range of actors involved in protecting children's rights(VACS Priority Response 2014).

In the Malawi's National Plan of Action for vulnerable Children (MNPAC), the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) is mandated to implement early identification and reporting programs within schools. Primary and secondary schools should emphasise interventions which promote the changing of harmful social norms surrounding issues such as violence (VACS Priority Response 2014).

Furthermore, MOEST banned the use of corporal punishment in schools (Ameli et al., 2017a; Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment, 2019).In addition, Malawi embarked on a project Safe Schools programme to create safe environments for both girls and boys that promote gender-equitable relationships and reduce school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) by working in partnership with children, youth, parents, teachers, schools and communities. According to Safe school programmes, reducing SRGBV is critical due to the negative effect of SRGBV on school participation, attendance and achievement, and the health and well-being of children(Psaki et al., 2017).

The role that health workers play in violence prevention is critical (Simon & Hurvitz, 2014) and extends beyond just caring for victims to also include stopping violence and preventing violence before it happens. The health workers also help the population understand the negative health effects resulting from exposure to violence, evaluate evidence for prevention strategies, and learn where to turn for information about planning and implementing prevention strategies for this preventable problem,

(Southall & MacDonald, 2013). In relation to this, the health sector in Malawi responded by opening One Stop centres commonly known as 'Chikwanekwane' in the local language ("everything under one roof") clinics to assist victims of violence. The first centre was established in Blantyre, Malawi, the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH) (Mulambia et al., 2018). The centre was established by funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) with the support of the Ministries of Health, Social Welfare and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (Molyneux et al., 2013; Mulambia et al., 2018). The one stop centre builds on the work of a multidisciplinary team which has been operating in Blantyre since 2010 (Molyneux et al., 2013; Mtibo et al., 2011; Mulambia et al., 2018). The team comprises paediatricians, nurses, social workers, police victim support officers and volunteer counsellors working together to provide the best care possible for child survivors. Currently, police Victim Support Units (VSU) are the main referral agents (Mulambiya et al., 2018). These centres basically react to violence that has already taken place.

Effective identification and reporting of child physical abuse is critical to break cycles of physical abuse and for developing a well-functioning child protection system. Child healthcare nurses, paediatric doctors and primary school teachers are among professionals that can play a pivotal role in the detection and reporting of these cases because of their encounter with children. By virtue of their long-term engagement with children, primary school teachers have arguably, greatest opportunity of any professional to observe and act in response to child abuse. Teachers can make an important contribution to the early detection and prevention of abuse by detecting and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. In addition, there are several procedures in

schools for identifying and reporting child abuse in Malawi. One of the procedures for reporting violence against children first involves reporting the incident to local committees or authorities who refer the victim to police (Molynux et al, 2013; UNICEF 2015). The other pathways involve reporting abuse at classroom level to a class monitor (usually a fellow student who has been elected by classmates) or take the matter directly to a teacher (USAID, 2008). In spite of the available guidance on reporting violence there is limited data on the experiences of primary school teachers on identification and reporting of child physical abuse. Likewise, the National Youth Council of Malawi (2009) report bemoans lack of reporting of CPA cases despite that there is a high prevalence of CPA amidst young people in the country.

Studies in the country have explored issues of GBV in both primary and secondary schools in the country. For example, a study done by Malongo & Mwale, (2019) in secondary schools in Rumphi District, Malawi. This study sought to find out participants understanding of the concept of GBV. The study targeted 55 participants, 40 secondary school students and 15 teachers using simple random technique. The findings revealed that knowledge was low among the participants. However, the study did not go further to examine how the lack of knowledge influenced identification and reporting of GBV cases in the schools. The lack of studies on experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse poses a challenge for developing a well-functioning child protection system aimed at breaking the cycles of abuse experienced by children. It is, therefore, against this background that this study was conducted to explore the experiences and perceptions of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse cases in Blantyre urban.

1.3.Problem Statement

Reports from schoolchildren in Malawi demonstrate high incidents of CPA violence (Molyneux et al, 2013). A study on child physical abuse involving 561 primary school pupils in Malawi found that 42% of the girls and 36% of boys are physically abused at school while 30% of the pupils reported experiencing physical abuse at home. (Ameli, Meinck, Munthali, Ushie, & Langhaug, 2017). In Blantyre, according to a NSO MDG (2014)survey, 72.4% of 1-14- year olds were subjected to physical punishment during the month preceding the survey, 42.9% of 1-14 - year olds were subjected to physical punishment during month preceding the survey, with 9.2% subjected to severe physical punishment. Adults in urban centres in Malawi admits that they commonly use physical punishments on their children. Blaney (2019) conducted a study on knowledge, attitude and practice toward physical child abuse among adults in Blantyre urban Malawi. The results indicated 73.6% admitting to practicing a form of physical punishment that did, or could easily, result in physical injury, including beating a child with a rod or thorny stick, throwing them to the ground or kicking them in the back.

Child physical abuse is a serious public health problem because of its association with poor child health outcomes. Effective identification and reporting of CPA are critical to break cycles of physical abuse and for developing a well-functioning child protection system. Child healthcare nurses, paediatric doctors and primary school teachers are among the professionals that can play a pivotal role in the detection and reporting of CPA because of their encounter with children but primary

school teachers by virtue of their long- term engagement with children, have arguably, the greatest opportunity of any professional to observe and act promptly in response to child physical abuse.

Studies in Malawi have shown that there is high prevalence of child physical abuse. Literature suggest that teachers spend more time with students therefore easy for them to identify and report abuse. However, studies done locally have not explored on the experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse cases in Malawian schools. Wot is prevalent in literature is the acknowledgement of the presence of child physical abuse in schools. It is, therefore, against this background that this study was conducted to explore the experiences and perceptions of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse in Blantyre urban.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study explored the experiences of primary school teachers in identification and reporting of child physical abuse. Thus, the study results will also inform formulating guidelines on identification and reporting of child physical abuse by primary school teachers. Furthermore, the study will provide baseline data for further research in child physical abuse among child health nurses and other relevant professionals.

1.4.1. Broad Objective

To explore experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre urban.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Identify the meaning of child physical abuse from the perspective of primary school teachers
- Describe the perceptions of the primary school teachers on child physical abuse.
- Identify challenges primary school teachers face in identifying and reporting child physical abuse.

CHAPTER 2:

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter contains the literature that was reviewed in relation to the study topic. Literature review dwelt much on current evidence on teacher's experience of child physical abuse. However, there was scarcity of direct literature to the topic because no study has ever been done on experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Malawi and sub Saharan countries. Issues concerning identification and reporting child physical abuse were coming from studies that were conducted outside Africa. Basing on literature review that was undertaken, this section covers the following areas: Definition of child physical abuse, teachers recognizing and responding to child physical abuse, perceptions of primary school teachers towards the ban of using corporal punishment to discipline children and challenges faced by primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse.

Literature search was done using the electronic resources such as HINARI, PubMed /MEDLINE, and Google Scholar. The following search terms were used to search articles containing information relevant to this study: primary school teachers AND reporting child physical abuse, child physical abuse AND teacher perception, primary school teachers AND child physical abuse, identifying abuse AND primary school teachers AND child physical abuse AND school-based violence AND gender-

based violence AND education AND health. The literature reviewed studies reported in English and those which were published from 2009 onwards. However, studies published before 2009 were included if they were historical or provided very critical information about the study.

2.2. Definition of Child Physical Abuse

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines physical abuse against children as “the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in or has the potential to result in, physical injury”(Breiding et al., 2013b). This may include injury from punishment and can be a single or recurrent act by adults and fellow children. Such physical force includes actions such as kicking, biting, shaking, hitting, burning, punching, weeping, and suffocating (WHO 2006). Others consider child physical abuse when someone causes deliberate physical harm or injury to a child or failure to prevent the child from physical injury (Breiding et al., 2013a; Meinck et al., 2016; Theoklitou et al., 2011; K. Walsh et al., 2008). Both definitions agree on intentionality in the use of physical force. Studies indicates that teachers have regarded the definition of child physical abuse as ambiguous fact (Al-Shail et al., 2012; Atiquil Haque et al., 2019; Schols, De Ruiter, et al., 2013). As a result, primary school teachers struggle to grasp the meaning of the definition of child physical abuse (Schols, de Ruiter, et al., 2013; Choo, Walsh, Marret, Chinna, & Tey, 2013; Goebbels et al., 2008; K. Walsh, Bridgstock, Farrell, Rassafiani, & Schweitzer, 2008). Considering that there is ambiguity in the definition of CPA this thesis has adopted the definition by CDC which is a common definition used in many studies.

2.3. Teachers Recognizing and Responding to Child Physical Abuse

Knowledge is regarded as an important factor for the identification of child physical abuse (Schols, de Ruiter, et al., 2013). To be able to comply with identification and reporting obligations, it is necessary for the primary school teachers to be confident, to have knowledge on child physical abuse and also knowledge about their responsibility to identify and report child physical abuse. Studies across the world have found that teachers feel they have a moral and professional responsibility to report child abuse and neglect (Choo, Walsh, Marret, Chinna, & Tey, 2013a; B. P. Mathews, Walsh, Butler, & Farrell, 2010; McTavish et al., 2017; Tillman et al., 2015; Walsh & Jones, 2015). However, many teachers explained that they felt incompetent to identify abuse as they had limited knowledge of signs of child physical abuse (Choo et al., 2013a); (Schols, de Ruiter, et al., 2013).

Lack of adequate training on child abuse issues, was blamed for making teachers unaware of important symptoms of child physical abuse and making them less likely to understand the nature and seriousness of child physical abuse (Mathews 2011). Thus, lack of awareness about signs and symptoms of child physical abuse, uncertainty about what constitutes reasonable grounds for suspicion and unfamiliarity with reporting procedures makes it difficult for teachers to identify and report suspected child physical abuse. In many African countries, knowledge of the baseline rates of child physical abuse is lacking (Schols, de Ruiter, et al., 2013; Manuella, 2013; Engle et al., 2011; Fisher et al., 2012; Knerr, Gardner, & Cluver, 2013; Organization, 2010; Richter, Komárek, Desmond, Celentano, Morin, Sweat, Chariyalertsak, Chingono,

Gray, & Mbwambo, 2014). The non-availability of accurate data on the prevalence rate or burden of child physical abuse has not only been attributed to the absence of data from these regions (WHO 2016) but also due to secrecy and sensitive nature of issues surround child abuse (Richten & Dawes, 2008; WHO 2010).

In Malawi, studies done on gender violence in schools found that many cases of child physical abuse go unreported because child physical abuse is condoned by school personnel (Bisika et al., 2009; Mandal & Hindin, 2013; Mtibo et al., 2011; Sherr et al., 2015). According to the available literature, there is a gap in the response to child physical abuse by primary school teachers. Among other reasons, poor reporting procedures make it difficult for primary school teachers to effectively respond to child physical abuse. Previous research suggests that professionals including primary school teachers' child maltreatment reporting behaviour are influenced by attitude towards reporting (Choo et al., 2013). One of the negative attitudes acting as barrier to reporting is fear of making an inaccurate report which can be as a result of inadequate knowledge of child physical abuse and reporting procedures (Buntina, Lazenwabutt & Wallace 2010).

Poor reporting procedures negatively contributes to poor efforts in combating child physical abuse (Gilbert, Kemp, et al., 2009; Mathews et al., 2010; Richter et al., 2014). Lack of reporting mechanisms hinder access to a timely and effective redress for child's rights violation. Child abuse reporting guidelines can increase teachers' confidence to report the suspected abuse. The use of a structured method can strengthen the basis of teachers suspicions and can improve the detection and reporting of abuse.A

study in Dakahlia Government was done to assess the teacher's perception regarding abuse of rural government primary children. The results revealed that majority of the primary school teachers had poor knowledge level of all the forms of child abuse including child physical abuse, their knowledge level regarding the notification and reporting of abuse cases was also poor (Mekheimar, 2011).

The lack of data and guidelines to help manage child abuse in most countries in Africa has created a huge gap in child protection service delivery (Badoe, 2017). Due to lack of proper procedures, many cases of abuse in Africa are under-reported to child-protection agencies. , few of the cases reports to police and few of them are identified at the hospital when they are brought in for medical attention (Molyneux et al., 2013; Organization & Unit, 2014; Seedat et al., 2009). This process contributes to many cases being undetected and unreported. In a South African study participants indicated that although there were procedures in place for compiling child maltreatment data, they were not consistently utilised (Makoae, Roberts, & Ward, 2012).The study results further indicated that there were concerns that the system was not well maintained and monitored to provide reliable data, and that the Child Protection register had some missing data, and government departments did not provide annual reports of child maltreatment cases.

Similarly, a qualitative study was done to explore the experience of school-related gender-based violence by pupils and the culture of silence (Barasa, Wamue-Ngare, & Wanjama, 2013). The study was conducted in primary Schools in Kasarani District, Nairobi County, Kenya and comprised of a sample population of 156 pupils and 8

teachers from 10 primary schools. The study results revealed that when the abused child or parent complain against a teacher, an official report may be submitted by the school head to the Ministry and disciplinary actions are taken. However, evidence suggested that very few teachers were expelled from the teaching profession; most are merely transferred to another school. The study results further indicated that school-related violence is common in the schools and 75% of the respondents had suffered physical violence. The results also revealed disparity in reporting patterns of each form of violence. For instance, reporting acts of physical or sexual abuse was undermined by the fear of reprisals from the perpetrators. This study concluded that there existed serious cases of violence in schools that went unreported or unnoticed owing to the abnormal nature of the relationships between the pupils and the perpetrators.

According to literature, lack of awareness of the signs of child maltreatment and processes for reporting to child-protection agencies, and a perception that reporting might do more harm than good, are among the reasons for not reporting (Goebbels et al., 2008a; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Mulambia et al., 2018; Nkuba et al., 2018). Finkel, (2009) also states that lack of knowledge about child physical abuse and its health consequences, has been attributed to the hidden and stigmatised nature of abuse, the complexity of definitions of physical abuse and community understandings of acceptable child rearing practices including physical punishment.

2.4. Perceptions of Primary School Teachers towards the Ban of Using Corporal Punishment to Discipline Children

The government of Malawi has made a national commitment to ameliorating violence against children hence banning the use of corporal punishment when disciplining children, (Malawi, 2014). This strategy aims to provide a strong framework for sustainable interventions to prevent and effectively respond to violence against children.

Corporal punishment of children which includes a wide range of physical actions (hitting, smacking, slapping, paddling, canning, thrashing, belting, strapping, walloping, tanning and whacking) meant to inflict pain and discomfort has been the focus of increasing concern from researchers and policymakers around the world because of its negative effects on children (Gershoff, 2017; Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016; Hillis et al., 2016; Lansford et al., 2010; Lansford & Deater-Deckard, 2012). The practice is still prevalence around the globe and evidence has shown that seven in every ten primary school learners and one in every two secondary school learners still receive corporal punishment from educators (Olivier, 2011a). In a study done by Chiang, (2009), teachers perceived the ban for using corporal punishment to discipline children as a formal directive that is unrealistic rather than a practical strategy to handle indiscipline. They explained that they adhered to the ban, with respect to harsher forms of corporal punishment; however, many continued to administer milder forms of corporal punishment as a practical tool for pupil control and motivation. The findings further revealed that teachers were full of uncertainty, insecurity, or were unable to discipline students under the new law. They complained

that they only received “formal directives” or “unrealistic guidelines,” rather than practical strategies or advice from the school officials or the Ministry of Education. When asked for their initial thoughts about the corporal punishment ban, about two thirds of the teachers stated they were worried about it or disapproved of the new policy. The teachers argued that the ban protected those students with disciplinary problems but hurt the remaining students ‘rights.

Another study done in Kenya to investigate teachers perceptions towards corporal punishment ban showed that teachers perceived negatively the outlawing of corporal punishment (Gershoff, 2017) . The results further indicated that about 71% of the teachers indicated that reasonable corporal punishment is beneficial to children. The teachers used corporal punishment even after the ban due to heavy responsibility placed on them by parents especially on moral behaviour modification of the children. Likewise, Masha, (2017) states that teachers, to a large extent have assumed the role of parents because they spend a greater part of their day with the children as compared to the time children spend with their parent during their school going age. As a result, the issue of discipline in most cases has been left to the teachers.

Another study was done to identify the reasons behind the use of corporal punishment by Kenyan teachers and teachers' awareness of existing laws on the use of violence on children, Mweru, (2010a). The results showed that corporal punishment was commonly used in solving discipline problems such as noise making, refusal to do homework and late coming to school. The study also revealed that most head teachers preferred to use other disciplinary methods like detention and counselling, other than

corporal punishment to solve disciplinary problems in schools. However (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010) found that educators generally feel disempowered in their ability to institute discipline in schools in the absence of corporal punishment because they feel that learners do not fear or respect them because they know that nothing will happen to them. Educators view alternative disciplinary measures as ineffective and time consuming.

Corporal punishment is still common in South African schools even though it was banned more than a decade ago. The legislation prohibits spanking of learners. (Olivier, 2011b) in his research on educators' perceptions of corporal punishment and the reasons why they still administer it even though it is against the law, he found that although the teachers were well-informed about the consequences of administering corporal punishment, the educators perceived that the abolishment of corporal punishment was forced on them too quickly while they were not trained in other methods of disciplining the children. Educators felt that corporal punishment was acceptable if done reasonably. The results also showed that the educators were frustrated and believed corporal punishment was an effective way of maintaining discipline in over-crowded classrooms. The research showed that some of the teachers did not think that other methods of discipline were as successful as corporal punishment. Some of them had tried other methods like guidance and counselling, rewarding but had limited success with them. Teachers also believed the department's poor support on how alternatives for corporal punishment should be applied, contributed to the ineffectiveness of these methods of disciplining the children. The

teachers said they were not consulted when corporal punishment was scrapped in schools.

In Malawi, corporal punishment is unlawful in schools under article 19 of the Constitution. Following a review of the Education Act of 1962 in 2009, prohibition of corporal punishment was made explicit. However, the Education Act of 2012 is silent on the issue of corporal punishment (National Statistical Office, 2015; Malawi MDG Survey, 2014; Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of children, 2016). Similarly, the 2015 National Education Standards for primary and secondary education prohibit the use of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is unlawful in schools under article 19 of the Constitution. However, despite this prohibition, it is still used in schools. According to a study conducted by National Statistics Office [NSO] in 2011, one fifth of the 4500 children sampled had experiences which made them afraid to go to school, 10 percent of them cited violent corporal punishment and 20 percent mentioned ill-treatment by the head or teachers. Similarly, a study on children in Institutional Care in Malawi, conducted by UNICEF (2011) indicated that of the 104 childcare institutions (orphanages, special needs centres, church homes, transit care centres and reformatory centres) in Malawi, documented the use of corporal punishment, including children being whipped, forced to kneel and forced to do hard work (UNICEF, Malawi & Ministry of Gender, Children and Community Development 2011).

In another study conducted in Machinga involving 40 schools, 800 students and 288 teachers were interviewed. 68.5% of students reported having been whipped or caned, 20.5% in the home, 48% in school. This means that physical punishment is very

common in Malawi(Bisika et al., 2009; Kendall, 2007; Sherr et al., 2015; Skeen et al., 2016). The research studies showed that in Malawi, physical punishment is still being practiced on children to modify their behaviour. The use of corporal punishment therefore seems to be a reflection of the attitudes and behaviour of the whole society which the school and the school teachers are part of.

2.5. Challenges Faced by Primary School Teachers in Identifying and Reporting Child Physical Abuse

Child abuse is a main common public health concern world over (Badoe, 2017; Heredia, 2015; Schols, De Ruiter, et al., 2013; Shaw & Jong, 2012; Tonmyr & Hovdestad, 2013). Teachers are in a unique position to detect possible cases due to their daily contact with children. Teachers have a pedagogical role in dealing with abused children, and a legal and professional duty to identify and report child physical abuse. Failure to report suspected child maltreatment not only undermines the child abuse reporting system, but also greatly impairs society's ability to help children in need of protection. Underreporting by professionals like teachers, denies children who have been maltreated an opportunity to receive protection, reduces professional support for mandated reporting laws, exposes professionals to anxiety and liability, and distorts the statistics of child abuse which can impact both funding and policy.

By virtue of their long- term engagement with children, primary school teachers have arguably, greatest opportunity of any professional to observe and act in response to child abuse. Teachers can make an important contribution to the early detection and prevention of abuse by detecting and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.

However, studies reveal that this does not happen as expected due to different challenges encountered by the teachers. Most challenges include lack of knowledge regarding how to detect and report child abuse which affects the confidence in the primary school teachers' judgment as reporters, (Adeyemi, 2013; Badoe, 2017; Bazon et al., 2013; Jose, 2017; McTavish et al., 2017; Nkuba et al., 2018; Ramesh et al., 2017b; Richter, Komárek, Desmond, Celentano, Morin, Sweat, Chariyalertsak, Chingono, Gray, Mbwambo, et al., 2014; Sinanan, 2011a; Ssenyonga et al., 2018; Tillman et al., 2015; Tite, 1994; K. Walsh et al., 2008; W. Walsh & Jones, 2015). Furthermore, literature states that primary school teachers are frustrated with Child Protection agencies in regard to how they manage the child physical abuse cases because they feel that cases are simply ignored by such agencies, and that nothing is actually done about the cases and that there is no follow up even if cases are reported (Badoe, 2017; Jamieson et al., 2017), and that primary school teachers fear being identified as the reporter, and also fear that the abuse on the child would escalate if reported and investigated, the primary school teachers also fear possible deterioration of relationship between the school and the family and fear community repercussion (Choo et al., 2013b; Mathews et al., 2010).

Literature states that lack of knowledge on child physical abuse is the common challenge among primary school teachers across the world (Falkiner et al., 2017; Gilbert et al., 2009; Saadoon & Salih, 2017; Schols et al., 2013; Walsh et al., 2012). Ramesh et al., (2017) conducted a study among primary school teachers of 19 randomly selected schools of Kanpur city in India from January to February 2016. The results indicated that 90% of the school teachers lack knowledge and skills to identify and report child

abuse cases. The teachers sensed the need of having an expert in their respective schools to boost their confidence of identifying and reporting such cases. Majority of the school teachers 74.5 %, had never or rarely recognized any cases of child abuse. The study also revealed that more than half (56.4%) had never identified any cases of child abuse and neglect in their school. Findings in this study highlighted the need for assessing and improving teacher's knowledge in any form of child abuse, as by reporting suspected child abuse cases, teachers can make an important contribution to the early detection and prevention of child abuse.

Similarly, a study on abuse reporting procedures was done in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia (Mathews, 2014). The study occurred as part of a larger study into the law, policy and practice of teacher reporting of child sexual abuse. Some of the component of the study reported aimed to find their self-rated estimation of the adequacy of the training to both identify indicators of sexual abuse and to follow reporting procedures, their self-rated confidence in identifying indicators of child sexual abuse, and their self-rated knowledge of indicators of sexual abuse. The results indicated that teachers with recent training reported more confidence in recognising indicators of abuse, and were more knowledgeable about reporting duties and more prepared to follow reporting guidelines. Teachers without training, or without recent training, were likely to have significant gaps in knowledge about their reporting duty, and were less likely to understand the nature and seriousness of child abuse. Literature indicates that training is effective in promoting detecting and reporting any form of child abuse(Badoe, 2017; Falkiner et al., 2017; Heredia, 2015; Kemoli & Mavindu, 2014; Tillman et al., 2015; Walsh et al., 2008). After training,

teachers gain knowledge and skills that helps them feel prepared to deal with issues of detecting and reporting of this problem.

Another study on reporting child maltreatment was conducted in South Monterey County Schools, United States of America, with the aim of describing methods and procedures available to public elementary school teachers for assessing, detecting and reporting evidence of child abuse and neglect(Heredia, 2015), The purpose of the study was to assess teachers' knowledge of child abuse and neglect reporting, assess the actual frequency and experience of child abuse and neglect reporting, and to assess the possible barriers that may exist to adequate/accurate reporting. The results revealed that some of the common barriers to reporting had to do with teachers feeling like nothing is actually done about the cases and that there would not actually be any follow up even if they report. Lack of information, fear of being identified as the reporter, fear of a misreport, and fear that the abuse could escalate if reported and investigated.

Sinanan, (2011) conducted a study on Bridging the Gap of Teacher Education about child abuse. This study was designed to examine which child characteristics (i.e., gender, age, race, prior victim of abuse, and disability) and which family risk factors (i.e., domestic violence, inadequate housing, financial problems, and substance abuse) are related to physical abuse reporting by educational personnel. The study examined children in the U.S. between the ages of birth to 17 years who have had a substantiated physical abuse report record. The results indicated a variety of reasons why school personnel did not feel comfortable to make the decision to report a possible child abuse

case. These reasons included legal implication for false allegations, consequences of disclosure, lack of knowledge regarding how to detect and report child abuse, and possible deterioration of relationship between the school and the family. The results also showed that concerns or apprehensions about child protective services prevented individuals from reporting a case. Another reason for failure to report was the fear of making an accurate report.

2.6. Summary

This chapter covered a review of previous research studies related to child physical abuse. Due to the existing resource gaps in the process of identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Malawi and Africa as a whole, it is important to explore the prevailing detection and reporting trends with respect to resource support in the schools, to provide evidence based policy suggestions on improving child physical abuse detection and reporting in Malawi. The high burden of child physical abuse in Malawi with little literature on identification and reporting practices by primary school teachers, provides a strong motivation for exploratory study aimed at exploring primary school teacher's experiences in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse.

CHAPTER 3:

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This section presents the methodology of the study. Methodology is the strategy used by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data in the course of the study (Polit and Beck 2017). It describes study design, setting, population, sampling method, sample size, inclusion criteria, exclusion criteria, pretesting of data collecting tool, data collection method, data management, data analysis, trustworthiness of data and ethical consideration.

3.2. Study Design

Ontological and epistemological beliefs guide methodological choices that justify the methods used, with the data collected and consequent analysis contributing to the creation of knowledge (Carter & Little 2007; Munhall 2012). This study was a cross sectional descriptive qualitative approach to explore experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre urban. The study used cross-sectional design because it allowed the researcher to collect data on multiple relevant variables at one time (Grove et al., 2012; Polit & Beck, 2017). Traditionally two paradigms will be used in research which includes positivist (quantitative) and constructivist (qualitative) paradigms. This study was guided by the constructivist paradigm with the use of a qualitative approach. The approach allows for investigation of the social world from the perspective of the people being studied in their natural

settings (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013); and offers the opportunity to generate new knowledge on topics where there have been limited research (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to discover the experiences of primary school teachers toward identification and reporting of child physical abuse since the qualitative methodology is generally associated with inductive approaches, and it is oriented toward discovery, is less concerned with generalizability, and is more concerned with deeper understanding of the research problem in its unique context (Kumar, 2019). Exploring the views and experiences of primary school teachers in this study was very important because it gave first-hand information in the context of their experiences when in contact with a child that has been physically abused. Qualitative inquiry looks across all the data to identify the common issues that reappear, and identify the main themes that summarise all the views that have been collected.

3.3. Study Setting

The study setting is the physical location where individuals live, experience life and where the data collection takes place (Polit and Beck, 2017). The study was conducted in government primary schools in Blantyre urban (Table 1). Blantyre urban is educationally divided into 6 primary school educational zones and has a total number of 59 government primary schools (BUDEO, 2016). The primary schools are; Bangwe zone with 9 schools and 299 teachers, Chilomoni zone with 10 schools and 265 teachers, Limbe zone with 9 schools and 282 teachers, Ndirande zone with 10 schools and 379 teachers, South Lunzu zone with 11 schools and 391 teachers, Zingwangwa

zone with 10 schools and 255 teachers. According to records at Blantyre Urban District Education Office, the total number of primary school teachers in Blantyre urban is 1871. The researcher purposively selected one primary school from each of the six zones (Chigumula LEA from Bangwe Zone, Mayera LEA from Chilomoni zone, Kanjedza LEA from Limbe zone, Ndirande Matope from Ndirande zone, Mthawira LEA from South Lunzu zone, Zingwangwa primary school from Zingwangwa zone) to best represent the diversity of the zones. The list of Government primary schools was sourced from the Blantyre urban district office.

Blantyre urban was selected as a study site since the first one stop centre was established in Blantyre, specifically at Queen Elizabeth Central hospital (QECH). One stop centres were established to cater for child abuse cases in Blantyre urban and surrounding areas (Nhlane, 2018). Furthermore, a previous study in Blantyre indicated that 90% of primary school pupils had experienced domestic violence (Kanchiputu, 2016). Considering that the official starting age for primary school is six and the primary level lasts for 8 years (Al-Samarrai & Zaman, 2007), the researcher felt that many of these children were in primary schools. This means that teachers encounter many students who are abused in their daily work. However, very few children were identified and reported by teachers. Therefore, the researcher explored their experiences in order to appreciate the challenges teachers face in identifying and reporting child physical abuse.

Table 1: Breakdown of Study Setting

Blantyre urban zones	Number of primary schools	Number of teachers	Primary school selected per zone
Bangwe	9	299	Chigumula LEA
Chilomoni	10	265	Mayera LEA
Limbe	9	282	Kanjedza LEA
Ndirande	10	379	NdirandeMatope
South Lunzu	11	391	Mthawira
Zingwangwa	10	255	Zingwangwa

3.4. Study Population

A study population is defined as the entire population that is the focus of the research and the target population is the entire set of individuals or elements who meet the sampling criteria (Polit & Beck 2010; Burns and Grove, 2009). The study's target population were the primary school teachers working in government primary schools in Blantyre urban.

3.5.Sampling Method

Sampling is defined as the process of selecting a portion or subset of the designated population to represent the entire population (Wood & Haber, 2006). All primary school teachers within the six selected schools who met the inclusion criteria were eligible to participate in the study. The researcher purposively selected primary school teachers for both in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling. The method was chosen as it was specifically relevant to this study's explorative nature. The participants in this study were selected on the basis that they are suitable for the study. According to Creswell (2013), it is important that all participants should have experience and/or are aware of the phenomenon being studied. Purposive sampling also allowed the researcher to select the sample based on the knowledge of the phenomena and relied on the researcher's judgment regarding who is best qualified to answer the research questions. The basis for selecting such a sample is that it can yield considerable data that is specific to the research topic. In this method, the researcher deliberately selected the research participants because they had met the criteria to participate in the study. This was important because such participants contributed appropriate data both in terms of relevance and depth.

3.6.Sample Size

A sample is smaller representative of a target population. Different authors have expressed different opinions towards adequate qualitative sample size. Ritchi, Lewis, Mcnaughton Nicholls, & Ormston (2014), suggested that in qualitative studies, a sample

size usually lies below 50. While, Adler and Adler (2012) states that the sample size number of between 12 and 60 is adequate. Although, Moule & Goodman, (2014) states that qualitative research studies have no specific rules on sample size as sample size is based on need to obtain sufficient information that will address the research. Adler and Adler (2010), observe that qualitative sample sizes should be large enough to obtain enough data to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest and address the research questions. Peek (2010) states that researchers can gather interviews from more participants when they are plenty, and may even use data-gathering techniques such as focus group discussions. Therefore, this study recruited a total of 69 participants who participated in both interviews and focus group discussions after data saturation.

3.6.1. Sample size for the focus group discussions (FGDs).

There were a total of six focus group discussions, one in each of the six conveniently selected primary schools. Each group had 8-10 purposively selected primary school teachers. According to Polit and Beck (2017) the number of participants required for focus group discussion is 6 – 12 people. A minimum of 8 participants was considered appropriate for the discussion because if one or two participants had dropped during the discussion, the required number of 6-12 participants in FGD was still maintained. All those who were selected managed to participate. During the group discussion, 3 participants dropped from participating in the discussions because of other engagements. However, this did not affect the recommended number for focus group discussions.

3.6.2. Sample size for Key Informants.

The head teachers, Primary Educational Advisors (PEAS) and District Educational Managers (DEM) were purposively selected for in-depth interviews. These were involved because they are supervisors of the primary school teachers where reports about child abuse case are supposed to be reported. The researcher also wanted to solicit views at different levels to triangulate the findings. In addition, these are busy people and it could not have been easy to gather them together for a group discussion. The researcher had planned to recruit a total of thirteen participants but 10 were recruited for interviews. The researcher stopped recruiting more participants because the data had reached its saturation. Data saturation is the repetition of discovered information by study participants (Polit & Beck, 2017). Polit & Beck further states that the guiding principle in qualitative sampling is data saturation.

3.7. Inclusion Criteria for Primary School Teachers

The study criteria included

- Primary school teachers who were currently full-time employees of the Malawi Ministry of Education.
- Primary school teachers who were able and willing to consent to participate in the study
- Primary school teachers who were willing to share their experiences on child physical abuse

3.8. Exclusion Criteria for Primary School Teachers

The study excluded;

- Primary school teachers who were currently student teachers.
- Primary school teachers who felt that they could not give information.
- Primary school teachers who did not give written consent.
- Primary school teachers who worked for less than a year

3.9. Inclusion Criteria for Key Informants

The study criteria included

- Supervisors who were currently full-time employees of the Malawi Ministry of Education.
- Supervisors who were able and willing to consent to participate in the study
- Supervisors who were willing to share their experiences on child physical abuse

3.10. Exclusion Criteria for Key Informants

The study excluded;

- Supervisors who were currently not permanently employed.
- Supervisors who felt that they could not give information.
- Supervisors who did not give written consent.

3.11. Recruitment Process

Recruitment of the participants began by getting permission to conduct the study with primary school teachers from Blantyre District Education Office (Appendix 6). The researcher used the letter obtained the DEO Office to contact the head teachers at each school for permission to hold FGDs with the teachers and have an interview

with the head teachers. The head teachers then provided the researcher with a list of teachers who were available and would be interested in participating in a study on child physical abuse. The researcher then held an audience with the potential participants, asking them to participate in the study and giving them information on the study topic, aim and objectives. The researcher gave full explanation on the study information to the identified participants (Appendix 1) and (Appendix 2). After reading the information sheet, understanding the contents, and agreeing to participate in the study, then they were asked to sign a consent form. The key informants (Head teachers and PEAs) were accessed through the District Education Officer. The procedure was similar to that of the teachers. The researcher was approaching the key informants one by one requesting them to participate in the study and giving them an information sheet. Those who voluntarily gave consent were asked to choose their convenient day and time for interviews within the study period. The researcher was also granted permission from the participants to have the interview recorded.

3.12 Interview guide

Semi-structured interview guide which was developed by the researcher was used (Appendix 4 and Appendix 5) to collect data. The interview guide contained open ended questions that were formulated according to the study objectives. The interview guide contained open ended questions for the primary school teachers to give rich information about their experience. Data was collected through focus group discussion and in-depth interviews.

3.13.Pre- testing

A pretesting was done at Namiwawa Primary School in Blantyre. The guide was pretested in order to identify problems with the questions and improve clarity of the questions before the actual data collection. One question had to be rephrased after participants noted that it was vague to them and would not help to bring out much information. We worked together with the participants to rephrase the question and after rephrasing, it was easy for participants to articulate their experiences. This exercise was important because it helped to improve the actual data collection process and quality of data.

3.14. Data Collection Method

Data from participants was collected using focus group discussions and Key informant interviews with the aid of interview guides (Appendix 4) and (Appendix 5). Section A of the interview guides contained demographic information of the participants. The demographic data helps in informing the researcher and consumers as to whether the sample reflects the attributes of population of interest (Profetto-McGrath et al., 2010). Section B focused on their experiences in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse.

The principal investigator collected all the data at the respective schools and offices. The interview guides were formulated based on study objectives and information obtained from literature. The researcher conducted 6 focus group discussions and 8 individual in-depth interviews in order to obtain participants accounts

of their experiences. The focus group discussion and in-depth interviews were conducted at the participant's convenient time and schedule.

One interview session was conducted per day. This gave ample time for the researcher to reflect on the collected data. Both focus group discussions and interviews were audiotaped and field notes were also taken. Notes were taken as data backup measure in case of recording failure. Each focus group discussion took an average of one hour and the key informant interviews lasted for forty-five minutes. Data was collected in English language. This is the official communication language in Malawian schools. The primary school teachers were able to understand and express themselves in English with less problems although one anticipates that they may have been more fluent in Chichewa since this is their first language. The choice was given to them to select the preferred language and they chose English. The researcher had to respect the participants' right to choice. However, during the interviews participants were at times slipping to local language.

3.15. Data Management and Analysis

3.15.1. Data Management

The researcher kept the electronic data in the researcher's computer which had a pin code known only to the researcher. The recorder and some field data were locked in the drawer of the researcher and were only accessed by the researcher and the supervisor.

3.15.2. Data Analysis

The researcher manually transcribed recorded interviews word by word in the language that they were conducted which is English. The researcher utilised simple thematic analysis prescribed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the data. Thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke has six simple steps; Familiarizing oneself with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing a report. A simple thematic analysis is one that looks across all the data to identify the common issues that recur, and identify the main themes that summarise all the views you have collected (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). This approach ensured that findings are based on data collected. Thematic analysis ensures that data collected through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews method is appropriate and significant and meaningful patterns emerge (Profetto-McGrath et al., 2010).

Phase 1. Familiarizing oneself with data.

- ✓ Transcribing the interactions
- ✓ Reading transcripts and (re-reading) /or listening to recordings
- ✓ Jotting down initial ideas
- ✓ Having a comprehensive understanding of the content.

Phase 1 involves familiarisation with the data (Bailey, 2008). This is an important first step in data analysis. Thus, the researcher transcribed the interactions, read and re-read the transcribed data including listening and listening to recordings.

This process allowed for close observation of data through repeated careful listening to the recorded data and writing word for word (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). This process also assisted in, jotting down initial ideas that were emerging from the data.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes.

- ✓ Identifying preliminary codes which were the features of data that appeared interesting and meaningful.
- ✓ Coding was done manually using highlighters
- ✓ Potential codes were numerous.
- ✓ They provided an indication of the context of the conversation.
- ✓ Data that was identified by the same code was collated together.

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), Phase 2 involved the production of initial codes from the data. Codes identify a feature of the data that appears meaningful regarding the phenomenon. In this study, initial codes were given to sentences in the data set according to similar units. Codes were compared across the whole data set to identify any similarities, differences and linkages within them (Profetto-McGrath et al., 2010). This exercise was aimed at identifying repeated forms that would translate into themes. Repeated forms were highlighted by a coloured pencil and were later coded by writing short notes against them and grouping them.

Phase 3: Searching for themes.

- ✓ had a long list of different codes

- ✓ Sorting different codes into potential themes
- ✓ Some codes formed main themes or subthemes, others codes were kept aside and others discarded.

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), Phase 3 begins when all data have been initially coded and collated. The phase involves sorting the different codes into potential themes, and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes. The researcher searched for possible themes. Similar codes were translated into possible themes. This activity involved sorting the codes into potential themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were derived basing on the frequency in which they came up from the transcripts. From this process superordinate (main) and subordinate (sub) themes were developed. . The researcher drew a table that assisted in the organization of the identified codes into themes and sub-themes.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes.

- ✓ Refining of the themes
- ✓ Some themes were added together
- ✓ Others were broken down smaller components

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), phase 4 involves reviewing and refining of the themes to ascertain whether the themes match the data set. In this study, after identification of themes, they were reviewed and refined to ensure that they were clear and they matched with the data that supported them. The researcher identified the

themes and subthemes and the meanings that each theme carried and determined what part of the data qualified what the participants said in their own words under each theme. Themes that needed to be combined were combined, and those that needed to be separated were separated. The researcher re-read the entire data set to make sure the themes matched the collected data. A few themes were discarded because they did not cohere to the pattern. Instead, the themes that reflected ideas in the transcriptions were refined to produce a clear and true reflection. This was done by testing them if they showed a relationship to the data set.

Phase 5: Defining themes.

- ✓ Captures the aspect of what each theme is about
- ✓ Captures what aspect of the data each theme captures

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), phase 5 involves defining and further refining of the themes. This means identifying the essence of what each theme is about and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures. This is done by going back to gathered data extracts for each theme, and organising them into a coherent and internally consistent account, with accompanying narrative. In this study, the researcher named and defined the themes based on what the themes were communicating from the data in connection to the research objectives. The themes identified were; Understanding of child physical abuse, Utilization of physical punishment in schools, Identification of child physical abuse and Reporting of child physical abuse.

Phase 6: Producing the report.

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), Phase 6 involves the final analysis and write-up of the report to tell the story of the data in a way which convinces the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis. This process assisted in interpreting the experiences of participants with regards to identification and reporting child physical abuse. In this study, the themes, sub-themes and supporting narratives were fully discussed in line with the study objectives and the report of the results was written. The frequency or recurrence of the themes Informed the process of interpreting the viewpoints of the participants with regard to the experiences and challenges faced by primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse.

3.16. Establishing Trustworthiness of the Data

Trustworthiness of data refers to the quality, the authenticity and truthfulness of findings in qualitative research and relates to the degree of confidence readers have in the study findings (Pollit & Beck 2017). There are different criteria used to assess the rigour of qualitative research but the most common are those proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985); credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). These formed the framework for determining the rigour in this study.

3.16.1.Credibility.

Credibility refers to the value and believability of the findings (Pollit & Beck 2017). Credibility involves two processes; conducting the research in a believable manner and being able to demonstrate confidence in truthfulness of the data and its interpretation (Houghton et al., 2013). To ensure credibility an appropriate sample

consisting of participants who had the knowledge on the research topic were purposively selected. Participants were given opportunity to refuse to participate in the study to ensure that the data collection sessions involved only those who were genuinely willing to take part and prepared to offer true information freely.

The researcher also made it clear to the participants that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point, and that they did not even require to disclose an explanation to the researcher. This was done ensure honesty in participants when contributing, and to encourage participants to contribute ideas and talk of their experiences in identifying and reporting of child physical abuse without fear of losing integrity. Participants were also encouraged to be frank from the beginning of each session and were encouraged to ask questions where and whenever they feel they did not understand something. Additionally, open-ended questions were used to allow participants freely express their views on the topic in their own words and the researcher probed for more information wherever necessary. The data were transcribed verbatim to ensure that the data analysed were the actual words from the participants. Direct quotes from the participants have been used to anchor the report.

There were also frequent debriefing sessions between the researcher and the supervisor and other senior members of academic staff through boot camps. Through the discussions, the vision of the researcher was widened as others brought in their experiences and perceptions as regards to the research project. Such collaborative sessions were used by the researcher to discuss alternative approaches in a more supervisory capacity. The meetings also provided a sounding board for the researcher to

test the developing ideas and interpretations, and probing from others helped the researcher to recognise weaknesses and mistakes. The boot camps also gave an opportunity for peer and academic scrutiny of the research project and feedback was offered to the researcher at the presentations. These individuals brought in fresh perspective since the researcher's closeness to the project would have inhibited the ability to view it with real detachment and hence the researcher was able to refine the project.

3.16.2. Dependability.

Dependability is often compared to the concept of reliability in quantitative research and refers to how stable the data is (Houghton et al., 2013; Polit & Beck, 2010a). Dependability means that the study should be consistent over time and that enough observations were made that showed this consistence (Schmidt & brown 2012). In order to ensure consistency in this study, a detailed report on the research process undertaken has been made which includes, research design, and its implementation, data collection and analysis. Detailed reporting of the process will enable the readers of the report to understand the methods and their effectiveness, and also enabling future researchers repeat the study and get the same results.

3.16.3. Confirmability.

Confirmability is the potential for congruency between two or more independent people about data accuracy, relevance or meaning (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). **Confirmability** was achieved by recording all the words spoken by participants and the researcher in order to distinguish the participants' data from the interviewee's

view. Raw data in form of literal statements and quotations of participants were included in the dataset. Data analysis was done followings steps in thematic analysis hence preventing the researcher departing from the focus of the inquiry. The findings were reviewed together with the research supervisors.

3.16.4. Transferability.

Transferability is the extent to which the qualitative findings can be transferred to another setting or similar groups of people (Profetto-McGrath et al., 2010).

Transferability is established by providing evidence that the findings of the research study could be applicable to another or a similar context. In this study, transferability was demonstrated by providing enough description of the study setting and sample so that anyone who wants to use it can evaluate the application of the data to other or similar settings and population.

3.17. Reflexivity

The interviews were conducted within the school premises and one would expect that this may have influenced the way the teachers would respond to my questions. To my surprise the environment and the nature of the topic under study did not have any negative influence at all. The discussion was free. The teachers were freer to discuss the topic under study because they seemed to have found a channel for ventilating their disappointment over the banning of corporal punishment in schools. From our discussion teachers felt aggrieved by this law which they clearly stated that it is making their life as teachers hard due to indiscipline. It was even surprising to me to hear some of them openly admitting that they strongly support use of corporal

punishment. Nonetheless, I felt that they were freer to discuss these issues because they talked more on what others do and not what they do in terms of practising corporal punishment. My calm approach, I am sure gave them the confidence that they can trust me.

3.18. Ethical Consideration

Ethics is a system of moral values that is concerned with a degree to which research procedures adhere to professional, legal and social obligations to the study participants (Houghton et al., 2013). Therefore, in this study, respect for human rights of the participants on the right to self-determination, privacy, autonomy, anonymity confidentiality and protection from harm was enforced. Thus the ethical considerations included voluntary participation, obtaining informed consent and ensuring privacy and confidentiality of participants. The researcher made sure that the participant's rights were protected by giving them detailed information about the study in order to obtain their consent; that is participant's information letter was devised (**Appendix 1**) and (**Appendix 2**).

The information covered the aim of the study, duration of the interview, data collection methods and procedures, as well as the relevance of the research study to the children's health in Malawi and worldwide. Participants were also assured that the data would be treated with strict confidentiality and that their identity would not be disclosed in the final report. Their freedom to withdraw at any stage and to stop an interview whenever they feel it was necessary was stressed to ensure autonomy. They were ensured that their refusal to participate in the study would not affect their work in

any way. Institutional ethical issues included obtaining approval for the study from the College of Medicine Research and Ethics Committee (COMREC) through Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN). Permission to conduct the study was sought from the District Education Office; (**Appendix 6**).

3.19. Dissemination of the Findings

Dissemination of findings and possible recommendations will be done locally, at the study setting, nationally and globally. There will be meetings at the selected primary schools and Blantyre District Education Office to share the results.

Furthermore, the study report will be submitted to College of Medicine Research and Ethical Committee (COMREC) and staff of the Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN) and report will be published as a journal article. A thesis will be submitted to the KCN library in Blantyre.

CHAPTER 4:

Presentation of Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study. The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of primary school teachers in identification and reporting of child physical abuse in Blantyre urban. Findings are presented in two sections. The first section contains demographic information of the participants. The second section presents the findings of the narratives obtained through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. These findings are presented thematically. Direct quotes from participants have been used to illustrate what was actually said. No names have been mentioned, instead the participants have been identified using codes which were assigned to them.

4.2. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Details of the demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1. The table shows that of the 69 participants, the majority, 56(81%) were females and at various levels of their professional ladder. More than half of the participants had long service, having worked for a period of over 20 years. These teachers were also of various categories but many 53 (77%) were in the category of Primary Type 2 teachers. The least represented were type 4 teachers because they are being phased out and type 1 because it's a promotional grade reserved for teachers with post graduate qualifications.

Table 2: Demographic Information of Participants

Characteristic	Number	Percentage (%)
Age in years		
20 – 30	3	4.3
31 – 40	12	17.4
41 – 50	32	46.4
51 – 60	22	31.9
Gender		
Male	13	18.8
Female	56	81.2
Length of service		
1 – 10	12	17.4
11 – 21	21	30.4
22 – 32	30	43.5
33 – 43	6	8.7
Religion		
Moslems	1	1.4
Christians	68	98.6
Professional qualification		
Primary Type 1 (post graduates)	4	5.8
Primary Type 2 (MSCE holders)	53	76.8
Primary Type 3 (JCE holders)		
Primary Type 4 (PSLCE holders)	8	11.6
	4	5.8

4.3. Findings from Focus Group Discussion and In-depth interviews

The qualitative data were analysed manually using simple thematic analysis as outlined in the methodology section. The main themes that emerged were:

Conceptualization of child physical abuse, Utilisation of physical punishment in schools, Identification of child physical abuse and Reporting of child physical abuse.

These themes have been outlined in Table 3

Table 3: Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
Theme 1: Conceptualisation of child physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed understandings of child physical abuse • Consequences of child physical abuse
Theme 2: Perceptions towards utilisation of physical punishment in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive attitudes towards use of physical punishments in schools
Theme 3: Identification of child physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct observation of a child • Secrecy • Large classes • Inadequate knowledge
Theme 4: Reporting of child physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red tape bureaucracy • Mistrust in justice system • Fear of community reprisal

4.3.1. Conceptualization of Child Physical Abuse

Participants were asked different questions to explore their understanding of child physical abuse. Participants defined child physical abuse as an abnormal way of

treating children which involves deliberately hurting the child by beating her/ him or throwing objects resulting in intentional injuries. They regarded it as a deviation from the usual way of treating children, which includes, assaulting, beating, using weapons, instruments, corporal punishment to treat somebody. Participants stated that physical abuse may take place in the home and at school and can be perpetrated by parents, teachers, head teachers and fellow students.

*“Uh, child physical abuse what I can say I know, uh, from the information that is made available is like examples would be, like beating a child and many forms of physical abuse that happens either at school level where the teacher beats or sometimes in the homes what happens when maybe a child wets on a bed, sometimes the parents would actually physically take a child maybe do all sorts of things to actually show that they are angry with the behaviour... they are also made to sleep outside just because of the habit and many other associated kind of behaviours which are somehow taken as normal
“ Key informant BT male”.*

While participants defined physical abuse as abnormal, they were also quick to note that the same behaviours are also regarded as normal child rearing practices especially in the homes.

“In most cases parents they look at it as normal being their child, they feel they can do anything which they feel like doing because it’s their child. at school level maybe I can look at the beating of a child could be used as a punishment when a child has not behaved well or sometimes even failing in class then the

teacher decides to whip to say if you get wrong fives then you are also going to be whipped five times... (Key informant BT female).

4.3.1.1. Mixed understandings of child physical abuse

Descriptions from both key informants and FGD participants demonstrated that participants confused child physical abuse with other forms of abuse such as emotional and sexual violence and other forms of child maltreatment. Although participants managed to cite typical examples of physical abuse when asked what constituted child physical abuse; they could hardly isolate physical abuse from other forms of child abuse in the discussion. This became very clear when they were asked to give specific examples of behaviours that they would label physical abuse as illustrated in the following quotations:

“Child physical abuse to my understanding..., maybe touching breast or raping or any other assault by word or action” (Key informant KJ female).

Likewise, the following participant had this to say;

“Yah, sometimes we may also say that when we look at the child physical abuse, it’s abusing the body of that particular child. It can be ah, private parts if they have been tampered with, that is physical abuse, sure” (Key informant Zfemale).

4.3.1.2. Consequences of child physical abuse

Many participants explained that child physical abuse results in bad behaviour and so many other negative outcomes. Participants cited absenteeism from class,

aggressive behaviour, crying, urinating in class, sleeping during classes, lack of concentration, fearfulness, low self- esteem and self- isolation as consequences of child physical abuse. They also mentioned that physical abuse affects child's academic performance. On this point, participants commented that physical punishments contribute to school dropout among young children. They explained that physical punishments scare children as a result some of them opt to completely stop attending school.

“And also, there are some children and when you do that to them they are afraid of coming to school, they say that if I go to that school they will beat me or maybe they will give me a punishment, so the best way is to stop going to school. So, it makes some children to stop coming to school” (C FGD p5 male).

Some participants reported that use of physical punishments result in strained relationships between the teacher, the learner and the family. They explained that in response to the abuse some students display unbecoming behaviour towards the teacher who abuses them.

Sometimes that child has a hatred of you and even maybe doing something bad deliberately whenever he or she sees you so that you can send that child out” (NM FGD p7 male).

Some noted that physically abused children may sometimes project their anger towards fellow students. Consequently, the child may be looking forward to being punished. Still on behavioural effects of child physical abuse, others noted that abused children may also engage in risky behaviours such as drug, substance and alcohol abuse.

“When the child comes here, he/she is aggressive to his or her friends” (My FGD p7 male).

Others noted that frequent use of physical punishment may result in behaviour conditioning in the child

“And also, another effect can be that their behaviour can change because a person who is used to being beaten, he or she is used to that, so the behaviour itself shows that he or she is used to that” (My FGD p2 female).

“The child smoke tobacco cigarettes and also drinks bear” (NM FGD p6 male)

Participants also reported that physical punishments may cause injury and permanent disability or even death of the child. Participants emphasised that physical punishments are not intended to cause harm or injury to the child but acknowledged that such events may occur accidentally. They explained that injury or death may happen in cases where there is already a pre-existing condition.

“you can hurt somebody’s child and even maybe become unconscious but it could be that the child had already that problem and it happened that you just brought it out, the child fell down and fainted and is found with other problems” (Z FGD p5 female).

“Maybe he or she can become physically crippled”(NM FGD p3 female).

Apart from the physical consequences, participants also tackled on the mental health effects of physical abuse.

“He or she can become crippled psychologically, that can be invisible, behaviour wise because of being physically abused being beaten too much, as a result he or she is mentally disturbed” (Key informant MT male).

4.3.2.Perceptions towards Utilization of Physical Punishment in Schools

There was convergence of views with regards to the legal and policy stand on child physical abuse in schools in Malawi. All participants acknowledged that physical punishments in schools are prohibited. Participants cited article 19 of the Constitution, which they said prohibits use of corporal punishment in schools. They also cited a directive that was issued by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology through a circular informing all the teachers of the banning of physical punishments on learners and penalties for non-adherence to the policy. The participants stated that the consequences are dire because one can be charged with criminal offence under the laws of Malawi or can be dismissed for misconduct. They explained that many are restrained from effecting physical punishments on learners because of this ban.

“corporal punishment is banned; we are not supposed to do that” (MY FGD p7 male)

“Now it is wrong and we don’t do it anymore because in those days like in our time, the teacher had a stick and we used to call it Sjambok and we were definitely being whipped and also sometimes the teacher could make you to

stand up with one leg in the class and now all those things were banned, they are no longer there, and the only punishments that we give are to sweep and pick up waste papers” (NM FGD p2 male).

In spite of defining CPA as abnormal and acknowledging that the practice is banned by MOEST, many participants revealed that use of physical punishments on learners was still prevalent among primary school teachers. Participants unanimously agreed that CPA was a very big problem in their communities and within schools. The participants asserted that physical abuse is highly prevalent and openly stated that it will take some time for the practice to stop completely.

“Many children in the schools are really being abused.....and these physical abuses can also be done by teachers, that’s beating the learners in class or a child in class....” (MY FGD p4 female).

“There is much of physical abuse these days to the children...in the community” (Key informant KJ female).

4.3.2.1.Supportive attitudes towards the use of physical punishment

There was a great yearning for reinstatement of physical punishments in schools among participants. Many participants felt that the ban, robbed them of their most effective tool in child discipline.

Participants asserted that physical punishments are a necessary ingredient for raising a competent and responsible citizen.

“We too were punished and things worked by then. We were disciplined, we were respecting our teachers because of those corporal punishments but as for now the learners are very rude” (MY FGD p7 male).

“ these children are really rude. It’s sad that corporal punishment was stopped but it was helpful because that was what the teachers were doing to us in those days. For us to be educated and be where we are today, it was because of that corporal punishment” (Z FGD p2 male).

Physical punishments help teachers to handle difficult learners, set boundaries between who is in charge and what rules have to be followed. Participants explained that children do not always realise that certain behaviours are bad and if left alone, they end up making poor life decisions that will affect their future. Participants strongly believed that learners refrain from misbehaviour when they understand that stiffer penalties will accompany misbehaviour.

Participants used their past experiences to compare with the current situation to assert their position on usefulness of physical punishments:

“...but now just because we don’t beat those children, you can command them that ‘keep quiet, keep quiet’ or maybe ‘don’t be late’ but because they know that they are not whipped they keep on doing those things” (NM FGD p5 female).

In addition, participants had great reservations regarding the manner in which the ban was introduced. Many complained that Ministry of Education Science and Technology imposed the ban without consulting the teachers and offering them alternative strategies to discipline learners. Many mentioned that if given any opportunity to express their opinion on this policy, they would vote for reinstatement of corporal punishment.

The introduction of the ban on corporal punishment was also perceived as a manifestation of the ills of human rights. They added that organisations that are teaching learners about human rights have the tendency of misrepresenting and misleading children because they only educate children on their rights without teaching them about the accompanying responsibilities. They felt that sometimes children follow these without questioning and they believed that this could also be a major source of conflict and a cause of abuse in itself.

You know uh, it's like uh, with these issues of human rights to use corporal punishment uh, but for me and my fellow teachers I think it was the best way to discipline the child but with human rights I think it is contrary. So, to teachers, to me I mean, me as a teacher I wish corporal punishment was in use" (MY FGD p2 female).

Participants perceived individuals who support the ban on use of corporal punishment as lacking understanding on the importance of corporal punishment in child disciplining. These comments were made specifically in reference to parents who they felt that do overreact when they hear that children are beaten by teachers.

“And if most of the times you give punishments to those children, once they report that to their parents, their parents come here and start shouting ‘why did you do this to my child?’ That is because they don’t know the benefits of that, most of the parents don’t know the benefits of punishing a child if that child misbehaves. They don’t know the benefits and as a result, you the teacher, you become a bad person” (Z FGD p4 female).

Participants also noted that whipping or use of corporal punishment in child discipline is sanctioned biblically. However, some participants were quick to note that severe punishments are not acceptable and that punishments should match with age of the child and nature of offence committed by the child.

“.... even the bible it’s written ‘whip a child’ then what does a child do, the child grows up (all laughed ...), I mean the degree of the punishment will matter anyway in this but at least discipline her or him by giving that punishment I think it will work, yah “(MT FGD p 6 female)

4.3.3. Identification of Child Physical Abuse

Participants were asked different questions to explore their ability to identify a child that is suspected to have been physically abused and the responses indicated that several factors influenced participant’s ability to identify a child that is suspected to have been physically abused which led to emerging of the following themes; 1) Direct observation, 2) Secrecy, 3) Overcrowding in classes, 4) Inadequate knowledge.

4.3.3.1. Direct observation.

Direct observation was one of the methods used to identify physically abused children. Participants explained that they recognise signs and symptoms of child physical abuse through observing the obvious changes in behaviour or physical injuries on the children during their interaction with children. Physical signs and symptoms mentioned included scars, swellings on a part of the body, poor bodily hygiene; deformity and change in gait and posture when walking. Participants also mentioned bruises among others as cues that would lead them to suspect abuse.

“ ... we just look at the bruises or wounds on the skin, yes, that's it, or what you can easily detect. But with the other signs it is difficult unless we are deeply informed” (NM FGD p1 male).

“I think we can see wounds, bruises, broken maybe leg, hand, swollen eyes” (MT FGD p1female).

Many participants indicated that the child's behaviour can be indicative that something is wrong. They specifically mentioned that sudden changes in the child's behaviour or remarkable behaviour change within a space of time serve as indicators for suspected abuse. Participants mentioned absenteeism from class, aggressive behaviour, crying, urinating in class, sleeping in class and lack of concentration, fearful, low self- esteem and self- isolation. With regards to class performance, participants mentioned that class participation and academic performance of children who are physically abused worsens.

“And sometimes maybe we cannot see the actual signs but sometimes the way the learner or the student is behaving you can also suspect something that something like physical abuse is happening to her or him. So, her behaviour can tell the story, will speak the volume” (MY FGD p1 female).

Some participants gave examples of cases they identified through observation

“Yah, it’s was suspecting her behaviour, most of the time she was coming to school late and even uh, I consulted my fellow teachers from her previous class, yah, they were telling me that this learner was performing very well but this time around we are also uh, wondering as to what is happening with her because her performance dropped. So, I asked her some questions, so, she told me that she has been uh, beaten at home, yah, things like given a lot of work which are not of her age, so that’s what I came across, that was last term”. (MT FGD p2 female).

“Sometimes the child is miserable in class, if that child is not participating properly in class, we sit down with that child and ask him or her that ‘why are you always quiet in class? When your friends go out to play you are always in class, when your friends are cleaning you are alone’. We call that child and do let’s say like counselling, so sometimes that child reveals” (Z FGD p3 female)

4.3.3.2. Secrecy.

Many participants explained that although teachers use observation to identify abuse, many teachers rarely take an active role in identifying cases of physical abuse.

They explained that many teachers learn about abuse when the child personally discloses the abuse to the teacher. Sometimes teachers get tips about the abuse from the child's friends, parents and other parents and people of good will. However, participants observed that this method is not reliable because many children do not have the courage or opportunity to speak out. They observed that many abused children refuse to disclose abuse to their teachers even when they are quizzed. Participants were not sure of the reasons behind the secrecy but speculated that several factors including threats from their abusers may be behind the secrecy.

“The children are very secretive, they are not able to explain what happens to them, I don't know whether maybe it's because they are threatened or maybe what, so they are like they are not free to explain what makes them to be quiet and unable to be free. So that also is very difficult to identify a child and know what exactly is bothering the child”(NM FGD p3 female).

Typical scenarios were cited where teachers failed to persuade learners to disclose abuse. They explained that suspected children totally refuse to disclose abuse even when the abuse is ongoing. In certain cases, children acknowledge the existence of abuse but assure their teachers that the abuse existed in the past.

“I had a certain case sometime back. It seems that maybe she broke her mother's phone and the mother beat her very much...So she wrote in the middle of her notebook 'my own biological mother, shouting at me these words' and she listed them down, there were maybe about fifteen of them..., Actually about fifteen of them 'shouting at me like this, my own biological

mother' and she listed them down. So I read them, I was marking, so I called her 'what happened?' She didn't respond. So I enticed her later on when her friends went out for break 'tell me what happened because you can't just write this for nothing' she said 'it's alright, the issue was sorted out' still I insisted 'but what happened?' 'she beat me too much because I broke her phone, so she beat me too much and also shouted me those words, so I was really hurt' then I said 'ok, can I call her?' and she said 'no, the issue was already sorted out' but the look of things she was afraid because I think the way she was beaten and the way she shouted at her, she shouted foul language at her child and it really hurt her''(MY FGD p3 female).

Lack of motivation to engage with cases of abuse makes the teachers to rely heavily on self-disclosures from the learners.

"I don't think there is anything which can motivate a teacher to be investigating more about the abuses. If we are talking of motivation there is nothing of that type, that teachers are motivated but because they are teachers, they have to take care of welfare of the learners. So, yah, they do that but if you are talking of motivation there is no that thing in practice, they are not motivated, there is no motivation" (Key informant C male).

4.3.3.3. Overcrowding in classes or large classes.

Large classes were perceived as a major hindrance in actively identifying abuse. Participants explained that the pupil teacher ratio for many schools in Blantyre Urban is very high. It is hard for teachers to effectively engage with each and every learner to an

extent that they can easily identify problems of the learners. Participants explained that they do not have enough time to enable them concentrate on both abuse issues and other class work. Additionally, their classes are very large which makes it difficult for the teachers to spot those that have been physically abused. Dealing with abuse cases in the context of large classes was perceived to be an extra burden for the already overworked teachers.

“The recommended ratio for teachers to learners is sixty learners to one teacher but seeing the schools it’s not like that, one class has one hundred and fifty or two hundred something learners and for you to identify that this one has been physically abused, it’s difficult” (NM FGD p6 female).

“I think here in Blantyre it could be because of overcrowding of learners because there are too many learners, sometimes it’s difficult to detect if that learner is really affected, overcrowding. But had it been that our classes are, you know, manageable, it would have been very easy because that’s our duty to do that, we should know our learners, sure” (Key informant Z female).

4.3.3.4. Inadequate knowledge

Some of the key informants who spoke on the subject strongly believed that teachers have the responsibility to actively engage in identifying abuse and that the lack of it could be simply be a sign of lack of knowledge and motivation. Participants explained that most of them do not have adequate knowledge to recognise and intervene in child physical abuse cases as they did not receive any formal training on the subject matter.

“And also, we don’t know what to do. The learner is in problems but you don’t know how to assist the learner. We don’t have information on how to treat the learners who are passing through those problems” (K FGD p2 male).

Most of them explained that they got their information from radios, meetings and newspapers. They commented that these sources provided very basic information on child physical abuse and could not adequately prepare them to competently detect abuse and later on manage such cases. Participants requested for trainings to improve their confidence in handling cases.

“If the teachers could be well trained, I definitely believe that they can have that, ah, that knowledge about how they can detect and report timely, yah...” (Key informant K female).

Uh, to me I somehow saw that there is a gap and over the years like past two years I felt like I need to employ other people that can come to train the local structures at school level” (Key informant DEM female).

Participants felt that teachers are left out on issues of child protection yet they are the ones who stay with children most of the times. They cited departments like health, social welfare, police and the judiciary as some of the departments that are equipped in dealing with child abuse cases.

Participants also pointed out that some organisations target learners only at the expense of their teachers

“But I think specifically, we teachers, because we are the ones who stay with that child for a long time, we are the ones who are supposed to have more information. We have to be trained on about this issue...” (K FGD p4 female).

4.3.4. Reporting of Child Physical Abuse

The findings revealed that all primary schools that were involved in the study had established some form of structure for reporting and handling child abuse. However, there was a lack of established standard reporting procedures and handling of abuse cases was left at the discretion of each and every school authority.

4.3.4.1.Red Tape Bureaucracy

Participants noted that there was a gap in reporting procedures for abuse. Schools did not have established policies and procedures for reporting suspected cases. Each and every school had its own ways for reporting. Teachers in many cases were only involved at the beginning of the case but resolution of such cases were left at the discretion of school administrators and in many of the cases, teachers who identified the case were not given feedback on how the case was finalised. *“You need to go to the administrators. It’s up to the administrator to tell you what to do, either to go on with the case or to leave them to carry on the case” (K FGD p6 male).*

Participants explained that decisions were made on case by case and the extent to which the case is pursued depended on the perceived gravity of the individual case. In some schools, participants reported that once a case was identified by the teacher, it was reported to the deputy head who was then responsible to report to the head teacher

of the school who was also responsible for calling mother groups and parents of the concerned students for a round table discussion. In other schools, deputy heads were involved; and yet in others, the case was directly reported to the mother groups who were then responsible for informing the head teacher of the school. Only one school mentioned the existence of a child protection officer within the school. This officer is one of the teachers designated to handle issues of abuse and acted as a coordinator and liaison officer between the school and relevant stake holders.

Consequently, committees that were responsible for handling cases varied from one school to the other. In other schools it was the Disciplinary committee, while in other schools it was School management committee, Parents Teachers Associations or Mother groups. Participants observed that the process was complicated by excessive red tape or bureaucracy.

“Then we are required to come and report to our immediate boss in order to see the way forward, so that if the issue is not too big, the class teacher is supposed to call the parents, yes, or maybe the guardian of the child....to see what is the way forward...if the issue is too big requires the police to intervene because the parents and us cannot be able to settle the issue on our own” (NM FGD p2 female)

4.3.4.2. Mistrust in the justice system.

Participants who managed to identify and report cases to police expressed some reservations about the justice system. Participants explained that although they identified abuse and reported the cases to police, their efforts proved futile as cases

were never taken seriously. Long distance from the school to the police stations was also cited as a hindrance to reporting cases.

“...Even if that child has faced that problem and we managed to identify it and we have reported it and the issue goes as far as the police, the help will not be effective. But we need to be trained; we should have information that after identifying the problem of a child, how can we help that child?” (K FGD p4 female).

Participants in some schools specifically mentioned that abuse perpetrated by law enforcers or school authorities was hard to handle.

“But the challenge maybe that I have ever faced within this school is that most of the learners that come to this school are learners from the police family. So when we are trying to, when we are trying to investigate about physical abuse about the learners, especially not within the school that the child has been physically abused within the school but from the home, sometimes the case doesn't go forward because the parents are the law what (laughs), the law is in their hands, so sometimes they try to defeat the process (Key informant K, female).

4.3.4.4. Fear of community reprisal.

The majority of participants expressed safety concerns with handling of abuse cases. They reported that the community does not understand the effects of physical abuse hence when the participants try to intervene, the community becomes angry with

them, intimidates them and sometimes forcefully ask them to leave the working station. The participants felt that the community does not understand and appreciate teachers' roles in abuse prevention. They are accused of interfering with family issues. They said the community expects that the teachers' responsibility is to teach, and not intervening in child rearing issues. Even in situations where teachers try to intervene on an alleged abuse, the parents scold them and conceal any information of the abuse. Some parents even threatened to abandon the child to the teachers, if they insist on investigating the abuse.

“Yah, the challenges are that since they deal with learners and when a learner has revealed, ah, a teacher find it difficult to get maybe to expose that problem maybe to bring this problem to the attention of the parents fearing that maybe the parents will rise against the teacher, ‘what is your concern on my child and how come that you are trying to find out the family matters of my child yet your part is only, eh, your work is of teaching the learner, it is not finding about what is happening to the learner’. So in other words we say teachers are, are, they are what, uh, maybe they become afraid to reveal whatever the experiences which learners feel or how they are treated” (Key informant C male).

“Ah, sometimes they are able to say that ‘how did you know that we are not taking care of this child properly? ‘yes, ‘if you want you can take the child because we are not able to take care of him’ like such words, yes” (Key informant NM female).

Most participants explained that they would comfortably work on issues of child physical abuse if their security was assured. Participants mentioned that they need protection in cases where they are investigating the suspected abuse. They said that if safety was guaranteed, investigation process would be easy. One participant said;

“I just want to add, specifically I think we are more at risk when we identify issues like those, so to take that issue further it is like we are risking because they can harm us, so we think that our security is poor” (Z FGD p5 female).

Sometimes we are intimidated, we are intimidated because you want to report the issue appropriately but you hear some threats that something bad will happen to you, you are intimidated, so maybe that can be a challenge” (NM FGDp5 female).

4.4. Summary

In this chapter, demographic characteristics and qualitative findings of the study have been presented and analysed. Direct quotations from the interviews were used whenever necessary during presentation of qualitative findings. The results were presented according to major themes that emerged during data analysis. The major themes that emerged were; understanding of child physical abuse, utilisation of physical punishment in schools, identification of child physical abuse and reporting of child physical abuse.

The findings in this chapter have shown that participants were not able to properly define and differentiate child physical abuse from other forms of child abuse

and that the participants have supporting attitudes towards the use of corporal punishment in schools. Despite the supportive attitudes toward corporal punishment, there were some indications that other participants have started embracing the change towards the use of corporal punishment as a method of disciplining learners.

Participants also noted a gap in child physical abuse reporting procedures. They also expressed that they lacked knowledge on child physical abuse issues, inadequate time to properly detect and report the suspected physical abuse because of large classes, mistrust in justice system, and concerns over safety issues.

CHAPTER 5:

Discussion of Results

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses findings of the study whose aim was to explore the experiences of primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre urban. The specific objectives included; to identify the meaning of child physical abuse from the perspective of primary school teachers, to describe the perceptions of the primary school teachers in the role of identifying and reporting of child physical abuse, and to identify challenges primary school teachers face in identifying and reporting child physical abuse. The purpose of the discussion chapter is to understand and describe the meaning of the findings in relation to what was already known about the research problem being investigated, and to explain any new understandings (Polit & Beck, 2017). In this thesis, the discussion will be based on the themes that were generated from the data especially those responding directly to the research aim and objectives and those which provide a platform for informing future interventions and practice. It must be noted however, that some of the themes from the literature review (Chapter 2) resonate strongly with the findings of the present study, and will be incorporated into this discussion where appropriate, whilst areas of divergence or contrast will also be highlighted.

Four areas addressed in the discussion are: 1) conceptualization of child physical abuse, 2) utilization of physical punishment in schools, 3) identification of child physical abuse and 4) reporting of child physical abuse.

5.2. Conceptualization of child physical abuse

The study findings showed that primary school teachers in Blantyre urban were not able to properly distinguish child physical abuse from other forms of abuse such as sexual abuse although they managed to cite typical examples of child physical abuse. Lack of pre- and in-service training in child physical abuse issues was blamed for creating this gap amongst the teachers. These findings resonate well with findings of studies conducted in Malaysia, India, Netherlands and United States of America which demonstrated that there was a lack of attention to child abuse issues in teachers education (Choo et al., 2013; Ramesh et al., 2017; Schols, De Ruiters, et al., 2013; Sinanan, 2011). Lack of knowledge was also one of the important factors affecting identification and reporting of child abuse in a study that investigated the level of support among teachers to assume mandatory reporting duties in Malaysia. Very few teachers in their study had received training on child abuse prior to or during their period of service. Consequently, many teachers lacked knowledge on indicators of child physical abuse and confidence in recognising and reporting the problem (Choo et al., 2013).

Lack of knowledge of child abuse issues have also been demonstrated in studies that included other professionals in their samples. For example, a Denmark study among primary school teachers, nurses and physicians found that the definition of different forms of abuse including physical abuse used by the participants were not consistent with the definition found in the empirical literature. The participants did not know the signs of abuse, had no knowledge of the baseline rates of abuse and could not

explain child abuse reporting procedures. Apart from lack of training, researchers indicated that an individual's upbringing and social and cultural factors may have also shaped the participants understanding of child abuse (Schols, De Ruiter, et al., 2013).

The role of knowledge in shaping the understanding, identification and reporting of child abuse cases cannot be over emphasised, considering that other studies have demonstrated high identification and reporting rates among teachers who are properly trained in child abuse issues (Adeyemi, (2013). In addition, others have stated that making reporting child abuse mandatory for primary school teachers and other professionals responsible for children to recognize and report suspected cases of child abuse would increase identification and reporting of such cases (Hendricks, 2014).

5.3.Utilization of physical Punishment in Schools

In this study, the findings indicated that participants continued using corporal punishment to discipline children despite the practice being outlawed in Malawi. The majority were against outlawing of corporal punishment. Participants explained that corporal punishment was the most effective means of instilling discipline in the learners. According to the participants, corporal punishment helps children to grow into competent and responsible individuals. They further said that children make better decisions about their actions and behaviours when they understand that stiffer penalties accompany misbehaviour. Corporal punishment serves, as a remainder on the specific boundaries not to be crossed.

These findings correlate with literature which state that the use of corporal punishment to manage discipline in primary schools is very prevalent

worldwide (Badoe, 2017; Hecker, Hermenau, Isele, & Elbert, 2014; Lansford et al., 2010; Meinck et al., 2017; Nichols et al., 2014; Richter et al., 2014). Even in countries where school corporal punishment is legally prohibited, its ongoing use remains high (Covell & Becker, 2011; Gershoff, 2017; Guedes, Bott, Garcia-Moreno, & Colombini, 2016; Hillis, Mercy, Amobi, & Kress, 2016; Pells, Morrow, Maternowska, & Potts, 2018; UNICEF, 2014), despite the United Nation clearly stating that corporal punishment is inhuman or degrading, and it always violates children's physical integrity, demonstrates disrespect for human dignity and undermines self-esteem and breaches the fundamental human rights of a child (Hillis et al., 2016).

Studies that have explored the reasons why primary teachers continue to use corporal punishment have found that corporal punishment is perceived to be an effective discipline measure (Mwai, Kimengi, & Kipsoi, 2014a). In addition, others have found that lack of alternative disciplinary strategies among primary school teachers have perpetuated the situation (Hecker et al., 2014, 2014; Makoe, Roberts, & Ward, 2012; Mweru, 2010). However, emerging evidence is demonstrating that use of corporal punishment on children is not effective at maintaining appropriate behavior, and enhancing or promoting children's learning in the classrooms as teachers have always claimed. In a meta-analysis of spanking and child outcomes, Gershoff, (2017) found no evidence that spanking is associated with improved child behavior and rather found physical punishment to be associated with increased risk for detrimental outcomes. The results indicated that parental use of spanking in childhood is associated with low moral internalization, aggression, antisocial behavior, externalizing behavior problems, internalizing behavior problems, mental health problems, negative parent–

child relationships, impaired cognitive ability, low self-esteem, and risk of physical abuse from parents. Similarly, a cluster randomized controlled trial in Tanzania that aimed at reducing use of violence by teachers using the preventative intervention Interaction Competencies with Children for Teachers (ICC-T) at public secondary schools in Tanzania found that a relationship between the decrease in the use of physical and emotional violence, stronger decrease in positive attitudes towards the use of physical and emotional violence in disciplining children Tanzania with improvement in student's behaviour (Nkuba et al., 2018). One would argue that the participants used in the study were older than primary school learners and therefore, their findings may not necessarily reflect the conditions at primary school level. Nonetheless, the findings may provide a basis for the need to emphasise on the negative health effects of using corporal punishment to discipline the children and for the educational institutional to review the curriculum so that it has specific content related to child physical abuse and its management and emphasise on the positive ways of disciplining the children.

However, the role of culture and upbringing in sustaining the use of physical violence against learners should not be undermined. In our study, participants argued that corporal punishment has been a traditional means of disciplining learners and that they too benefited from being whipped by their teachers. These findings echo study findings from other Sub-Saharan countries which show that the difficulty in defining child physical abuse may be as a result of a general culture of acceptance of using physical punishment or corporal punishment in child rearing practices and due to lack of exposure to child physical abuse issues. In a cross national study involving South

Africa, Zimbabwe and Tanzania, high prevalence childhood physical abuse was attributed to common understanding of acceptable child rearing practices that includes physical punishment (Maniglio, 2009).

In many countries in Africa, spanking of a child by a parent is considered part of the child-rearing practice (Richter et al., 2014). It is not surprising that UNICEF (2010) reported on child disciplinary practices at home in low- to middle-income countries states that the use of corporal punishment was highly prevalent in several sub-Saharan African countries with more than 80% of children in the region reporting being beaten at home and in schools. Similarly, Richter et al., (2014); and Sherr et al.,(2015) indicated that the number of children exposed to violence at home, school and community was very high in Africa, Asia and other low income countries and that physical abuse was much more common.

In Malawi, just like in many other countries in Sub Saharan region, there is a culture of tolerance on the use physical violence as an acceptable form punishment (Pangapanga, 2015). For example, a study on knowledge, attitude and practice amongst adults in a township in urban Malawi, many participants admitted to practicing a form of physical punishment that did or could easily result in physical injury, including beating a child with a rod or thorny stick, throwing them to the ground or kicking them in the back (Blaney et al., 2019). This attitude has been blamed for high rates of community and domestic violence against women and children documented in Malawi and South Africa (Sherr et al., 2015; Skeen et al., 2016; Pangapanga 2015).

Consequently, this positive attitude towards corporal punishment may result in the continuation of violence by teachers. Studies of teachers around the world have found a negative relationship between support for corporal punishment as a form of discipline and the intention to report child abuse (Badri, 2014; Blaney et al., 2019; Choo et al., 2013; Gershoff, 2017; Hillis, Mercy, Amobi, & Kress, 2016; Mwai et al., 2014; Sinanan, 2011). Thus if teachers have a negative attitude towards the use of corporal punishment in managing problem behaviour of students, they would confidently report many cases of child physical abuse.

5.4. Identification of Child Physical Abuse

Findings from this study reveal that primary school teachers have little knowledge on observing signs and symptoms of child physical abuse. Most teachers were not able to recognize the symptoms of abuse. Participants mentioned that they recognised the signs and symptoms of child physical abuse through observing the obvious changes in behaviour or physical injuries on the children and also through interaction with children. However, teachers also stated that not all abused children display signs of abuse.

Detecting child physical abuse is strongly affected by teacher's haphazard exposure to child physical abuse information. Literature indicates that exposure to child abuse information has some beneficial effect on teachers' awareness of abuse (AlBuhairan, Inam, AlEissa, Noor, & Almuneef, 2011; Büyük & Rızalar, 2016; Jose, 2017; Kennym, 2005; Márquez-Flores, Márquez-Hernández, & Granados-Gámez, 2016; Pm, 2016; Schols, De Ruiter, et al., 2013). Furthermore, literature states that

there is a great relationship between teachers under-reporting child physical abuse and teachers lack of knowledge of child abuse detection and reporting procedures.

Other studies state that training of primary school teachers on child physical abuse is associated with an increased likelihood of primary school teachers detecting and reporting a child that is suspected of being physically abused (Mutinta, Govender, Gow, & George, 2013). Furthermore, Adeyemi (2013) states that teachers and eventually the children in their care, would greatly benefit from trainings on child physical abuse which addresses issues that would improve teachers' child abuse detection and reporting practices.

Similarly, a descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted among the primary school teachers in Kanpur city, India. The aim was to assess the knowledge and awareness on recognizing and reporting child abuse including physical abuse and neglect among primary school teachers. Of the 220 primary school teachers in 19 randomly selected schools of Kanpur city, majority of the school teachers (74.5%) who never had any form of training in the detection and reporting of child maltreatment never or rarely recognized any cases of child abuse and neglect in their school (Ramesh et al., 2017). Furthermore, findings highlighted the need for enhancing teacher's education in child physical abuse, as by reporting suspected child physical abuse, teachers can make an important contribution to the early detection and prevention of child physical abuse.

The available data also suggests that detection of child physical abuse can be complicated by teachers' perception that they need to weigh children's need for

discipline against children's need for protection from parents, other teachers and adult's members who use physical punishment (Al Dosari, Ferwana, Abdulmajeed, Aldossari, & Al-Zahrani, 2017; Gamache Martin, Cromer, & Freyd, 2010; Kennym, 2005; Mekheimar, 2011b; Ogbe, 2015). The implication of this is that teachers may ignore some other signs and symptoms of physical abuse, hence not reporting the abuse, rather than correctly treating any physical abuse as equally serious and worthy of reporting. Walsh et al., (2008) documented that perceived seriousness of the abuse played a significant part in teachers' decision to detect and report suspected cases of abuse among Australian teachers. In other studies, findings suggest that child abuse training should address child physical abuse and child development issues including the emphasis on the negative health impact of subjecting a child to child physical much more thoroughly, because primary school teachers are more likely to report abuse when they are aware of its impact on the child.

Literature states that teacher and school characteristics influences teachers' detection and reporting of child physical abuse and neglect(Walsh et al., 2008).The results further indicated that one of the most important determinants of teacher decision making in detecting and reporting child physical abuse are case characteristics. A critical review of child abuse and its management in Africa (Badoe, 2017) indicated that perception of seriousness of injuries determines the teachers decision of reporting the suspected case of abuse. Concurrently, Walsh et al., (2008) found that despite the fact that most teachers acknowledged that all suspected cases should be reported, more than half of them stated that some forms of child abuse are more serious thus deserving reporting, than others.

In this study, the results also showed that teachers also depend on children's self-report of physical abuse. Literature states that children's self-report is affected by the child's loyalty to parents, how well a child communicates, the child's degree of coping to the physical abuse and also upon perception of the child towards the outcome of the report (Annerbäck, Svedin, & Dahlström, 2018b; McKinney, Harris, & Caetano, 2009). Other study results showed that children's loyalty to their parents makes it difficult for the teachers to detect child physical abuse. The results further explained that children's self-report also depends on communication skills on the part of the teachers. The teachers who receive information about abuse from the child ought to listen carefully and be supportive. Children are likely to under-report corporal punishment because they are afraid of the repercussions. This applies where the child perceives a risk of being harmed by a parent or carer or any other person. In a study on children's disclosure of physical abuse, the process of disclosing and the responses from social welfare workers (Thulin, Kjellgren, & Nilsson, 2019) found that the decision for the children to disclose abuse was often made out of fear, but the fear could remain after the disclosure, not knowing what will happen next. The study results also state that children seem to worry a lot about how their abuse stories are handled after disclosure and that children emphasized on the importance of trustworthy and competent adults when disclosing the abuse. However (Schols, De Ruiter, et al., 2013) found that self-report of child physical abuse and observing or being informed of specific evidence of maltreatment, along with suspicions or feelings that a child was at risk, would increase teacher's likelihood of reporting. Evidence highlights some of the problems associated with teacher's identification and reporting of child physical abuse

role. One critical aspect is the lack of appropriate time and opportunity for reflective observation. It is expected that teachers are ideally placed for detection and reporting of child physical abuse because of their frequent interaction with children. However, it is evident that in the crowded and intense daily work of the classroom, teachers may be unable to engage individual children on a level sufficiently close and personal to notice when a child has been abused. Added a general lack of knowledge of child physical abuse definitions and specific information on child physical abuse, teachers' dependence on self-report to detect child physical abuse may leave out other cases undetected.

Lack of access to child abuse trainings has also been suggested as one of the main reasons for teachers failing to detect and report cases of maltreatment (Mathews & Walsh, 2014). The training would enable the primary school teachers to have more information on child physical abuse even when the victims do not have the obvious signs of child physical abuse. Primary school teachers' dependency on obvious physical evidence of abuse in children has also led to possible cases of physical abuse not being detected and reported.

5.5. Reporting of Child Physical Abuse

Findings from this study revealed that there were no proper reporting procedures in schools for reporting the child physical abuse cases or any other abuse case. Participants explained that there were no written documents to explain the procedures to follow and no policies on handling the child that has been suspected to be

physically abused. The participants also mentioned other challenges like inadequate time, mistrust of the justice system and also fear of community repercussion.

5.5.1. Lack of knowledge on identification and reporting procedures.

In this study, participants explained that most of them do not have adequate knowledge to recognise and intervene in child physical abuse cases. They did not receive formal training and that the limited knowledge they have were obtained from sources like radios, meetings and newspapers. These sources were perceived inadequate to enable them competently detect signs and symptoms that may signify that the child is being physically abused for possible action. Participant also explained that there is red tape bureaucracy due lack of standardised reporting procedures for child physical abuse. Schools did not have established policies and procedures for reporting suspected abuse and that the suspected referred physical abuse cases did not get the necessary attention from the school authorities. Resolution of reported cases are left at the discretion of administrators. Lack of knowledge on detecting and on proper reporting procedure results in lack of follow up of abuse cases and also discontinuity of care.

Similar to a study done by Schols et al., (2013) to investigate primary school teachers' and child health care workers' child abuse detection and reporting behaviours found that both primary school teachers and child health care workers are in need of supportive tools in the child abuse detection and reporting process. Schools et al further explained that the use of a structured method would assist in objectively assessing the children suspected of being abused, especially in case of circumstances in which implicit rather than obvious signs of abuse are present. This means that primary school

teachers are in need of supportive tools in the child physical abuse detection and reporting process.

Concurring with the findings, literature reveals that in most sub-Saharan regions, there are no standard procedures for identifying and reporting child abuse. A qualitative study by USAID (2008) through the SAFE SCHOOLS programme was conducted to examine school-related gender-based violence in Malawi. The study was conducted in Machinga district in the Southern region of Malawi. The study identified several children abuse reporting pathways. The most common pathway for reporting abuse at classroom level was for the victim or observer to report to a school monitor (usually a fellow student who has been elected by classmates) or take the matter directly to a teacher. The study results further indicated that each school and community has its own criteria for deciding when a matter is to be handled by specific authorities. Often times when the offenders are the teachers, generally they are not held accountable for the severity of their actions. All schools and communities in the study agreed that a substantial number of violence cases were not reported. This means that reporting of child physical abuse by teachers would depend on the attitude of the school headmasters and the administrative procedures the headmasters employ.

Similarly, in a study done in Kenya to explore the experience of school-related gender-based violence by pupils and the culture of silence: A case of primary schools in Kasarani District, Nairobi County, Kenya by Barasa, Wamue-Ngare, & Wanjama, (2013). The results revealed a significant disparity in reporting patterns of each form of violence. This study concluded that because of disparity in reporting patterns, there

were serious cases of violence in schools that went unreported. In a study to assess teacher's knowledge, attitudes and reporting practices of suspected child abuse in independent and public primary schools across all quintile categories in the Midlands education circuit in Pietermaritzburg, the findings revealed that there were critical gaps in participant's knowledge of reporting procedures.

The above findings provide a basis for primary schools to have standardised child physical abuse reporting procedures and for the primary school teachers, to have knowledge on identification and reporting procedures and also to have standardised reporting tools in the child physical abuse detection and reporting process. A child physical abuse reporting procedure and tool would help teachers to be more objective and neutral in their conversation with parents and children.

5.5.2. Mistrust in the justice system.

In this study, although participants generally expressed challenges with identification of abuse, some managed to identify cases of abuse. However, those who managed to identify and report cases to police expressed some reservations with the justice system. Participants explained that even though they identified the abuse, reporting to the police proved futile as cases were never taken seriously, in some cases the police stations are far from the schools hence reporting becomes a challenge.

Literature has documented that child abuse is known to go unreported by various professionals who are frequently in contact with children due to different reasons such as a range in belief as to what constitutes reasonable suspicion worthy reporting, differences concerning reporting requirements, lack of awareness regarding

reporting protocols and also uncertainty as to the effectiveness of government intervention services when the report is made (Levi & Crowell, 2010; Lynne, Gifford, Evans, & Rosch, 2015; Talsma, Bengtsson Boström, & Östberg, 2015; Dinehart&Kenny,2015). Scholsetal (2013) also found that teacher's poor experiences and mistrust with school authorities in relation to detecting and reporting of suspected child abuse cases, child protection agencies and the justice system contributed to underreporting of child abuse cases.

There is need for all stakeholders to implement laws and policies as a crucial step in addressing violence. Concurrently, (Malongo & Mwale, O. J.) conducted a research to investigate the state of gender- based violence among students in secondary schools in Rumphi, with the aim of bringing out practical solutions to the problem. The results revealed the need to intensify laws against violence as one of the ways of dealing with gender- based violence. The study results further emphasized on the role of government, and other stakeholders in initiating and enforcing laws against violence. Similar to the findings, a country report on child maltreatment prevention readiness assessment in Malaysia indicated that the legislation was extremely ineffective in preventing child maltreatment prevention(Cheah & Choo, 2011).

Literature states that the effective way to deliver child protective and preventive services at a larger scale is through collaboration with other sectors, keeping in mind that all sectors are facing serious capability problems (UNICEF 2012). There is need for collaboration in education, health, social justice and security. The education sector needs to intensify programs to prevent violence against children in schools and prevent

school drop-out due to violence, child labor and child marriage. There is need for child protection officers to deal with child protection concerns in the education sector. The health sector should utilize the school health and nutrition programs to intensify and alert the students, teachers and the community on the dangerous health effects of exposing a child to physical abuse. There is also a need to intensify birth and death registration by the health sector. The evidence based social protection services targeting vulnerable children and their families should be strengthened and the justice and security systems need to ensure that child protection is involved in all its initiatives.

5.5.3. Fear of community reprisal.

In this study, the majority of participants expressed concerns about safety issues. The teachers seem reluctant to report child physical abuse because they felt like this was an intrusion into family privacy issues, hence scared of the consequences of doing so. The teachers felt that such intrusions could result in parents becoming angry with the child, beating them or withdrawing parental support. Furthermore, most teachers were concerned for disturbing parent-teacher relationship. The primary school teachers avoided conflict between the home and school and because of this, deliberately avoided questioning the suspected cases of child physical abuse. The primary school teachers also mentioned that most child physical abuse cases are left undetected and unreported due to teachers' lack of knowledge on child physical abuse issues.

In their study, Mathews et al., (2010) found that teachers fear the consequences of making a report to authorities. These fears relate to the possible retaliation against the child by the family; fear of damaging the teacher–child or parent–child relationship;

fear of being sued by families; and fear of the emotional costs and disruption to the child and their family, particularly if the teacher has misinterpreted the signs of maltreatment and the report has proved to be invalid.

Similarly, Bazon et al., (2013) conducted a qualitative study in Brazil among school principals and teachers to explore child maltreatment identification and reporting in the education Sector. The results indicated that the main reasons for not reporting cases included fear of repercussions and lack of trust in the child protection system. The study revealed that fear was associated with the possibility of retaliation on the part of parents and that the teachers disliked the difficulty of maintaining balance between the obligation of reporting and the risk of becoming involved in a situation that is dangerous for them. Additionally, respondents associated fear of reporting with potential negative consequences for the child, such as being removed from school or being physically punished more severely. This means that community sensitization on child physical abuse issues and a trust on child protection system's ability to act efficiently and promptly would help to ease such fears.

5.5.4. Overcrowding in classes/ Large classes.

In this research results, participants explained that large classes make it difficult for them to identify physically abused learners. Participants explained that they do not have enough time to enable them concentrate on both the abuse issues and other class work. Additionally, their classes are large and yet they receive very little support from their seniors to help them handle too many learners. Handling abuse in their context was perceived to be an extra burden. Participants explained that increased number of

students make it difficult for proper identification and reporting of children suspected of being physically abused.

Concurrently, the available literature states that in Malawi, pupil teacher ratio is too high. According to UNICEF (2017), The Pupil Trained Teacher Ratio is 1:78. Most teachers have little or poor knowledge as regards to child abuse issues, making it difficult for teachers to detect signs which are not obvious. Too many children in class leads into difficulties in detection of children suspected to have been physically abused. Since the abused children are surrounded in the classroom by many children who are not abused, the abused child should stand out obviously to the teacher and the teacher should be knowledgeable enough to detect the abuse. There is inadequate time for the teachers to effectively detect the abused children and make a proper report due to overcrowding.

Similarly, USAID (2008) reported that in the safe school program, a qualitative study which was conducted in 40 (out of 154) primary schools in 10 education zones in Machinga district to examine school related gender- based violence in Malawi revealed that teachers worked in classrooms with a large number of children. The report further stated that as a result of too many pupils in class, many signs and symptoms of child abuse go unnoticed by the teachers and little attention is paid to other signs and symptoms because they are considered trivial and tiresome to handle. The researchers further suggested that attaining an acceptable teacher– pupil ratio would certainly contribute a lot in identifying and reporting child abuse.

Concurrently, various studies state that there are few teachers in sub Saharan region and that most of them do not have enough time and capability for one to one interaction with the student because of pressure of work(Lee & Zuze, 2011; Maphosa & Shumba, 2010; Penson, o. J.). Even when the teachers are culprits of using corporal punishment, they are generally not held accountable for the severity of their actions. The teachers are not reported and the abused case is not followed. Teachers need to detect and report child abuse because of the role they can play in saving children's lives. However, large classroom enrollments can promote student disengagement with the teacher. In this way, physically abused children can easily go unnoticed(Wilson, 2012).

5.6. Recommendations

Recommendations have been formulated in order to address some of factors that have been identified to be associated with underreporting of child physical abuse by primary school teachers. The recommendations have been categorised under practice policy and research

5.6.1. Practice

The findings of this study have shown that primary school teachers have little knowledge on child physical abuse issues. This contributes a lot to underreporting of various cases. As people who frequently come in contact with children, the primary school teachers are in a great position to help greatly in breaking the circle of this public health and social problem. There is a need to stress on the negative health effects that result when a child is being exposed to child physical abuse. This is because

findings have shown that primary school teachers continue using physical punishment to discipline pupils. The primary school teachers need to be equipped with information on physical abuse to enable them handle the cases of child physical abuse. This is because the findings have shown that most primary school teachers do not have adequate knowledge to recognise and intervene in child physical cases. There is also need for multi-disciplinary approach to break the chain of children being exposed to physical abuse. This is because the findings have shown that lack of trust in other sectors like the justice system negatively affects identification and reporting child physical abuse. There is also need to improve teacher-student ratio because findings have shown that due to increased numbers of children in class, it is difficult for the teachers to properly identify and report a child that is suspected to have been physically abused. Improving teacher student ratio will enable the primary school teachers to effectively assess the students and also it will prevent burnout in teachers. Primary school teachers should be taught on alternatives to disciplining the children, other than using corporal punishment. This is because the findings have shown that primary school teachers continue to use physical punishment to discipline the children and according to them, this is the most effective way of disciplining the children.

Alternative ways to disciplining the children are for example, the adoption of counselling and detention strategies have proven to be effective in instilling a sense of discipline. The community should also be sensitized on all forms of abuse including child physical abuse and its negative health effects on the children. This is because findings have shown that communities do not understand the negative effects of child

physical abuse which affect the primary school teacher's efforts in trying to intervene in child physical abuse cases.

5.6.2. Policy

All schools should have clear, accessible, written policies for school personnel regarding reporting of child physical abuse cases. This is because the findings have shown that primary schools did not have established policies and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse. Resolutions of some few reported cases were left at the discretion of administration. School administration can help prevent further harm to children by implementing these procedures and providing appropriate training and support for their staff. Training for primary school teachers should include the negative health effects of physically abusing children, identifying and reporting a child that is suspected to be physically abused, provide support and guidance to abused children and their families. Training efforts can be established at many levels, including college curriculums and continuing education requirements. This is because findings have shown that primary school teachers do not receive formal training on child physical abuse issues.

Furthermore, the findings have shown that the limited knowledge that the primary school teachers have, gets from various sources like the radios, newspapers and meetings. Since primary school teachers spent a lot of time with children, they need be trained to identify abused children and those children at risk of abuse. There is also a need to make all the primary school teachers mandatory reporters of child abuse cases. This is because the findings have shown that child physical abuse is largely a hidden

phenomenon, taking place in schools, communities and family hemisphere, which even when it comes to the attention of professionals, tends to be ignored. Throughout data collection in this study, there was no clear mention of utilization of Social Workers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in primary schools. Therefore, there should be deliberate efforts to ensure deployment of social workers in school catchment areas, and clear guide lines on how teachers should work with social workers. Furthermore, the real prevalence rate of child physical abuse far exceeds the number of cases that are brought to the attention of the child welfare. However, making primary school teachers mandatory reporters must be made within a framework that allows protection of the teacher.

5.6.3. Areas for Further Research

There is need of a study to assess knowledge levels of communities on child physical abuse. Furthermore, the study can be done to analyse parent's attitudes and perception against ban to use of corporal punishment in disciplining the children. This is because primary school teachers indicated that children are physically abused home in the community and at school. An exploratory study among higher primary or secondary school learners regarding their attitudes/experiences on child physical abuse would also be interesting to have first-hand information on the victims of abuse.

5.7. Study Limitations

The findings may not be transferrable since they are based on perspectives of few selected teachers in Blantyre urban. Another limitation was finding resources such as funds to support the study. Though this study was partially sponsored, the funds

were not enough thus limiting the researcher to Blantyre urban only, possibly depriving her of other equally useful findings from other areas or cultures. Lastly, the study was done as part of researcher's academic work and hence it had time limit.

5.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this section has demonstrated that primary school teachers lacked knowledge in many areas of child physical abuse and its management. Other factors that may have contributed to low detecting and reporting of the same by primary school teachers have also been explored. The fear and stress teachers experience in relation to detecting and making a report of child physical abuse may result in noncompliance with their duty to detect and report child physical abuse. In view of these, recommendations to improve teacher's knowledge and consequently improve child physical abuse reporting have been made. One of such proposal is to attend regular child physical abuse management sessions to cover comprehensive content on child physical abuse. In addition, teaching colleges through the ministry of Health need to have a curriculum that includes specific content about child physical abuse and its management in children.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 7.1: Participants Information letter for In-depth interview

Dear Participants

I am Tauncio Kayange, a student at University of Malawi, Kamuzu College of Nursing. I am pursuing a Master of Science degree in Child Health Nursing. I am asking you if you would like to take part in my research titled “*Exploration of primary school teachers experiences in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre Urban*”.

The research intends to explore factors affecting primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre Urban. The study results of this study may influence change of policy by the Government as well as Ministry of Education in training Primary School teachers on child abuse issues because early identification and reporting will contribute in prevention of child physical abuse.

Your participation in the study is voluntary and you may agree or disagree to participate or withdraw at any point from the study, after giving your consent. Be assured that you have the right to do so without any consequences.

Your participation involves answering questions, which are on the questionnaire through an interview. This may take 45 minutes to one hour of your time and will be done at your convenient time. This will be done in a quiet and isolated place to safeguard your privacy and confidentiality. Furthermore, information that you will

provide will be reached and kept private in a lockable locker and will only be used for research purposes to safeguard your privacy and confidentiality.

Please note that there will be no financial benefits for participating in the study. In addition, there may be no direct benefits for taking part in this study. However, it is hoped that the completed study will clarify factors affecting primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse, hence improving approaches to unlocking the magnitude of child physical abuse in our country.

There is no anticipated risk to you for participation in the study.

No reports in this study will identify you in anyway and results of the study will be given to you should you wish so. The interview will be tape-recorded but the recordings will be handed with confidentiality. If you agree to participate, you will be required to sign a consent form in the space provided to indicate that you have accepted to be interviewed.

The study has been approved by college of medicine Research Ethics (COMREC), and the Blantyre District Education Office has approved the study and its procedures.

Thank you for taking time to read this information letter.

Should you require further information regarding this study or your rights as study participants, you are free to contact me 0999958682 or email kayange2016tauncio@kcn.unima.mw or COMREC secretariat, P/Bag 360, Chichiri, Blantyre 3. Or you may call 01989766.

Appendix 7.2: Participants Information letter for Focus Group Discussion

Dear Participants

I am Tauncio Kayange, a student at University of Malawi, Kamuzu College of Nursing.

I am pursuing a Master of Science degree in Child Health Nursing. I am asking you if you would like to take part in my research titled “*Exploration of primary school teachers experiences in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre Urban*”.

The research intends to explore factors affecting primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre Urban. The study results of this study may influence change of policy by the Government as well as Ministry of Education in training Primary School teachers child abuse issues because early identification and reporting will contribute in prevention of child physical abuse.

Your participation in the study is voluntary and you may agree or disagree to participate or withdraw at any point from the study, after giving your consent. Be assured that you have the right to do so without any consequences.

Your participation involves being part of the focus group discussion and answering questions that maybe asked or sharing your experience. This may take approximately 1 hour of your time and will be done at your convenient time. This will be done within the school campus. Further more information that you will provide will be reached and

kept private in a lockable locker and will only be used for research purposes to safeguard your privacy and confidentiality.

Please note that there will be no financial benefits for participating in the study. In addition there may be no direct benefits for taking part in this study. However it is hoped that the completed study will clarify factors affecting primary school teachers in identifying and reporting child physical abuse, hence improving approaches to unlocking the magnitude of child physical abuse in our country.

There is no anticipated risk to you for participation in the study.

No reports in this study will identify you in anyway and results of the study will be given to you should you wish so. The interview will be tape recorded but the recordings will be handed with confidentiality. If you agree to participate, you will be required to sign a consent form in the space provided to indicate that you have accepted to be interviewed.

The study has been approved by college of medicine Research Ethics (COMREC), and the Blantyre District Education Office has approved the study and its procedures.

Furthermore, the head teacher is aware of this research study and has been involved in the planning of this focus group discussion.

Thank you for taking time to read this information letter.

Should you require further information regarding this study or your rights as study participants, you are free to contact me 0999958682 or email

kayange2016tauncio@kcn.unima.mw or COMREC Secretariat, P/Bag 360, Chichiri,

Blantyre 3. Or you may call 01989766.

Appendix 7. 3: Participants Consent Letter

N/B Please read and sign the form if you are taking part in this study.

I.....(Name) Voluntarily give permission to participate in the study. I have read and understood the contents of the information letter and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions, where deemed necessary, about the study and its procedures, and I have fully understood.

I understand that the interview will be recorded and that the information I will give will only be used for purposes of the researcher and the people directly concerned with the research.

I therefore voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participants Signature

Date.....

.....

Researchers Signature

Date

.....

SECTION B: TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE ON CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE

1. What is child physical abuse?
2. What are signs of child physical abuse?
3. How did you acquire knowledge on child physical abuse (probe formal training, announcement by school authorities, other authorities)
4. What information on physical child abuse did you receive during the training/s?
5. What is your view on primary school teachers' ability in detecting a child that have been physically abused?
6. What challenges do primary school teachers experience in detecting child physical cases?

SECTION C: REPORTING CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE CASES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

7. What procedures have been put in place in schools for reporting children that are suspected to be physically abused?
8. In your opinion, what motivates primary school teachers to report suspected child physical abuse cases?
9. What challenges do primary school teachers face in reporting child physical cases?
10. What challenges do you face in dealing with child physical cases?
11. How are parents/guardians of suspected cases of childhood physical abuse handled

Appendix 7.5: Guide for Focus Group Discussion for Primary School Teachers

Exploration of primary school teacher's experiences in identifying and reporting child physical abuse in Blantyre Urban.

SECTION A:

In this section, we are going to ask you information about your background and training:

1. Date of interview: ___/___/___ (DD/MM/YYYY)

Code.....

2. Age.....

3. Gender: Male Female.....

4. How many years have you worked as a primary school teacher?.....

5. What is your Religion?.....

6. Which tribe do you belong to?.....

7. What is your highest level of education?.....

8. What is your professional qualification?.....

9. Did you ever receive formal training about child physical abuse?

.....

10. What type(s) of information on physical child physical abuse did you receive during training?

SECTION B

Explain to participants that you will enquire about knowledge of child physical abuse that may influence the ability on identification and reporting behaviour.

Participants should express their views guided by the discussing the following questions

- a. In your perspective, how do you understand child physical abuse?
- b. What are signs of child physical abuse?
- c. How do you get information on child physical abuse (formal training, announcement by school authorities, other authorities)
- d. What information on physical child physical abuse did you receive during the training/s?
- e. As a primary school teacher, how do you detect a child that have been physically abused?
- f. What are the challenges experienced when detecting child physical cases?

2. Explain that, you will enquire about actions taken by primary school teachers when they identify a child that has been physically abused.

- g. What are procedures that were put in place at your school for reporting children that are suspected to be physically abused?
- h. What challenges do primary school teachers face in reporting child physical cases?
- i. How do you handle parents/guardians of suspected cases of childhood physical abuse?

3. Having discussed on barriers and abilities in identifying and reporting child physical abuse, allow the participants to explain their opinion on motivational factors.

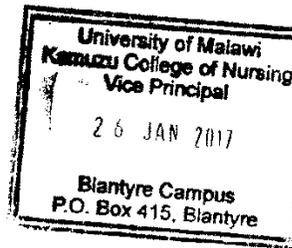
- j. In your opinion, what motivates primary school teachers to report suspected child physical abuse cases?

4. Any comments and questions?

Appendix 7.6: Permission Letter from Blantyre District Education Office

Kamuzu College of Nursing
P.O Box 415
Blantyre.
25th January 2017.

Blantyre District Education Office,
P.O Box 30217,
Chichiri, Blantyre 3.



Dear Sir/ Madam,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY

I am a Senior Nursing Officer currently enrolled at University of Malawi Kamuzu College of Nursing pursuing the Master of Science in Child Health Nursing. This letter is written to seek permission from your office to conduct a study as part of the requirements for this programme. The study is entitled 'Factors affecting identification and reporting of child physical abuse among primary school teachers in Blantyre urban.

The study will be conducted in one randomly selected primary school from each of the six zones. The primary schools that have randomly selected are; Chigumula LEA from Bangwe zone, Mayera LEA from Chilomoni zone, Kanjedza LEA from Limbe zone, Ndirande matope from Ndirande zone, Mthawira LEA from South Lunzu zone and Zingwangwa primary from Zingwangwa zone. Five primary school teachers will be purposefully selected from each of these six randomly picked primary schools.

After the study, a copy of the findings will be given to your office and the selected primary schools. Further information regarding this study may be obtained by calling me on 0999958682 or my supervisor Dr L. Chepuka on 088 254 3222.

Accompanying this is part of the study proposal.

Yours Faithfully,

Tauncio NyirendaKayange.

Email: kayange2016tauncio@kcn.unima.mw

Phone: 0999 958682.



Permission granted for the undersigned Senior Nursing Officer to conduct a study in Child Health Nursing at your school. Please assist her accordingly and make sure the lessons are not disrupted.
M. Nkhosha
for DEO
30/1/17

Appendix 7.7: Approval Certificate from college of Medicine Research Ethics Committee

